The Real Stalin Series

written by Dennis “Klo” McKinsey

Dedication

The page is dedicated to preserving “The Real Stalin” series by the late Dennis “Klo” McKinsey. The author poured a tremendous amount of effort into producing this work. It represents a great contribution to advancing an accurate and objective view of J.V. Stalin, including his contributions to Marxist-Leninist theory, his work and writings, even his personal and political character. In my opinion, this is the best work on this subject to date. Please enjoy and share widely. **– E.S.**

October Revolution

BOLSHEVIKS SUPERIOR TO MENSHEVIKS

The 150,000 members with which they began 1907 dwindled to a few thousand, while the correspondingly depressing movement among the leaders gave rise to a variety of opinions concerning policy — even to decrying the revolution and pleading for the liquidation of the party and a revision of Marxism.
Here was a test for the new philosophers who would change the world. To all superficial appearances the 12 years of effort had been of no avail, and the Philistines were scathing. In every great crisis such views recur. Nevertheless, Dan, a Menshevik opponent of the Bolsheviks, felt compelled in after-years to write of the Bolsheviks of this period of blackest depression: while the Bolshevik section of the party transformed itself into a battle phalanx held together by iron discipline and cohesive guiding resolutions, the ranks of the Menshevik section became ever more seriously disorganized by dissension and apathy.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 62

And it was always the Mensheviks of varying shades who received the maximum of Stalin’s attention. This may seem like an obsession on his part, and the Bolsheviks in general, unless it is realized that the Mensheviks were their greatest rivals for the confidence of workers. The Bolsheviks regarded them as an extraordinary danger because they gave coherence and a certain rationality to the mood of the masses.
At one time they were classified as “softs” and the Bolsheviks as “hards”; and there was much that was appropriate in these respective characterizations. For it invariably happened that the Mensheviks expressed all the doubts and fears and weaknesses which beset the workers and the peasants.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 67

Stalin was in prison, in 1903, when he heard a great piece of news. At the Second Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Party, a split began to appear, on Lenin’s initiative, between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. The Bolsheviks were the extremists, the wagers of uncompromising class warfare, the iron militants. The Mensheviks were the reformers, the adapters, the arrangers, the technicians of compromise and combination….
The split grew wider. There came a definite parting of the ways…. Stalin did not hesitate. He chose Bolshevism, and decided for Lenin.

A moment always arrives at which a man of action must make a decision of this sort which is destined to affect the whole future course of his life. One is reminded of the old Greek myth, impressive because of its antiquity, of Hercules being compelled to choose, at the beginning of his divine and sportive career, between Vice and Virtue. But were there not, in this case, reasons for and against? Reform is very tempting. It has an atmosphere of wisdom and prudence, and seems to avoid the shedding of blood. But far-seeing people, who understand the great principles of logic and social arithmetic and, in an ever-increasing degree, historical experience, know that on the path of opportunistic resignation and reformist vassalage lie first mirages, then snares, and finally betrayal–and that it is the path of destruction and of massacre. People may say that it is only a question of degree. But no, it is a crucial question, a question of life and death, because minimalism (which is also called the "lesser evil") is really conservatism.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 24

After his sixth escape, Kobi carried on a campaign against the Georgian Mensheviks. "From 1904 to 1905," writes Ordjonikidze, "Kobi was, for the Mensheviks, the most hated of the Caucasian Bolsheviks, whose recognized leader he became."
One day an Olibadze workman addressed him:
"Anyway, damn it, Comrade Sosso, the Mensheviks have got a majority in the Party, after all!"
And this workman remembers quite well today that Sosso answered him:
"Majority? Not as regards quality. Only wait a few years and you will see who was right and who was wrong."
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 25

LENIN FOUGHT TROTSKY'S EVISCERATING THE PARTY

The events had revealed again that the Bolshevik party was far from being thoroughly united. The old struggle which had marked the history of the social Democratic Labor Party until the split of 1912 was now raging furiously within the Bolshevik party itself. And as before, Lenin not only won the struggle but raised his prestige enormously. Again in a decisive hour he had saved the revolution when Trotsky and his supporters had nearly lost it.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 119

The polemics between Lenin and Trotsky were ceaseless after 1902. After the Revolution Lenin knew Trotsky had split off but still kept him in the Politburo, along with Zinoviev and Kamenev. The people he had to work with! Lenin took to anyone who supported him in the slightest.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 121

Just because in those years conciliationism became epidemic, Lenin saw in it the greatest menace to the development of a revolutionary party…. in his crusade against that dangerous tendency he felt he had the right not to make any distinction between its objective sources. On the contrary, he attacked with redoubled ferocity those Conciliators whose basic positions were closest to Bolshevism. Avoiding public conflict with the conciliationist wing of the Bolshevik faction itself, Lenin chose to direct his polemics against "Trotskyism," especially since I, as has already been said, attempted to provide a "theoretical foundation"

for conciliationism. Quotations from that violent polemic were later to render Stalin a service for which they were certainly not intended.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 113

TERRIBLE CONDITIONS BEFORE THE REVOLUTION

The fact is that some 90 and more percent of the Russian nation had little fun in the old days and were little better than slaves. It was fun, I admit, for the nobles and generals and the rich and cultured people. But not much fun for the masses who lived like pigs in the dirt and not like pigs in clover.
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1941, p. 158

The Bolshevik Revolution was made, if you like, by Lenin. But you can't "make" a revolution; you must have certain conditions. The first and cardinal one is that the majority of your population does not like the way they live…. The 5 percent had fun, the 5 percent at the top; oh yes, they had marvelous fun. But the others lived mostly like beasts and weren't even fed enough.
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1941, p. 164

The criminal Tsarist autocracy has brought our country to the brink of destruction. The utter ruin of the hundred million Russian peasants, the oppressed and poverty-stricken condition of the working class, the excessive state debts and heavy taxes, the whole population's complete lack of rights, the endless tyranny and violence reigning in all spheres of life, lastly the citizens' utter lack of security in life and property–such is the terrible picture which Russia presents. This cannot go on much longer! The autocracy which is the perpetrator of these dark outrages must be destroyed!… Besides those hundreds and thousands of peaceful citizens–workers, whom it has murdered on city streets–besides the tens of thousands of workers and intellectuals, the best sons of the people, languishing in prisons and in exile, besides those murders and acts of violence perpetrated day in and day out by the Tsarist bashi-bazouks in the villages, among the peasantry of the whole of Russia, the autocracy has devised new outrages to cap it all. It has begun to sow enmity and bad feeling among the people themselves and to provoke sections of the population and whole nationalities against one another.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 19

BOLSHEVIKS AND MENSHEVIKS CLASH OVER PARTY MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

The "Mensheviks" the minority in the party, were in favor of according membership to anyone who accepted the parties program and supported its finances by paying his membership subscription; the Bolsheviks, the majority, were for requiring a further condition: the member must actively co-operate in the work of one of the party groups. In other words, the Mensheviks wanted a party on West European lines, in which anyone could be a member by virtue of paying his subscription; the Bolsheviks wanted a much smaller party, but one whose members would all be professional revolutionaries. This raised already the substance of another theory which was later accepted. The conception of the political purpose of democracy held by the Menshevik wing was that after an upheaval had won civil liberties for

the great mass of the people, and especially for the workers, the party had to become the executor of the will of the people. The Bolsheviks, the advocates of a party of purely professional revolutionaries, were virtually in favor of the opposite standpoint, that the revolution had to be made by a trained elite, and that elite had not to fulfil any and every wish of the people, but to lead the mass of the people in the people's own interest.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 22

CONTRARY TO TROTSKY'S CLAIMS STALIN PERFORMED WELL BEFORE THE REVOLUTION

During the years of reaction following upon 1905, Stalin may be said to have won for himself a universally recognized reputation and to have laid the foundations of his later rise to a leading position in the Party. In one of his many embittered polemics against Stalin, Trotsky has since sought to prove that his rival's name was unknown to the Russian masses until long after the successful 1917 revolution. Trotsky's purpose in this slander is to infer that Stalin owed his advance to wire-pulling and backstage tactics, rather than to proven ability. Detailed study of the period 1906 to 1914 effectively gives the lie to this accusation, which could never have been made at all but for the fact that from 1913 to 1917 Stalin was prevented from adding to his fame because he was imprisoned and under the strictest possible surveillance.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 31

STALIN SET A GOOD EXAMPLE IN PRISON AND WAS BRAVE

Prison had long ago ceased to hold any terrors for Stalin, who offered the perfect example of how a revolutionary should conduct himself in such conditions…. Lenin prepared a series of letters to be sent to young and inexperienced comrades in jail, enjoining them to devote their time to the study of economic theory or to writing on political subjects. "Avoid inactivity, for when a man allows itself to become utterly bored with prison life he is most likely to weaken and lose faith in his cause" was the theme of these remarkable missives. While confined at Baku, Stalin resumed his old routine of proselytising and study, making the most of all opportunities to gain assistants against the time he should return to his interrupted work.
As regards this particular confinement we are more fortunate than usual, for a fellow prisoner, the Menshevik Vereschak, in a book attacking Bolshevism, makes detailed mention of Stalin's tactics in jail. Vereschak condemns Stalin because he refused to limit himself to association with the other politicals, preferring to maintain friendly relations with all the prisoners, including many convicted of robbery, forgery and other crimes….
in the same book we find a striking passage showing one more facet of Stalin's character. It appears that a new company of soldiers arrived to act as temporary guards at the Baku jail and began their work by compelling the despised "politicals" to run the gauntlet of two lines of soldiers who belabored the unfortunate men with rifle butts. "When it came to the turn of Koba Djugashvili, he walked slowly down the line, his eyes fixed on a book. Not one of the soldiers struck him." Even the critical Vereschak felt compelled to pay tribute to the personal courage of an adversary.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 32

Vereshchak was surprised by Koba's stamina. A cruel game was played in that prison, the purpose of which was by hook or crook to drive one's opponent frantic: this was called "chasing into a bubble." "It was never possible to drive Koba off his balance…." states Vereshchak, "nothing would get his goat…."
All the prisoners suffered from the nervous strain. "Koba slept soundly," says Vereshchak, "or calmly studied Esperanto (he was convinced that Esperanto was the international language of the future)."
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 117-118

He was decisive, ruthless, and supremely confident. Yet he was also brave. This is usually overlooked by those who seek to ascribe every possible defect to him. Even his detractor Vereshchak conceded that Dzhughashvili carried himself with courage and dignity in the face of the authorities. On Easter Day in 1909 a unit of soldiers burst into the political block to beat up all the inmates. Dzhughashvili showed no fear. He resolved to show the soldiers that their violence would never break him. Clutching a book in his hand, he held his head high as they laid into him.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 79

The Russian leader [Stalin] is a general who received the highest military decoration from Lenin in 1919 with the following testimony: "In a moment of great danger, near Krassnaja, Joseph Stalin, through his untiring energy, saved the tottering Red Army. Fighting himself in the frontline, he inspired the soldiers through his example."
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 233

It is said that he knows no fear, and it is certain that he never had any doubt that his side would win. Close intimates told me that all through the days of civil war and intervention he had absolute disregard for his own comfort and contempt for danger. No matter how dark the outlook, or how depressed his coworkers, he always believed that victory was attainable. In World War II, Stalin refused to worry even when the Germans were knocking on the gates of Moscow. He never left the city, and was certain that the Red Army would not fail in its task.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 11

Stalin's own coolness did somewhat inspire confidence at the nadir of Russian morale, after the loss of the Ukraine and during the battle for Moscow. When the Germans were on the edge of the capital Stalin stayed on in the Kremlin….
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 161

Stalin frequently visited him [Orbeliani] at the Winter Palace. I admired his audacity. He was not only living in the capital of Russia with a forged passport, after four imprisonments and five escapes from Siberia, but he had the cheek to walk calmly into the carefully guarded precincts of the Palace of the Emperor of all the Russias.
But that was by no means the most audacious of his exploits; and in the one I am about to report he was aided again by a Georgian Prince attached to the court. Prince Tchavtchavadze was an officer in the personal guard of the Czar –and also a secret member of the Bolshevik Party. Stalin asked him for the loan of a uniform, in which he thought he would be safe from the attentions of police spies, and Tchavtchavadze gave him one.

There were other Georgians in the service of the Czar who might have recognized my uncle in his illicitly acquired uniform; but he was confident that no Georgian would give him away. Since there was no one else likely to be able to unmask him, Stalin wore the Czar's uniform in confident tranquility–a fact which was to give rise later to a legend that Stalin had once served in the Imperial Personal Guard.
The legend is false, but the reality seems to me even more astonishing. Wearing a uniform of a colonel in the Czar's Guard, my Uncle Joe moved calmly through St. Petersburg attending to his secret activities designed to throw the Czar from his throne. In full daylight he walked down the Nevsky Prospect, in the heart of St. Petersburg, receiving and returning the respectful salutes of police officers charged with arresting Josef Djugachvili, criminal against the state, perennial escaper from the wastes of Siberia!
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 27-28

Another anecdote of this period shows him in a different mood. He was reviewing troops near Petrograd. A sullen soldier refused to salute. Stalin questioned him and the man pointed first to his own feet, wrapped in course burlap, soaked in snow and dirt, then at Stalin's substantial boots. Without a word Stalin took his boots off, tossed them to the soldier, insisted on donning the soldier's wet and stinking rags–and continued to wear them till Lenin himself made him resume normal footgear.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 524

In the morning, order was restored. The First Company of the brutal Selyansk Regiment had been called out to quell the rebels. The soldiers were lined up into rows, and commanded to use their rifle-butts. All the political prisoners were forced, in single file, to run the gauntlet of the punitive company. Stalin, holding his head erect, with a book under his arm, proudly marched under the reign of blows.
This picture of Stalin as a heroic figure was drawn by a political enemy of his, Semyon Verestchak, a fellow prisoner of his in Baku.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 78

Vereshchak tells how in 1909 (obviously, he means 1908), on the first day of Easter, a company of the Salyan Regiment beat up all the political prisoners, without exception, forcing them to run the gauntlet. "Koba walked, his head unbowed, under the blows of rifle butts, a book in his hands. And when the free-for-all was let loose, Koba forced the doors of his cell with a slop bucket, ignoring the threat of bayonets."
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 119

Later enemies overlooked the nerve he showed in the Civil War. He was not a physical coward; he put Lenin, Kamenev, Zinoviev, and Bukharin in the shade by refusing to shirk wartime jeopardy.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 165

Not that he was a coward. There is no basis for accusing Stalin of cowardice. He was simply politically non-committal. The cautious schemer preferred to stay on the fence at the crucial moment. He was waiting to see how the insurrection turned out before committing himself to a position.

Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 234

STALIN WAS EXILED MANY TIMES

Stalin was soon expelled from a seminary for subversive ideas, and entered on a long career of revolutionary activity, mostly in Tiflis, Baku, and other Caucasian centers, in the course of which he was arrested and sent into exile on no less than six occasions. Five times he escaped and returned to resume his underground work; he was released from his last term of exile in the remote north by the March Revolution.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 90

First arrested by the Tsarist police in 1902, he was sentenced to exile in Siberia. Escaping and returning to Georgia, he succeeded in evading the police for four years. There followed once again prison, exile, and escape, and then still again; altogether he was arrested six times and exiled six times. From the final exile, beyond the Arctic Circle, he was released by the March revolution in 1917, immediately returned to Petrograd.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 19

So Kobi (which was another of his names) made his first escape. And from that moment, detachments of police here, there, and everywhere tracked him down periodically, found him, recaptured him and then tried to find him again. This occurred six times, neither more or less.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 25

Five times he was caught by the Tsar’s police, five times exiled. Four times, a veritable Houdini, he escaped; the 1917 revolution liberated him from the fifth imprisonment, when he was incarcerated above the Arctic Circle.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 523

In 1902, Koba won the spurs of his first arrest and Siberian exile, the first of seven such exiles from which he escaped six times.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 28

LEADERS OF THE BOLSHEVIKS COME FROM THE INTELLIGENTSIA

The early leadership of all the modern revolutionary parties, including the Bolsheviks, was largely recruited from the intelligentsia.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 340

Intellectuals offer a worldview, but only the working class can achieve victory. I consider this to be Lenin’s most important legacy.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 152

Ninety-six percent of the Bolshevik Party were working men. Of course the party had its intelligentsia, not sprung directly from the soil. But Lenin and Trotsky lived close enough to the hunger line to know the thoughts of the poor.

Williams, Albert R. Through the Russian Revolution. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967, p. 82

CZAR USED NATIONAL SUPPRESSION AND OPPRESSION

The contrast between what I witnessed under the rule of Tsar Nicholas II in 1916 and what I saw nearly 30 years later was as that between total darkness and sunlight. The Empire was rightly called the prisonhouse of nations. Everywhere was illiteracy, abject poverty, disease, and exploitation. It was illegal for the various nationalities to have schools in their own language. The wealth of the land was sucked away while industry was kept in a primitive state. The richest agricultural lands were taken over by the Russian nobility. The dissolute rulers lived in great pomp and luxury, protected by Tsarist troops. National enmities and prejudices were deliberately fostered by Tsarist officials as a weapon against movements for freedom. One national group was sent to police another, and boundary lines were often arranged to cut nations in two.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 71

Much later Djugashvili himself thus recalled the motives of his adherence to socialism: 'I became a Marxist because of my social position (my father was a worker in a shoe factory and my mother was also a working woman), but also… because of the harsh intolerance and Jesuitical discipline that crushed me so mercilessly at the Seminary…. The atmosphere in which I lived was saturated with hatred against Tsarist oppression.'
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 19

Between 1905 and 1914 the numbers sentenced to hard labor (katorga) rose fivefold as the political authority of the Tsarist regime began to crumble.
Overy, R. J. Russia's War: Blood Upon the Snow. New York: TV Books, c1997, p. 16

Between January, 1905, and the convocation of the First Duma on the 27th of April, 1906, the Tzarist government, according to approximate calculations, had killed more than 14,000 people, had executed more than 1000, had wounded 20,000, had arrested, exiled and imprisoned about 70,000.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 81

IGNORANCE, PREJUDICE AND ILLITERACY WERE FOSTERED BY CZAR

Illiteracy was not the only factor in maintaining backwardness under the Tsar. All students were indoctrinated to unquestioning obedience to Throne, Altar, and Empire. Prejudice and superstition were fostered. Contemporary social problems and modern science were prohibited subjects. History bore little relation to reality. For instance, after the war with Japan and the loss of Port Arthur, textbooks continued to list Port Arthur as a Russian naval base. Even Russia's greatest thinkers and writers were forbidden in the schools. The reading of Tolstoy's War and Peace was prohibited in the secondary schools. Years later, under the Soviets, more than 40 million copies were published and sold!

Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 75

STALIN WAS AN EDUCATOR IN MARXIST IDEAS AND ORGANIZED DEBATES IN PRISON

Simon Vereshtchak, a Revolutionary Socialist and a fierce political enemy of his [Stalin] informs us that in 1903 he was in the same prison as Stalin, in Baku–a prison, made to hold 400 prisoners, into which 1500 were crowded. "One day a new face appeared in the cell containing the Bolsheviks. Someone said: 'It's Koba.'" What did Koba do in prison? He educated people. "Educational circles were formed, and the Marxist Koba stood out prominently among the professors. Marxism was his subject and he was undefeatable on it…." And Vereshtchak describes this young man, "wearing a blue, open-necked, satinet blouse, no belt or hat, a cloak thrown over his shoulder, and always carrying a book in his hand." Arranging big organized debates. (Koba always preferred these to individual discussions.)…
A little later, when he occupied cell No. 3 in the Bailoff prison, Koba again organized courses of study. Imprisonment only succeeded in altering his activities in a relative way.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 22

In Tiflis, young Socialists were quick to label themselves Iskra-men, and Djugashvili was one of them. Like others, he now awaited impatiently the successive copies of the paper arriving by clandestine mail at rather long intervals. The advent of a new copy was a festive event. Here was the intellectual authority on which he could confidently lean, for each copy of Iskra brought food for thought and plenty of solid arguments that would come in very usefully in debates with opponents. The periodical also reinforced the young man's self-confidence. He could now confound his opponents with pointed arguments and sharp phrases coined by the leading theorists abroad and get from the people on the spot some of the credit due to those who had briefed him. He was, of course, too young and too little educated, though knowledgeable by local standards, to make any contribution of his own to Iskra. But his mind was trained enough to absorb and assimilate the main lines, if not all the subtle shades, of the views it propounded. To the workers of whom he had political charge he would now expound not only the general ideas of socialism and the reasons why Tsardom and capitalist exploitation should be opposed: he could also recount the specific arguments against agrarian socialism, legal Marxism, and economism.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 34

Koba imposed upon himself a rigid discipline, rose early, worked hard, read much, and was one of the chief debators in the prison commune. After many years ex-inmates remembered him arguing against agrarian Socialists and other opponents of Iskra. His manner in debating was logical, sharp, and scornful.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 49

The difference that Stalin was able to turn to his advantage was his experience on the ground in Russia as a local organizer, something that few of the other original Bolshevik or Menshevik leaders could claim, and that recommended him to Lenin. An important part of that experience was the periodic interruption of arrest, imprisonment, exile, and escape. In

all he was arrested seven times and five times escaped; of the nine years between March 1908 and March 1917 he spent only a year and a half at liberty. In the Russian revolutionary tradition, prison and exile for many political offenders served as their “universities,” where they read widely, got a solid grounding in radical literature and ideas, often from experienced teachers and took part in frequent debates organized by the prison commune. This was where Stalin did his best to make up the deficiencies in his education, particularly in his knowledge of Marxist writings. Most of those who knew him in prison agree in recollections of a man who subjected himself to discipline, always had a book in his hand, and took a prominent part in debates, in which his manner is described as confident, sharp-tongued, and scornful.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 32

Stalin never engaged in any arguments with individuals. “He always challenged his opponents to an ‘organized debate.’ These debates were held almost on a scheduled program. They were on such issues as the agrarian question, and the tactics of revolution, or on philosophical topics. The arguments on the agrarian problem were especially heated and sometimes ended in blows. I remember such a discussion in which Koba took part. His comrade Ordjonikidze came to the defense of his thesis, and wound up by striking his opponent in the face.
Koba’s appearance and mannerisms did not conduce to ease at these debates. He lacked wit and expressed his thoughts somewhat dryly. The mechanical precision of his memory, however, amazed everybody. He had apparently learned by heart all of Marx’s ‘Capital.’ Marxism was his element, and in it he was invincible. There was no power that could dislodge him from a position once he had taken it. He was able to quote a corresponding formula from Marx for every phenomenon. This created a strong impression on the young and unenlightened members of the party.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 79-80

RULING CLASS DID NOT REALIZE A NEW REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD WAS ARISING

Unblemished Socialism, which had stood its ground and preserved its revolutionary integrity, blazed forth from the Kremlin, and suddenly the other Socialism, the Socialism of half-measures, of subterfuges, and of dreams, which blissfully recommended gradual and piecemeal progress, all of whose acquisitions middle-class power would gradually have absorbed and assimilated so as to reinforce itself thereby against the masses–was relegated into the past, with all the old superstitions and obsolete ideas.
These poor pontiffs, who had been unable to perceive their own downfall, found themselves, overnight, in the position of Rip van Winkle returning home after sleeping for a hundred years. But it was not so much that they had slept as that the great mass of the people had awoken. This was an entirely new phase in the history of mankind. Nothing of the sort had ever happened before since the beginning of the world.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 55

STALIN CONTRASTS MARXISM WITH ANARCHISM

Marxism and anarchism are based upon entirely different principles, irrespective of the fact

that they both enter the arena of struggle under a socialist flag. The cornerstone of anarchism is the individual, whose emancipation, according to it, is the main prerequisite for the emancipation of the mass, i.e., according to anarchism the emancipation of the mass is impossible until the individual is free; hence its slogan: “Everything for the individual.” The cornerstone of Marxism, on the contrary, is the mass, the emancipation of which, according to it, is the main prerequisite for the emancipation of the individual, i.e., according to Marxism, the emancipation of the individual is impossible without the emancipation of the mass. Hence its slogan, “Everything for the mass.”
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 38

STALIN REJECTS POSITION THAT PROLETARIAT MUST BE A MAJORITY FOR THE REVOLUTION

The opportunists of the Second International have a series of theoretical dogmas which they always use as a starting point. Let us consider some of them.

First dogma: Concerning the prerequisites for the seizure of power by the proletariat. The opportunists assert that the proletariat cannot and ought not to seize power if it does not itself constitute a majority in the country. No proofs are adduced, for this absurd thesis cannot be justified either theoretically or practically. Let us admit this for a moment, Lenin replies to the gentleman of the Second International. But suppose an historic situation arises (war, agrarian crises, etc.) in which the proletariat, a minority of the population, is able to rally around itself the vast majority of the working masses, why should it not seize power then? Why should it not profit by the favorable internal and international situation to pierce the front of capitalism and hasten the general climax? Did not Marx say, as far back as the 1850s, that the proletarian revolution in Germany would be in a “splendid” position if it could get the support of a “new edition, so to speak, of the Peasant War”? Does not everyone know that at that period the number of proletarians in Germany was relatively smaller than, for example, in the Russia of 1917? Has not the practical experience of the Russian proletarian revolution shown that this favorite dogma of the heroes of the Second International is devoid of all vital significance for the proletariat? Is it not obvious that the experience of the revolutionary mass struggle smashes this obsolete dogma?
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 43

The revolution of 1848 in France suffered defeat because among other things, it failed to evoke a sympathetic response among the French peasants. The Paris Commune fell because, among other things, it encountered the opposition of the middle strata, especially of the peasantry. The same must be said of the Russian Revolution of 1905. Some of the vulgar Marxists, with Kautsky at their head, basing themselves on the experience of the European revolutions, arrived at the conclusion that the middle strata, especially of the peasantry, were well-nigh born enemies of the workers’ revolution, and that it was necessary on that account to steer towards a more lengthy period of development, as a result of which the proletariat would become the majority of the nation whereby the actual conditions prerequisite to a victory of the workers revolution would be created. On the basis of this conclusion, these vulgar Marxists warned the proletariat against a “premature” revolution. On the basis of this conclusion, they, for “considerations of principle” placed these middle strata at the complete disposal of the capitalists. On the basis of this conclusion, they prophesied

to us the doom of the Russian October Revolution, referring to the fact that the proletariat constituted a minority in Russia, that Russia was a peasant country, and that on that account the victorious workers' Revolution was impossible in Russia.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 54

The October Revolution undoubtedly presented the happy combination of a "peasant war" and a "proletarian revolution" of which Marx wrote, all the chatterboxes and their "principles" notwithstanding. The October Revolution proved that such a combination is both possible and feasible. The October Revolution proved that the proletariat can seize power and maintain it, provided it is able to wrest the middle strata, especially the peasantry, from the capitalist classes, provided it knows how to transform the strata from reserves of capitalism to reserves of the proletariat.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 56

MARXISTS SAY FIGHT FASCIST VIOLENCE WITH FORCE

Take Fascism for example. Fascism is a reactionary force which is trying to preserve the old world by means of violence. What will you do with the fascists? Argue with them? Try to convince them? But this will have no effect upon them at all. Communists do not in the least idealize the methods of violence. But they, the Communists, do not want to be taken by surprise, they cannot count on the old world voluntarily departing from the stage, they see that the old system is violently defending itself, and that is why the Communists say to the working class: Answer violence with violence; do all you can to prevent the old dying order from crushing you, do not permit it to put manacles on your hands, on the hands with which you will overthrow the old system. As you see, the Communists regard the substitution of one social system for another, not simply as a spontaneous and peaceful process, but as a complicated, long and violent process. Communists cannot ignore facts.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 46

RULING CLASS WILL NOT LEAVE VIA REFORMS AND CONCESSIONS

That is why we cannot count on the change of social systems taking place as an imperceptible transition from one system to another by means of reforms, by the ruling class making concessions.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 49

DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT CAN ONLY COME ABOUT THROUGH VIOLENT REVOLUTION

Can such a radical transformation of the old bourgeois system of society be achieved without a violent revolution, without the dictatorship of the proletariat?

Obviously not. To think that such a revolution can be carried out peacefully within the framework of bourgeois democracy, which is adapted to the domination of the bourgeoisie, means one of two things. It means either madness, and the loss of normal human understanding, or else an open and gross repudiation of the proletarian revolution.

Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 51

STALIN SAYS THE DIC. OF THE PROL. IS THE ENTIRE PERIOD FROM CAPITALISM TO COMMUNISM

We must, therefore, regard the dictatorship of the proletariat, the transition from capitalism to communism, not as a fleeting period replete with "super-revolutionary" deeds and decrees, but as an entire historical epoch full of civil wars and external conflicts, of persistent organizational work and economic construction, of attacks and retreats, of victories and defeats.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 58

STALIN SAYS IT IS MASSES, PEOPLE, THAT COUNT, NOT LEADERS

I recall an incident in Siberia, where I was at one time in exile. It was in the spring, at the time of the spring floods. About 30 men went to the river to pull out timber which had been carried away by the vast, swollen river. Towards evening they returned to the village, but with one man missing. When asked where the 30th man was, they unconcernedly replied that the 30th man had "remained there." To my question, "How do you mean, remained there?" They replied with the same unconcerned, "Why ask?–drowned, of course," Thereupon one of them began to hurry away, saying, "I have got to go and water the mare." When I reproached them for having more concern for animals than for men, one of them, amid the general approval of the rest, said, "Why should we be concerned about men? We can always make men. But a mare–just try and make a mare!"

Here you have a case, not very significant perhaps, but very characteristic. It seems to me that the indifference shown by certain of our leaders to people, to cadres, and their inability to value people, is a survival of that strange attitude of man displayed in the episode in far-off Siberia just related.

And so,… if we want successfully to overcome the famine and the matter of people and to provide our country with sufficient cadres capable of advancing technique and setting it going, we must first of all learn to value people, to value cadres, to value every worker capable of benefiting our common cause. It is time to realize that of all the valuable capital the world possesses, the most valuable and most decisive is people, cadres….

…In this connection there is too much talk about the merits of chiefs, about the merits of leaders. All or nearly all our achievements are ascribed to them. That, of course, is wrong, it is incorrect. It is not merely a matter of leaders….
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 93

Josef Stalin was a great man; few other men of the twentieth century approach his stature. He was simple, calm and courageous. He seldom lost his poise; pondered his problems slowly, made his decisions clearly and firmly; never yielded to ostentation nor coyly refrained from holding his rightful place with dignity. He was the son of a serf, but stood calmly before the great without hesitation or nerves. But also — and this was the highest proof of his greatness — he knew the common man, felt his problems, followed his fate.

Statement by W.E.B DuBois regarding COMRADE STALIN on March 16, 1953

We may take it as the rule that as long as the Bolsheviks maintain connection with the broad masses of the people they will be invincible. And, on the contrary, as soon as the Bolsheviks become severed from the masses and lose their connection with them, as soon as they become covered with bureaucratic rust, they will lose all their strength and become a mere squib.

In the mythology of the ancient Greeks there is the celebrated hero Antaeus who, so the legend goes, was the son of Poseidon, god of the seas, and Gaea, goddess of the earth. Antaeus was particularly attached to his mother who gave birth to him, suckled him and reared him. There was not a hero whom this Antaeus did not vanquish. He was regarded as an invincible hero. Wherein lay his strength? It lay in the fact that every time he was hard pressed in the fight against his adversary he touched the earth, his mother, who gave birth to him and suckled him, and that gave him new strength. But he had a vulnerable spot — the danger of being detached from the eaarth in some way or other. His enemies took this into account and watched for it. One day an enemy appeared who took advantage of this vulnerable spot and vanquished Antaeus. This was Hercules. How did Hercules vanquish Antaeus? He lifted him off the ground, kept him suspended, prevented him from touching the ground and throttled him.

I think that the Bolsheviks remind us of the hero of Greek mythology, Antaeus. They, like Antaeus, are strong because they maintain connection with their mother, the masses who gave birth to them, suckled them and reared them. And as long as they maintain connection with their mother, with the people, they have every chance of remaining invincible.

This is the key to the invincibility of Bolshevik leadership.
Stalin, Joseph. Works, Vol. 14, Speech in Reply to Debate, 1 April 1937, Red Star Press, London, Pravda 1978, pp. 292-296.

STALIN SAYS FREEDOM MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY GOODS IF IT IS TO BE WORTHWHILE

Our revolution is the only one which not only smashed the fetters of capitalism and brought people freedom, but also succeeded in creating for the people the material conditions for a prosperous life. Therein lies the strength and invincibility of our revolution. It is a good thing, of course, to drive out the capitalists, to drive out the landlords, to drive out the Tsarist henchman, to seize power and achieve freedom. That is very good, but, unfortunately, freedom is far from enough. If there is a shortage of bread, a shortage of butter and fats, a shortage of textiles, and if housing conditions are bad, freedom will not carry you very far. It is very difficult, comrades, to live on freedom alone. In order to live well and joyously, the benefits of political freedom must be supplemented by material benefits. The distinctive feature of our revolution is that it brought the people not only freedom, but also material benefits and the possibility of a prosperous and cultured life. That is why life has become joyous in our country, and that is the soil from which the Stakhanov movement sprang.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 108

MARXISTS SUPPORT REFORMS, COMPROMISE AND AGREEMENTS

What is the difference between revolutionary tactics and reformist tactics?

Some are of the opinion that Leninism is opposed to reforms, opposed to compromises and to agreements in general. That is absolutely untrue. Bolsheviks know as well as anybody else that in a certain sense “every little [bit] helps,” that under certain conditions reforms, in general, and compromises and agreements, in particular, are necessary and useful.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 321-22

But since Communists had to fight for partial gains and reforms they had some common ground, however narrow, with the Social Democrats and the moderate trade unionists. They should try to concert action with them within a united front….

Lenin had expounded these ideas as early as 1920 in the Infantile Disease of “Leftishness” in Communism, where he dwelled on the harm done to communism by unreasoning ultra-radical sectarians. The need for a firm and formal disavowal of “ultra-radicalism” became pressing after the German March rising of 1921. It was then that Lenin placed proposals for the new policy before the Executive of the International. He met with strong opposition from Zinoviev, Bukharin, Bela Kun, and others. For a moment it seemed that the ultra-radicals would prevail. It was only after animated debates in the course of which Lenin and Trotsky jointly faced the opposition that the Executive was persuaded to authorize the policy of “gathering strength” and to instruct both Lenin and Trotsky to expound it at the forthcoming congress of the International.

… The Communist parties had come into existence in a desperate struggle against the leaders of the old Socialist parties whom they blamed for supporting the “imperialist slaughter” of 1914-18, for the subsequent suppression of revolution in Europe, for the assassination of Rosa Luxembourg and Karl Liebknecht, and for an ambiguous attitude towards European intervention in Russia. No wonder that many Communists were bewildered and indignant when they now heard Lenin and Trotsky urging them to acknowledge defeat, be it temporarily, and to co-operate with the hated “social imperialists” and “social traitors.” This to the ultra-radicals was surrender or even betrayal. At the congress, as earlier on the Executive, Trotsky and Lenin had to use all their influence and eloquence to prevent the opposition from gaining the upper hand–they even threatened to split the International if it backed the ultra-radicals.

Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 62

…Lenin and Trotsky had set the Communist parties the dual task of fighting arm in arm with the reformists against the bourgeoisie and of wresting from the reformists influence over the working class. The idea of the united front embodied the whole practical experience of the Bolsheviks who had indeed fought first against Tsardom, then the cadets, and then Kornilov, in a sort of united front with the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries until, in the end, they gained ascendancy over the latter too.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 64

STALIN'S EXILE, IMPRISONMENT, AND ESCAPE CAREER SHOWS GREAT DETERMINATION

1902, April 5: Stalin is arrested in Batum (first arrest).

1903, April 19: Stalin is transferred to the Kutais Provincial prison.

1903, Nov.: Stalin is exiled for three years to the Province of Irkutsk, East Siberia, via Batum and Novorossisk (first exile).

1904, Jan. 5: Stalin escapes from exile (from Balagansk, Irkutsk province) and goes first to Batum and later to Tiflis (first escape).

1908, March 25: Stalin is arrested in Baku under the name of Gaioza Nizharadze. Stalin is sent to the Bailov prison (Second arrest).

1908, Sept. 20: Stalin is exiled for two years to the city of Solvychegodsk in the Vologda province (second exile).

1909, June 24: Stalin escapes from the Vologda Province (2d escape).

1910, March 23: Stalin is arrested in Baku (3d arrest).

1910, August 27: By order of the Vice-Regent of the Caucasus, Stalin is forbidden to reside within the limits of the Caucasian region for a period of five years.

1910, Sept. 23: Stalin is exiled to the city of Solvychegodsk in the Vologda Province (3d exile).

1911, July 6: Stalin escapes from exile (3d escape).

1911, Sept. 9: Stalin is arrested in St. Petersburg (4th arrest)

1911, Dec. 14: a Stalin is exiled to the city of Solvychegodsk and the Vologda Province (4th exile)

1912, Feb. 29: Stalin escapes from exile (4th escape)

1912, April 22: Stalin is arrested in St. Petersburg (5th arrest)

1912, Beginning of summer: Stalin is exiled for four years to the Narym Territory (5th exile)

1912, Summer: Stalin escapes from exiled (from Narym) and returns to St. Petersburg (5th escape)

1913, Spring: Stalin is arrested in St. Petersburg (6th arrest)

1913, June: Stalin is exiled for four years under police surveillance to the Turukhan Territory (6th exile)

1913, June to Feb. 1917: Stalin is in exile in the Turukhan Territory.

Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 353

His education awed the the womenfolk among my family and our friends. The men were more impressed by his record as a fighter against the authorities. One of them, Siko Karangozichvili, said to me one day, "Your uncle is a real hero. He has been fighting all his life to free our country from the Russians. They keep putting him in jail and he keeps getting out.

Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 3

He [Stalin] was arrested for the first time in 1902, and in the following year married Yekaterina Svanidze –said to be his one true love–before beinng transported to Eastern Siberia.

Escaping from exile in 1904, Djugashvili returned to Tiflis, where he became a Bolshevik and adopted the alias 'Koba', the name of the hero of The Patricide, a novel by the Georgian writer Kazbegi….

Arrested again in 1909 and exiled to Solvychegodsk in the north of the province of Vologda, he escaped after four months and got back to Baku. In 1912 he was arrested again, this time in St. Petersburg, and deported to Western Siberia, escaping yet again and returning to the capital….

In 1913 he was arrested again in St. Petersburg and exiled for four years to Turukhansk in Western Siberia, which he was able to leave only after the fall of the Tsar in March 1917.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Autopsy for an Empire. New York: Free Press, c1998, p. 86

He carried on Socialist propaganda unceasing among the leather, tobacco, and mine workers. He worked as a bookbinder to earn his own living, while at the same time he set up and printed his own newspaper in a cellar or sometimes in a wooden hut. He took part in preparations for organizing attacks against the government and for that reason was constantly watched by the Imperial Police. In spite of his false beards and other disguises he was discovered again and again; and from his 24th to his 34th year he was imprisoned six times, first in the Caucasus and then in St. Petersburg. Following each imprisonment he was outlawed and exiled to Siberia, but he invariably escaped after a few weeks or months. During this 18 years of his existence as law-breaker and outlaw, constantly in danger, impoverished and miserable, he left Russia only a few times and each time he remained abroad only for a little while….

…during this first decade as an active Socialist, from the age of 16 to that of 26, neither ambition nor the will to power, nor the desire for action on a broad scale, nor recognition by

his comrades, brought him any satisfaction. For in all that he did he remained anonymous.
Ludwig, Emil. Leaders of Europe. London: I. Nicholson and Watson Ltd., 1934, p. 355

Though born in the South and accustomed to the southern sun, he had to pass the dreary years of the war in this arctic North, wavering between hope and doubt, rather weakened in health through long spells of imprisonment, entirely alone, living in a miserable wooden shack amid the snows, shooting wild geese and duck for his food during the winter and fishing for it in summer. He cooked for himself, made his own clothes and whatever implements he needed for digging and shoveling and building, while at the same time he read Marx and Darwin, for under the Czarist regime all political prisoners were allowed to take books with them into exile….
Ludwig, Emil. Leaders of Europe. London: I. Nicholson and Watson Ltd., 1934, p. 357

Between his flights from city to city, he was six times imprisoned, for periods of 3 to 10 months; he was exiled to Siberia, escaping five times at the end of a few weeks or months to reappear under a new name. Between times a bookbinder, a compositor, a printer of prohibited papers in cold cellars, or again a traveling agitator in tobacco factories or coal mines. Can such an early life, with its sacrifices of money and security, of the cheerful, hopeful education of children, of the respect of the world about him, with no hope of reward or fame–can such a life, if it does not break the man who bears it, make him other than a passionate champion of his community…?
Ludwig, Emil. Three portraits: Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin. New York Toronto: Longmans, Green and Company, c1940, p. 95

Map of Stalin's six exiles and five escapes

The complete records:

First arrest, Batum, April, 1902;

First exile, to Novaya Uda, Irkutsk, November 1903:

First escape, January, 1904.

Second arrest, Baku, March, 1908;

Second exile, to Solvychegodsk, Vologda Province, September, 1908

Second escape (to Baku), June, 1909

Third arrest, Baku, March, 1910

Third exile, Vologda, September, 1910

Third escape (two St. Petersburg), July, 1911

Fourth arrest, St. Petersburg, September, 1911

Fourth exile to Vologda

Fourth escape to St. Petersburg, February, 1912

Fifth arrest, St. Petersburg, April, 1912

Fifth exile to Narym region, June, 1912

Fifth escape to St. Petersburg, September, 1912

Sixth arrest, St. Petersburg, March, 1913

Sixth exile to Turukhansk District

Liberated in February, 1917, arriving in Petrograd, March 12, 1917
Barrett, James. Stalin and God. New York: Booktab, Inc., 1943, p. 21

He [Stalin] had worked in the capital of the oil industry for nearly eight months, he had spent nearly six months in the Baku prison, nearly nine months in the Vologda exile. A month of underground activity was paid for with two months of punishment. After escaping he had again worked in the underground for nearly nine months, spent about six months in prison, stayed nine months in exile–a somewhat more favorable ratio. At the end of exile–less than two months of illegal work, nearly three months of prison, nearly two months in Vologda province: two and a half months of punishment for 1 month of activity. Again two months of underground, nearly four months of prison and exile. Another escape. More than half a year of revolutionary activity, then–prison and exile, this time until the February Revolution; that is, lasting four years. On the whole, of the 19 years of his participation in the revolutionary movement, he spent two and three quarters years in prison, five and three quarters years in exile.
Trotsky , Leon , Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 182

DURING AN EARLY TRIAL KAMENEV DENOUNCED PART OF LENIN'S PROGRAM

In 1914 Kamenev was assigned by the party to return to St. Petersburg to direct Pravda and the work of the Bolshevik Duma group. A few months after the beginning of World War I, Kamenev was arrested and a year later appeared before the judges of the St. Petersburg judicial chamber together with the Bolshevik deputies to the Duma. Under wartime regulations the arrested Bolsheviks theoretically were faced with the death penalty. At the trial, Kamenev behaved in a cowardly fashion, stating that he disagreed with Lenin's slogan favoring "the defeat of one's own imperialist government." His behavior aroused sharp criticism among the Bolsheviks. He was sentenced to exile in Siberia.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 141

LITTLE IS KNOWN ABOUT STALIN'S YOUTH AND EARLY DAYS

(J. Arch Getty)

Stalin ruled the largest country on earth for a quarter of the 20th century and was perhaps the dominant personality of his era…. Yet we know practically nothing about him.
His childhood is a blank and solid information about his parents comprises less than a paragraph. His adolescence is equally shadowy, as it is his early political career. Only the occasional witness–his or her testimony inevitably clouded or scripted according to political needs–briefly enlightens Stalin's youth. His early writings are unrevealing, and the first focused impression one gets comes only in 1917. Even then, his ideas, plans, conversations, and even role as a significant actor are hardly known and hotly disputed.
We know little more about the rest of Stalin's personal life. None of his intimates later came forward with truly revealing pictures; the memoirs of his daughter Svetlana and his servant Khrushchev are the closest things one has to such testimony and although they tell us a lot, they provide only episodic snapshots of the master. Remembrances of other Soviets who had dealings with Stalin similarly consist of specific impressions and brief meetings. Some of them describe an open-minded and intelligent administrator who valued the advice of experts….
Nove, Alec, Ed. The Stalin Phenomenon. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993, p. 100

We do not really know for certain a great deal about Stalin's childhood and youth. In part this is due to a shortage of information, in part to the fact that informants often contradict one another, or at least give views which are hard to harmonize. Much of it was remembered 40 or 50 or 60 years later, and by people who had reasons, conscious or unconscious, to distort the picture.
In Stalin's case, the main thing seems to be not to accept as facts what are only probabilities and, where accounts are incompatible, to leave them to speak for themselves, or take a view of them and explain why.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 9-10

His [Stalin] early life in the Social Democratic organizations in the Caucasus is still a very obscure subject. The Trotskyite line, that he was unimportant and inactive, is clearly exaggerated.
… Stalin was involved in organizing raids on banks in the Caucasus, though he never directly took part in them.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 55

The existing memoirs of Stalin's youth, whether written by supporters under Stalin's watchful eye or by enemies in exile, are all biased, and all lack eyewitness accounts of his earliest years.
Randall, Francis. Stalin's Russia. New York: Free Press,1965, p. 21

Lenin's life and activity can be studied comprehensively, but in the case of Stalin the situation is unfortunately quite different. No comparable archive exists, nor will it ever be possible to re-create one in the future, since a significant portion of Stalin's papers were deliberately destroyed by his political heirs, including a large number of documents and a considerable part of his personal archive.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 65

Approximately 300 restricted files remain in the Stalin fond [files]. Because no list has ever been compiled, it is impossible to determine their content. This has led several historians to assume that there are crucially important documents hidden away in this fond. However, we think this unlikely and are inclined to believe that there is nothing of much importance in this last collection of Stalin documents closed to most historians. (After all, neither Radzinsky nor Volkogonov, who did have access, found anything of major interest.)
MAYBE WHAT IS LEFT WOULD ONLY BE OF INTEREST TO LEFTISTS
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 73

Joseph Djugachvili. Aged 23 years. Born at Gori. Ex-pupil of the Tiflis seminary. Expelled for unruly behavior.
[Footnote]: it is not known from what source Lavrov obtained this incorrect information.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 39

“Soso was always a good boy,” his mother declared emphatically, in 1930. “Yes, he was always a good boy. I never had to punish him. He studied hard, was always reading or talking and trying to find out about something…. Soso was my only son. Of course I treasured him. Above everything in the world….
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 7

What is more, there was little in the writings about Stalin which gave a vivid impression of him Thus the 1938 biography recited the bearest details of the first half of Stalin’s life before proceeding to catalog his actions at the level of policy. There was scant attention to the family, school, and native town of his boyhood. Accounts of his career in the clandestine Bolshevik committees before the Great War were discouraged; even his career in the October Revolution, the Civil War, the NEP and the Five-Year Plans was hardly covered in either the biography or the Short Course. He discouraged all historical and literary attempts to explain how he came to think what he thought or do what he did He strove instead to get writers, painters, and film-makers to present him as the embodiment of the party rather than as a credible actor in history. Despite the preoccupation of the state media with Stalin, extremely little was allowed into the public domain telling of his ancestry, education, beliefs, demeanor, or calculations….
[why did Stalin do this] The most plausible explanation is that Stalin still believed that austerity was what best suited Russia’s cultural ambience as well as the sensibilities of the world communist movement. After the Seventeenth Party Congress in 1934, he had stopped being called General Secretary but instead was designated Secretary of the Party Central Committee. Until 6 May 1941, furthermore, he resolutely refused to become Sovnarkom Chairman despite the fact that this had been Lenin’s job. He could not even be tempted to create the post of Chairman for himself in the Party Politburo. Nor was Stalin head of state. That position continued to be held by Kalinin as Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the Congress of Soviets.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 362-363

[Stalin’s mother said], “Soso was always a good boy…. I never had occasion to punish him. He studied hard, always reading or discussing, trying to understand everything…. Soso was my only son. Of course, he was precious to me.

Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 7

STALIN WAS A GOOD UNDERGROUND WORKER

He knew how to make himself inconspicuous. Cautious, taciturn, observant, and possessing great presence of mind, he was already, in many ways, the ideal underground worker.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 35

From now on [1901] his whole existence would be screened by false passports and nicknames, of which he was to use nearly 20 in the next 15 years. Hitherto he had existed on the borderline between clandestinity and legality. Now he was descending into the actual underground from which he was to emerge finally only in 1917, shortly before he became a member of the first Soviet Cabinet. For his living he would depend entirely on such assistance as the organization, rich in ambition and enthusiasm but poor in money, could give him, and on his comrades' private help. The decision to take this course was an informal vow of poverty, which in a sense terminated his novitiate to socialism. The ex-seminarist was now becoming one of that godless order of knight-errants and pilgrims of the revolution, to whom life offered little or no interest and attraction outside their service.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 37

A confidential report of the secret police stated: 'In the autumn of 1901 the Social Democratic Committee of Tiflis sent one of its members, Joseph Vissarionovich Djugashvili, formerly a pupil in the sixth form of the Tiflis Seminary, to Batum for the purpose of carrying on propaganda among the factory workers. As a result of Djugashvili's activities… Social Democratic organizations began to spring up in all the factories of Batum. The results of the Social Democratic propaganda could already be seen in 1902, in the prolonged strike in the Rothschild factory and in street demonstrations.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 47

For 17 years he was forced to live anonymously under a series of names as the police were constantly on his track. This illegal life has always been the fate and at the same time the secret delight of subterranean agitators, even in the ancient world. The insecurity of his daily life implants in a young soul distrust of every acquaintance, caution before every friend, and above all, suspicion.
Ludwig, Emil. Three portraits: Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin. New York Toronto: Longmans, Green and Company, c1940, p. 94

TROTSKY LIED WHEN HE SAID STALIN BEGAN AS A MENSHEVIK

Many years later his [Stalin] official biographers were to claim that,…he had sided with Lenin even before he was deported to Siberia. This version was challenged by Trotsky, who asserted that Koba was at first a Menshevik. In actual fact there is nothing to suggest either that Stalin ever was a Menshevik or that he declared himself to be a Bolshevik immediately after the split. Probably, he refrained at first from committing himself to any group, trying to find out the facts and their meaning amid a fog of conflicting reports. His hesitations, if this be the right word for his state of mind, did not last long. A few months after his escape from

Siberia he made up his mind to support Lenin. Towards the end of the year 1904 he was already zealously agitating for Bolshevism.
[Footnote:] Trotsky based this assertion on a single sentence contained in a police report written in 1911. The report is inaccurate in other points as well. It claims, for instance, that Stalin joined the Social-Democratic Party only in 1902.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 58

TROTSKY LED MANY ANTI-BOLSHEVIK GROUPS PRIOR TO WWI

In the preceding splits he [Lenin] parted company with his ablest colleagues. His latest decision to burn all boats behind him left him with few outstanding associates. Trotsky now headed a motley coalition of right-wing Mensheviks, radical Bolsheviks, anti-Mensheviks and anti-Bolsheviks, liquidators, boycotters, God-seekers, and simply Trotskyists in a ferocious journalistic onslaught on Leninism.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 109

STALIN UNITED WITH LENIN SHORTLY AFTER THE THESES CAME OUT

Barely 10 days after Lenin came out with his Theses, Stalin hastened to demonstrate, in Pravda, his solidarity with Lenin.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 141

TROTSKY DESCRIBES THE MISERY OF CZARIST PRISON LIFE

The old prison in Nikolayev had no decent accommodation for political prisoners, especially for so many of them. I was put into the same cell with a young bookbinder named Yavitch. The cell was a very small one; it could hold about 30, but there was no furniture of any sort, and it had very little heat. There was a big square opening in the door that looked out on an open corridor leading straight into the courtyard. The January frosts were very bitter. A straw mattress was spread on the floor for us to sleep on at night, and was taken away at 6 o'clock in the morning. It was torture to get up and dress ourselves. Yavitch and I would sit on the floor, in hats, over coats, and rubbers, pressing close to one another and leaning against the stove, which was barely warm, and would dream away for two hours or more at a time. It was the happiest part of the day for us. We were not being called up for cross-examination, so we would run back and forth from one corner to the other, trying to keep warm; we talked about the past and hoped wonderingly about our future. I began to teach Yavitch something about the sciences. Three weeks passed in this way.
Then there was a change. With all my belongings, I was summoned to the prison office and given over to two tall gendarmes, who drove me by horse to a prison at Kherson. It was a building even older than the other. My cell was roomy, but it had only a narrow window that did not open, and was protected by heavy iron bars through which little light could enter. My isolation was absolute and hopeless. There was no walking, nor were there any neighbors. I couldn't see anything through my window, which had been entirely sealed up for the winter. I got no parcels from outside, and I had no tea or sugar. Prisoner's stew was given to me once a day, for dinner. A ration of rye bread with salt was breakfast and supper. I had long discussions with myself as to whether I should increase my morning portion at the expense of the evening one. The morning arguments in favor of an increase seemed quite senseless

and criminal at night; at supper-time, I hated the person who had treated himself at breakfast. I didn't have a change of linen. For three months I had to wear the same underwear, and I had no soap. The vermin there were eating me alive. I would set myself to taking 1000, 100 and even 11 steps on the diagonal. That was my 19th year. The solitude was unbroken, worse than any I ever experienced afterward, although I served time in nearly 20 prisons. I didn't have even a book, a piece of paper or a pencil. The cell was never aired. The only way I could gauge the comparative purity of the air was by the grimace that twisted the face of the assistant warden when he sometimes visited me.
At the end of the third month, when a straw-filled bag, prison-bread, and lice were the fixed elements of existence, as much so as day and night, one evening the guards brought me a great bundle of things from that other, utterly fantastic world; there were fresh linen, covers, and a pillow, white bread, tea, sugar, ham, canned foods, apples, oranges–yes, big bright-colored oranges! Even today, after 31 years, I list all these marvelous things with emotion, and I even pull myself up for having forgotten the jar of jam, the soap and the comb for my hair. "Your mother sent them," said the assistant warden. And little as I knew about reading the thoughts of people in those days, I could tell from his tone that he had been bribed.
Trotsky, Leon. My Life. Gloucester, Massachusetts: P. Smith, 1970, p. 114-116

A TRUE REVOLUTIONARY MUST HAVE A SIXTH SENSE ABOVE MERE KNOWLEDGE

No great work is possible without intuition–that is, without that subconscious sense which, although it may be developed and enriched by theoretical and practical work, must be ingrained in the very nature of the individual. Neither theoretical education nor practical routine can replace the political insight which enables one to apprehend a situation, weigh it as a whole, and perceive the future. This gift takes on decisive importance at a time of abrupt changes and breaks–the conditions of revolution.
Trotsky, Leon. My Life. Gloucester, Massachusetts: P. Smith, 1970, p. 185

Stalin found himself once more passing through a period [involved with the reorganization of the power of the state] in which he could not clearly see the best way to follow: nevertheless, he did not lose his intuition or his realistic common sense, which were his best weapons. He refused to give his unreserved approval to the aggressive frankness of the Molotov group, which believed only in its own truth, and tried to impose it, without taking into account the truth which governed the western clan, and which was no less categorical and egocentric.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 399

FREEDOM UNDER THE BOURGEOISIE IS FRAUDULENT AND AT THE BIDDING OF A FEW

In other words, bourgeois democracy enormously and beneficially increased the field of visible liberty; it created legal and political freedoms and restricted the sphere of open and arbitrary interference with the individual's freedom of action. But, at the same time, it involved the development of a great mass of invisible compulsions; the powers of individuals to coerce and control their fellows by the hidden means of economic pressure, power of the press and of propaganda and the like. Moreover, these invisible compulsions were under no

sort of public control. They were exercised by individuals in their own interest; and, so far from being understood, their very existence was denied by the defenders of bourgeois democracy who claimed that its formal liberty was total and complete liberty, indeed, the only possible form of liberty.
Socialist Clarity Group. The U. S. S. R., Its Significance for the West. London: V. Gollancz, 1942, p. 66

BRITISH ARE A RUTHLESS COLONIAL OPPRESSOR

It is true, indeed, that over long periods, British imperialism has been able to hold back the British labor movement from revolutionary struggle by using the super-profits of its foreign trade monopoly and then of its colonial capital investments to win over an upper section of the workers; that it has used social democracy as a principal weapon to hold back the workers from militant struggle. But this never meant that it disbanded its organization of labor espionage and provocation. On the contrary, when British workers were held back for a time by the sops drawn from the fruits of colonial exploitation, all the weapons of espionage, provocation, penetration, were strengthened tenfold and used against the national liberation movements of the colonial peoples. Very long and very ugly is the story of espionage and provocation carried out by the British authorities against the workers and people of Ireland, India, Burma, Ceylon, Africa, etc. In the whole “art” of colonial repression, developed to its highest (or lowest) level by British imperialism, besides the weapons of bribery and of open repression, the weapons of espionage and provocation have always played a principal role. And in Britain itself the state has never disarmed. On the contrary, it has developed and perfected its weapons for use against the working-class even under Labor Governments. In times of lull in the class struggle the agents and spies carry out their work “quietly.” Telephones are tapped, letters opened, meetings reported, names filed, activities listed. Efforts are made to falsify revolutionary theory, to develop factional opposition groupings, to stir up personal intrigues, to organize disruption from within. In times of radical action and stiff class battles the state organs of espionage and provocation swing more openly into action.
Klugmann, James. From Trotsky to Tito. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1951, p. 63

AFTER WWI EAST. & CENTRAL EUROPEAN GOVTS WERE ALL DICTATORSHIPS EXCEPT CZECH.

With the exception of Czechoslovakia, which had genuine [bourgeois] democratic traditions [after World War I], virtually none of the other border states [of the Soviet Union] had. For a time a semblance of “Western democracy” was maintained in Romania, Poland and the three Baltic Republics which had broken away from the old Russian empire. But this did not last long. After a brief communist dictatorship in Hungary, that country became, with the help of Allied troops, a ruthless right-when dictatorship; in Poland, “democracy” lasted till 1926, when it became a dictatorship under Marshal Pilsudski, while in 1935 a new constitution adopted soon before the Marshal’s death, turned Poland into a near-fascist regime, the so-called “colonels’ Poland,” since its real rulers were a bunch of colonels,…
In the three small Baltic states “democracy” did not last very long All three, by the early ‘thirties, had become virtual military dictatorships, the mildest of them in Estonia, which was ethnically, geographically, and traditionally very close to Finland….

In Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, too, dictatorships succeeded ephemeral “democratic” governments very soon after the First World War I. Austrian democracy fell in 1934. The Wilsonian dream had proved a myth in the whole of Central and Eastern Europe–with the sole exception of Czechoslovakia, which lasted till the Munich betrayal,…
So there was, in Churchill’s and then in Truman’s and Secretary of State James Byrnes “passionate” pleading with the Russians for the “restoration” of “pure democracy” and for “free, unfettered elections” in these countries, with the exception of Czechoslovakia, something totally artificial, if not downright absurd…. none of these countries have had anything, in their whole history, even remotely resembling a Western-type form of government. All they were familiar with was some kind of autocracy or dictatorship. This was true of all of them– Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Albania, Yugoslavia, and Poland. The only truly remarkable exception was the newly formed state of Czechoslovakia.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co.,1971, p. 66-67

STALIN WAS ELECTED TO THE SIXTH PARTY CONFERENCE WHICH EXPELLED THE MENSHEVIKS

It was the task of the Sixth Party Conference to crown the completed work by expelling the Mensheviks and formally constituting the new party, a Bolshevik Party….
The Sixth All-Russian Party Conference was held in Prague in January 1912….
The Prague Conference elected a Bolshevik Central Committee of the Party, consisting of Lenin, Stalin, Ordzhonikidze, Sverdlov, Spandaryan, Goloshchekin and others. Comrades Stalin and Sverdlov were elected to the Central Committee in their absence, as they were in exile at the time.
Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Ed. History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks): Short Course. Moscow: FLPH, 1939, p. 141

“It [1912] was the period of the pre-election struggle with the Mensheviks,” writes Krestinsky, then a St. Petersburg attorney and now Soviet ambassador to Germany. “The tendencies toward compromise were very strong among the workers, and it required great discipline and firmness to prevent a fusion with the Mensheviks at the polls. This task was performed by Stalin. It was he who also guided the Bolshevist delegation upon its formation in the Fourth Duma. It was Stalin who stamped that delegation with its Bolshevist individuality, and who with the aid of Pravda created for it a supporting body among the workers of the capital.”
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 93

LENIN SAYS PARTY MUST ENGAGE IN LEGAL PARLIAMENTS AND ILLEGAL WORK

Lenin assailed the “Liquidators” (Mensheviks favoring the liquidation of the illegal work of the party and its transformation into a lawful political organization) and the Otzovists or “Recallers” who were urging the withdrawal of all Social Democrats from the Duma and from all legal organizations. Lenin held that the party must participate in elections and legislative activities and must at the same time carry on underground revolutionary work.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 47

The workers' deputies were going to the State Duma not for legislative purposes, but to utilize that body as a revolutionary tribune. Such were the main lines of the mandate to the deputies in the Third Duma.
In a leaflet issued in November 1907 in connection with the opening of the Third State Duma, it was pointed out that the workers' group in the State Duma could function successfully only if the masses of the people were kept informed of what went on in the Duma, and if the Party organizations explained to the masses that all hopes of securing the satisfaction of their demands in a peaceful, bloodless and "parliamentary" way were vain.
Yaroslavsky, Emelian. Landmarks in the Life of Stalin. Moscow: FLPH, 1940, p. 61

In this Mandate Comrade Stalin laid down the principles upon which the workers' deputies in the State Duma were to base their activities…. It explained that "the Duma tribune is, under the present conditions, one of the best means for enlightening and organizing the broad masses of the proletariat." The Mandate went on to say:
"We want to hear the voices of the members of the Social-Democratic group ring out loudly from the Duma Tribune,…proclaiming the peasantry as the most reliable ally of the working-class, and denouncing the bourgeois liberals as the betrayers of the 'people's freedom."
Yaroslavsky, Emelian. Landmarks in the Life of Stalin. Moscow: FLPH, 1940, p. 73

And in that year (1907), too, he launched with Lenin a violent campaign against the Otzovists, members of the extreme Left who contended that the revolutionary members of the Duma ought to be withdrawn– by the Party. Lenin and Stalin declared this to be a mistake. However rotten this young organization [the Duma] might be to begin with, the good elements in it should remain there as long as possible, in order to be able to make new contacts and to get new outlets for propaganda. (This proves that, in spite of their inflexible policy, the Bolshevik's knew quite well that they should never go beyond the limits of practical common sense, and that, in any case, they admitted the employment of legal methods.)
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 41

It was elevated to a political principal by Menshevik writers, who demanded that the party should wind up its underground activity, abandon its old habits, and transform itself into an ordinary opposition working for its ends openly, within the limits prescribed by the law–like the European Socialist parties. Those who preached this 'revaluation of values' were derogatorily labeled by Lenin 'the liquidators', the grave-diggers of the party.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 94

STALIN STAYED AND FOUGHT RATHER THAN FLED LIKE OTHER BOLSHEVIKS

… when one after another of the Bolshevik leaders escaped from exile or prison to an easier life abroad, Stalin "stuck it out and endured" in Russia, passing from one alias to another, one prison to another exile.
Because always, deep down underneath, he thought of them half disdainfully as "emigres," who had fled before disaster while he and those like him stayed and stuck it out.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 169

But when the Bolshevik cause crashed in the bloody repression which followed the abortive Revolution of 1905-1906, Stalin alone of the prominent Bolsheviks stuck the game out in Russia, while the others fled abroad. He spent years in jail, hiding under a dozen aliases, escaping and being recaptured, yet indomitable.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 234

Stalin became, and has always remained, the Russian Patriot.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 14

Still another source of power is his early career. Almost alone, Stalin had the guts to stay and work inside Russia after the collapse of the revolution of 1905. The other revolutionaries scattered into exile, and lived, like Lenin, in libraries or coffee-houses till 1917. Stalin remained within Russia the whole time. He did the dirty work; he was “the hall sweeper.” Thus he built up an immense acquaintance with submerged revolutionaries,…
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 520

STALIN AND TROTSKY CLASH OVER VOTING FOR THE REVOLUTION

Two members, Kamenev and Zinoviev, voted against the resolution outright, denouncing it as adventurism. And then came the first dispute between Stalin and Trotsky — not a big affair, but a forerunner of much to follow. Trotsky moved an amendment proposing that the uprising should not be started before the second Congress of Soviets met. Stalin was opposed to any delay.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 109

Zinoviev and Kamenev did not take part in the rising. “At that moment,” says Stalin, “they openly declared that in organizing the rising, we were rushing to our own destruction, that we should wait for the Constituent Assembly, that the conditions necessary for Socialism were not yet ripe and would not be so for some time…. Zinoviev and Kamenev joined the rising out of fear: Lenin drove them to it with a stick…. They were obliged to drag themselves into the rising…. Trotsky joined it willingly enough, but with a reservation which already, at that time, brought him nearer to Zinoviev and Kamenev…. He declared that if the Revolution did not break out and was not successful in Western Europe, revolutionary Russia would not be able to hold out against conservative Europe, and that to doubt this Trotskyist opinion was to give proof of national narrow-mindedness.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 52

LENIN DEMANDS ZINOVIEV AND KAMENEV BE EXPELLED

The defection of, Kamenev and Zinoviev, and the publication of their denunciation of the proposed uprising gave full publicity to the preparations already afoot and much which should have been kept secret. Lenin angrily denounced them as “traitors” and ” strike-breakers,” and demanded their expulsion from the party. The central committee denounced them, but refrained from the drastic course of expulsion.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 110

Zinoviev lacked decision and, but for Lenin's personal influence, would have left the Party altogether in 1917 because he refused to concur in the decision to revolt, on the grounds that the revolutionary movement was not yet strong enough….
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin: Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 66

Lenin was now more and more insisting on the necessity of preparing for insurrection, of passing on to revolution. In his letters, "The Bolsheviks Must Assume Power" and "Marxism and Insurrection," he severely condemned the capitulators, Kamenev, Zinoviev, and the other opponents of insurrection.
At a meeting of the Central Committee on September 15th, the traitor, Kamenev went so far as to propose that a statement be inserted in the resolution to the effect that the Bolsheviks were opposed to all street actions whatsoever, and further that Lenin's letters be burnt, only one copy of each being preserved in the files.
Yaroslavsky, Emelian. Landmarks in the Life of Stalin. Moscow: FLPH, 1940, p. 93

…Infallible people do not exist, Lenin used to say….
In 1917 Lenin called Zinoviev and Kamenev prostitutes for their treachery in the October Revolution. And not only prostitutes but strikebreakers as well. They were impeding us and directly helping the enemy.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 139

Zinoviev and Kamenev committed an act of betrayal yet remained in the party, and they were even admitted into the Politburo.
Certainly. Stalin helped Zinoviev and Kamenev. Why? Because there were very few trained people. They could not be trusted, but it was very difficult to do without them. Politics is a complicated matter. At that time Lenin demanded their expulsion from the party, but Stalin and Sverdlov objected.
Zinoviev and Kamenev remained in the Politburo for several years following their treachery. There were only five members–Lenin, Stalin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Trotsky. Two of the five Lenin had called prostitutes, and before that he had often called Trotsky "Little Judas." He had also called him an irreconcilable enemy, and so forth. But Trotsky remained in the Politburo and was head of the army during the civil war. So Lenin made use of him.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 139

Both Zinoviev and Bukharin were certainly against Lenin, but they could not be dealt with at once. Everything depends on stages….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 143

…Both [Zinoviev and Kamenev] claimed we did not have a dictatorship of the proletariat but a dictatorship of the party. That's how the Mensheviks reasoned: you Bolsheviks are well organized, you seized power, and you are cut off from the people…. But Lenin said, "No, we have a dictatorship of a class, a dictatorship of the proletariat headed by communists. We are not cut off from the people, from the working class, we are part of it, the leading, guiding, directing force."
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 146

"But," adds Stalin, "apart from these three, Lenin and the Party went forward without reservations."

Zinoviev and Kamenev carried hostility and lack of discipline to the point of publicly attacking, in a newspaper article, the decision to rise–which, naturally, was a secret. This betrayal allowed Kerensky to take armed offensive measures. Lenin treated Zinoviev and Kamenev as “strikebreakers,” and spoke of excluding them from the Party. As a result, they both left the Central Committee.
During October, the Central Committee appointed Stalin a member of the Assembly of Five (for the political management of the Revolution) and of the Assembly of Seven (for the organization of the Revolution).
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 53

Only Zinoviev and Kamenev now voted against insurrection, and on October 18th published their well-known letter in Gorky’s Novaya Zhizn, saying so.
Lenin’s fury was intense, and he demanded their expulsion from the party as ‘strike-breakers’. Zinoviev wrote to the party paper Rabochii Put, edited by Stalin (which had temporarily replaced the now illegal Pravda), denying Lenin’s charges and saying that the matter could be discussed later. Stalin published this, and even added an editorial comment expressing the hope that the matter might ‘be considered closed’ as, in spite of Lenin’s ‘sharp tone’, the Bolsheviks were ‘fundamentally’ in agreement. When the Central Committee met again on Oct. 20, Stalin opposed the expulsion of Zinoviev and Kamenev. When criticized, he offered his resignation as editor.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 68

A new meeting of the Central Committee on Oct. 16, which was attended by prominent non-members of the Committee, confirmed the previous decision in favor of insurrection. On the morrow Zinoviev and Kamenev carried the struggle against Lenin into the open and warned public opinion against the insurrection in Gorky’s newspaper Novaya Zhizn (New Life), which stood halfway between Bolshevism and Menshevism. Lenin, furious at the indiscretion, branded his two colleagues as ‘strike-breakers’, ‘traitors to the revolution’, and demanded their immediate expulsion from the party. The penalty seemed too harsh to the other members of the Committee. Stalin published Lenin’s denunciation in the Bolshevik newspaper, but softened its effect by a conciliatory editorial comment meant to bridge the gap between the opposed viewpoints.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 164

One cannot expect the millionaire press, or the Daily Herald of today, to present to their readers the real facts about this “Old Guard.” But here they are:
Zinoviev and Kamenev were not the leaders and inspirers of the Russian Revolution which began in Petrograd in 1917. In point of fact, as members of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party at the time, they opposed and voted against the uprising. What is more, they took the step of making public the plans of the Bolsheviks by publishing them in the newspaper Novaya Zhizn (“New Life”) in Petrograd. There and then Lenin denounced these two, demanding their expulsion from the Party, classing them as “strike-breakers” of the Revolution. But Zinoviev and Kamenev recanted and were allowed to remain members.
Shepherd, W. G. The Moscow Trial. London: Communist Party of Great Britain, 1936, p. 11

STALIN IS ONE OF THE MAJOR LEADERS OF REVOLT IN LENINGRAD

Stalin was directing the revolutionary armed contingents to all the decisive points of the city [Petrograd]. He was not in the limelight, but in his hands were the reins which guided forces in accordance with the collective will.
…Kerensky dived into an American motor-car and fled.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 111

Early in August 1917, the Sixth Party Congress met secretly in Petrograd. In the absence of Lenin, Stalin delivered the Central Committee's report to the 267 delegates, displaying great skill and persuasiveness…
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 95

On the afternoon of 24 October, the day the struggle for the city [Leningrad] began, Stalin reported on the current situation to a caucus of Bolshevik delegates, who had assembled in preparation for the opening on the next day of the Congress of Soviets. This report, along with the continuing responsibility for the editorial line of the party organ, disposes of the idea that Stalin was inactive during the seizure of power. In the speech he displayed a knowledge of the details concerning both the political and military aspects of the insurrection, which indicates that he was in close touch with the headquarters of the operation in Smolny Institute.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 39

STALIN IS ONE OF TOP REVOLUTIONARY LEADERS

There were three definite trends within the Bolshevik party at the very moment that it became the leading party of the revolution and took the reins of the newly formed Soviet government. The leaders in the central committee were Lenin, Stalin, Sverdlov, and Dzerzhinsky, representing Lenin's version of Marxism. Kamenev, Zinoviev, and Rykov formed a group with a policy at times indistinguishable from that of the Mensheviks, and Bukharin, Radek, Shliapnikov headed a group of "left communists." Trotsky vacillated from group to group.
Lenin regarded the Bolshevik party as the general staff of the proletariat waging an age long war.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 113

… so that to ensure a speedy victory, an organized military force would be needed when the actual insurrection began. With special orders to prepare for this eventuality, the Party appointed a Military Revolutionary Center, consisting of Stalin, Sverdlov, Bubnov, Uritsky, and Dzerzhinsky, placing in its hands the entire military direction of the rising. Once more Lenin's choice fell upon the "wonderful Georgian" when he needed organizing ability and tactical sense.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 40

The enlarged meeting of the Bolshevik Central Committee of October 16th placed Comrade Stalin at the head of the Party Center for the direction of the uprising.
Yaroslavsky, Emelian. Landmarks in the Life of Stalin. Moscow: FLPH, 1940, p. 94

In October 1924 Stalin, for the first time, started to denigrate, though not yet to dismiss entirely, Trotsky's role in the October Revolution…. Trotsky, Stalin noted, had not even been a member of the five-man 'center' appointed to conduct the seizure of power, though Stalin himself was on it.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 121

He [Stalin] distinguished himself in his practical capacities; and, with the exception of Trotsky who led the Petersburg Soviet from autumn 1905, he had a much more influential role in the events of that turbulent year [1917] than any other member of the first Party Politburo formed after the October Revolution. Dzhughashvili debated frequently with the Georgian Mensheviks. He talked at workers' meetings. He was one of the most productive writers for Proletarians Bzdzola.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 59

His jobs in the Central Committee and at Pravda involved so much writing with pen or pencil that calluses appeared on the fingers of his right hand. With the work came authority. Lenin and Zinoviev were fugitives. Trotsky, Kamenev, and Kollontai were in prison. The party leadership fell into the hands of Stalin and Sverdlov since they were the only members of the inner core of the Central Committee who were still at liberty. Such a situation would have disconcerted many. But Stalin and Sverdlov overbrimmed with confidence as they sought to repair the damage caused to the party by the July Days–and Stalin relished the chance to show that he had political skills which few in the party had as yet detected in him….
By the start of the clandestine Sixth Party Congress in late July there was no doubt about Stalin's eminence among Bolsheviks. He was chosen by the Central Committee to give its official report as well as another 'on the political situation'.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 135

Presumably it was his editorial duties that prevented him [Stalin] from attending the Central Committee on the same day. Trotsky too was absent, but this did not inhibit him from denigrating Stalin as a man who avoided participation in the decisions and activities connected with the seizure of power. The story got around–and has kept its currency–that Stalin was 'the man who missed the revolution'. Proof was thought to lie in the assignments given by the Central Committee to its own members. Here is a list of assignments:
Bubnov– railways
Dzerzhenski –post and telegraph
Milyutin–food supplies
Sverdlov –surveillance of Provisional Government
Kamenev and Vinter–negotiations with left SR's
Lomov and Nogin–information to Moscow

Trotsky thought this demonstrated the marginality of Joseph Stalin to the historic occasion being planned.
Yet if inclusion on the list was crucial, why were Trotsky and Lenin omitted? And if commitment to the insurrection was a criterion, why did the Central Committee involve Kamenev? The point was that Lenin had to remain in hiding and Trotsky was busy in the Military-Revolutionary Committee. Stalin as newspaper editor also had tasks which

preoccupied him, and these tasks were not unimportant. As soon as he had time, he returned to the Smolny Institute and rejoined his leading comrades. There he was instantly given a job, being sent with Trotsky to brief the Bolshevik delegates who had arrived in the building for the Second Congress of Soviets.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 144

The fact that Stalin was not asked to direct any armed activity has perpetuated a legend that he counted for nothing in the Central Committee. This is to ignore the broader scope of the meeting. The Military-Revolutionary Committee had already made its dispositions of the garrisons and Red Guards. Stalin's functions had previously precluded him from involvement in such activity and it would have been folly to insert him at the last moment.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 146

He had done his jobs, important party jobs, with diligence and efficiency. With Sverdlov he had run the Central Committee in July and August. He had edited the central party newspaper through to the seizure of power in October. Since April he had helped to bring about the pragmatic adjustment of party policy to popular demands. He felt at home in the environment of revolutionary Russia; and when he came back to the Alliluev flat he was greeted by admirers. He wrote, edited, discussed, and planned with eagerness.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 147

Far from fitting the bureaucratic stereotype, he was a dynamic leader who had a hand in nearly all the principal discussions on politics, military strategy, economics, security, and international relations. Lenin phoned or telegraphed Politburo members whenever a controversial matter was in the air. There were few corners of high public affairs where Stalin's influence was unknown; and the Politburo frequently turned to him when a sudden emergency arose.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 174

To Koba was ascribed direct leadership of the Baku "militant activities".
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 124

On the 24th of March, 1910, the gendarme Captain Martynov stated that he had arrested Joseph Djugashvili, known under the alias of "Koba," a member of the Baku Committee, "a most active Party worker who occupied a leading position."
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 125

LENIN SENT STALIN WHEN HE WANTED A GOOD NEGOTIATOR

Kamenev had been sent to confer, but without avail, and Stalin was dispatched–with complete success. It was Stalin whom Lenin sent to Finland to aid the Finnish revolution; it was Stalin who was sent as plenipotentiary of the Soviet government to negotiate with the

Ukrainian Rada and bring about its collapse in favor of the Ukrainian Soviet government.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 117

All his foreign visitors were impressed by his mastery of the factual material related to the case at hand. Above all, he knew what goals he considered essential in any negotiation and struggle with unyielding determination to obtain them.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 216

VAST EXPROPRIATIONS BEGIN IN 1918

Beyond the nationalization of the banks and the land no more than 500 individual enterprises had been nationalized by July 1918. But an unprecedented storm was gathering that was to force the Soviet government into what has been designated “War communism,” when nationalization, requisitioning, and rationing were to become drastic political weapons for the maintenance of Soviet power.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 122

DESCRIPTION OF BAD CONDITIONS AFTER THE REVOLUTION

Shortly after the great days after the beginning of November 1917, General Alexiev, the Chief of Staff of Kerensky’s army, made his way to the Don region and began the organization of the “Volunteer People’s Army” to fight the Soviet Government. Then, in December, the Mensheviks of Tiflis captured the local arsenal. Alexiev was joined by Generals Kornilov and Denikin. The Ukrainian National Government supported the Don Cossacks against the Ukrainian Soviet Government, with its headquarters in Kharkov. The Russian Soviet Government moved from Petrograd to Moscow as the German forces threatened to march on Petrograd. During February and March, 1918, British troops were landed at Murmansk. General Mannerheim invited the Germans to send him military assistance to crush the Finnish Revolution. Thirty thousand troops under General Von der Goltz arrived, and during March the Finnish Revolution was crushed. In the first week of July the “Left” Social Revolutionaries and the anarchists staged an armed revolt in Moscow, denouncing the Bolsheviks as “betrayers of the Revolution.” A corps of Czecho-Slovaks (Austro-Hungarian prisoners of war) seized Chelyabinsk on the trans-Siberian railway. The Social Revolutionaries murdered V. Volardarsky, the People’s Commissar of the Press. The Germans were in control of the Ukraine. The Turks were invading the Caucasus. The food situation was becoming increasingly serious as the forces of counter-revolution closed in from every side. They were threatening Tzaritsyn (now Stalingrad) and the whole system of food-supply from the south when Stalin was charged with the task of securing the Republic’s larder.
Murphy, John. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 123

It was not the introduction of Socialism by Lenin which produced this ghastly poverty and want; it was the war lost by the Czar, it was the ensuing civil war, which so disorganized the country that in the year 1922 only 51 million dessiatine were sown with crops as against 100,000.000 in 1913. The harvest amounted to 2.8 billion pud as against 6 billion in 1913. The production in industry in 1920 was 15 percent of that in 1913. The World War cost Czarist Russia $40 billion; the cost of the civil war was another 50 billion. Lenin had to

construct his new state in the midst of a catastrophic collapse, and to sign a peace after a war conducted by the Czar,….
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 70

Not through the Communists, but through the violent inroads of western powers, who had no business in Russia, the country had become involved in ever greater wars and disasters…. It was not a handful of doctrinaires and dreamers who ruined the country, but the heads of international banks and industrial establishments who, by means of the governments they controlled, sent their armies to the country of dangerous experiments in order to save their oil and their investments and at the same time suppress any imitations at home.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 147

The Soviet Union of the early 1920s was a land of deprivation. Hunger was everywhere, and actual mass famines swept across much of the countryside. Industrial production was extremely low, and the technological level of industry was so backward that there seemed little possibility of mechanizing agriculture. Serious rebellions in the armed forces were breaking out, most notably at the Kronstadt garrison in 1921. By 1924 large-scale peasant revolts were erupting, particularly in Georgia. There was virtually no electricity outside the large cities. Agriculture was based on tiny peasant holdings and medium-sized farms seized by rural capitalists (the kulaks) who forced the peasants back into wage labor and tenant farming. Health care was almost non-existence in much of the country. The technical knowledge and skills needed to develop modern industry, agriculture, health, and education were concentrated in the hands of a few, mostly opposed to socialism, while the vast majority of the population were illiterate and could hardly think about education while barely managing to subsist. The Soviet Union was isolated in a world controlled by powerful capitalist countries, physically surrounding it, setting up economic blockades, and officially refusing to recognize its existence while outdoing each other in their pledges to wipe out this Red menace.
Franklin, Bruce, Ed. The Essential Stalin; Major Theoretical Writings. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p. 7

BOLSHEVIKS TOOK OVER WITH VERY LITTLE VIOLENCE

…In any case, contrary to the impression which soon became current in the West, the Soviet Government between November and June, 1917-18, established itself and pursued its program with the less violence and with far fewer victims than any other social revolutionary regime in human annals.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 129

OTHER PARTIES WERE ALLOWED TO OPERATE WHEN BOLSHEVIKS BEGAN

During this period the practical meaning of the time-honored Marxist slogan of a "dictatorship of the proletariat," as defined and implemented by the Bolsheviks, was not that the Party alone should rule. All parties were welcome to participate, provided that they accepted the goal of socialism, represented workers and peasants, and acknowledged the Soviet as the

basis of the new State.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 129

For the first seven months after the Bolshevik revolution there were still opposition parties in the Soviets, though they were minorities. The first Soviet Government was a coalition government, a coalition between the Bolshevik party and the Left wing of the peasant Social Revolutionary Party, which at that time adhered to the Soviet regime with its dictatorship of the workers and peasants.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 275

I wanted to hear the so-called “Bloody Czar” himself talk about the terror, and include a part of our conversation, such as it was then published in Russia with Stalin’s permission.
“You have led the life of a conspirator for such a long time,” I said to Stalin; “and do you now think that, under your present rule, illegal agitation is no longer possible?”
“It is possible, at least to some extent.”
“Is the fear of this possibility the reason why you are still governing with so much severity, so many years after the revolution?”
“No, I will illustrate the chief reason for this by giving a few historical examples. When the Bolsheviks came to power they were soft and easy with their enemies. At that time, for example, the Mensheviks (Moderate Socialists) had their lawful newspapers and also the Social Revolutionaries. Even the military cadets had their newspapers. When the white-haired Gen. Krasnov marched upon Leningrad and was arrested by us, under the military law he should have been shot or at least imprisoned, but we set him free on his word of honor. Afterward it became clear that with this policy we were undermining the very system we were endeavoring to construct. We had begun by making a mistake. Leniency toward such a power was a crime against the working classes. Then we realized that the only way to get ahead was by the policy of absolute severity and intransigence.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam’s sons, 1942, p. 172

In the spring of 1918 the Bolsheviks were not the only legal party. The Left Social Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, Menshevik internationalists, Anarchists, Maximalists, and several other small political parties also existed legally and published their newspapers. After the Brest-Litovsk treaty they were all in opposition to the Bolsheviks. Naturally, the Bolsheviks kept a very close eye on this opposition press.
… The Social Revolutionaries, who at this time [early 1918] were the political allies of the Mensheviks,…
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 52

Of course the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries had a long record of crimes against the Soviet government. Suffice it to recall Fannie Kaplan’s attempt to kill Lenin in 1918, the assassinations of Uritsky and Volodarsky, and the crimes of Socialist-Revolutionary authorities in the Volga Region during the summer of 1918 and in Arkhangelsk. Nonetheless, in 1919 the Soviet government had declared an amnesty and legalized the Right Socialist Revolutionary Party, which began to publish its newspaper, Delo Naroda, in Moscow.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 645

In December 1919, the Social-Democrats Internationalists voted to join the Communist Party.

As a reward for this about-face, the Bolshevik leadership reversed its decision of the previous June to expel the Mensheviks from the Soviets. In January 1919 the party received permission to bring out its organ, the newspaper Vsegda vpered. The paper published such scathing criticism of the government, especially of the Red Terror, however, that it was closed after several issues. It never reappeared.
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 43

The main body of the SR Party felt it had no choice but to adopt the policy of accommodation as well….
SR's were instructed to work for the overthrow of the governments of Denikin and Kolchak but to refrain from actively resisting the Communist regime. The policy was justified as a "tactical" concession that did not imply even a conditional recognition of Bolshevik authority. This stipulation did not alter the fact that at the decisive phase of the Civil War, the Socialist-Revolutionaries placed themselves squarely on the side of the Bolsheviks. As a reward, in February 1919 they were also allowed to rejoin the soviets. On March 20, the SR Party was legalized and given permission to bring out its daily, Delo naroda. The paper, the first copy of which appeared on the same day, was suspended after six issues.
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 44

On November 7, 1917, Lenin decreed advertising a state monopoly which deprived the press of its principal source of income. The authorities also nationalized many printing establishments, turning them over to Bolshevik organizations. Even so, an independent press managed to carry on. Between October 1917 and June 1918, some 300 non-Bolshevik newspapers continued to appear in the provincial towns, that is, outside Moscow and Petrograd. In Moscow alone, there were 150 independent dailies.
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 293

A more specific consequence of Brest Litovsk was the breakup of the coalition between the Bolsheviks and left Social Revolutionaries. The latter resigned from the Government in March. Their motives were in part identical with those of the left Communists; in part they were dictated by ordinary nationalism. From now on power would be exercised by a single party. Government by a single party had hitherto not been a plank in the Bolshevik program. But the course of events was such that the Bolsheviks could not help becoming the country's sole rulers after their partners had refused to share responsibility for the peace. Alone in office, they still refrained from suppressing their opponents, except for the extreme right the initiators of the civil war. Only in June 1918, when the civil war was already in full swing, were the Mensheviks and the right-wing Social Revolutionaries temporarily outlawed, on the ground that some of their members sided with the White Guards. The Mensheviks were again permitted to come into the open in November of the same year when they pledged themselves to act as a loyal opposition within the framework of the Soviet regime.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 190

…At first the Bolsheviks tried to display tolerance towards their opponents. At the congresses of Soviets and trade unions, Menshevik, Social Revolutionary, Syndicalist, and Anarchist spokesman freely and severely criticized the Government. A restricted but still wide freedom of expression existed. The ruling party itself was continually alive with open controversy, in which ideas were vigorously thrashed out and no authority was spared. Its members were free to form themselves into separate groups and factions in order to

promote their views inside the party. There was no clear-cut or stable line of division between the groups and factions that fluctuated with events and with the issues as they arose. The libertarian spirit of the revolution survived the climax of the civil war until well into the year 1920. It was in the latest phases of the struggle, when victory was virtually assured, that it began to vanish, that the parties of the opposition were denied legal existence, and that even the ruling party found its freedom hemmed in by restrictions and coercion.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 217-218

The Sovnarkom met three times, on 7, 8, and 9 December 1917, under Lenin's chairmanship, to discuss broadening the political base of the new regime by including some Left Socialist-Revolutionaries (Left SR's), and finally agreed to include seven of them, five as People's Commissars and two as ministers without portfolio.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Autopsy for an Empire. New York: Free Press, c1998, p. 13

During the first four years of Soviet power, non-Bolshevik working-class parties continued to operate legally in the Soviet Union. The Left Social Revolutionaries were co-partners with the Bolsheviks on the ruling Council of People's Commissars (occupying 7 of the 18 seats) until July 1918. When, in July 1918, the Left Social Revolutionaries declared themselves in opposition to the Bolshevik leadership of the Civil War, and actually organized an armed insurrection, they were temporarily banned from participation in the Soviets. Although they had not supported the seizure of power, the Right Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks were active in the Soviets until they were banned from participation, also in June 1918, they were temporarily excluded owing to their failure to support the Reds in the Civil War. But even after their expulsion the three parties continued to operate as legal and active political organizations. The decrees banning Menshevik and Social Revolutionary participation in the Soviets were rescinded in the winter of 1918-19 after these organizations declared themselves opposed to foreign intervention and to collaboration with the bourgeoisie (i.e., had declared their support of the Reds in the Civil War). The Right Social Revolutionaries were allowed to resume publication of their newspaper in 1919, and both groups legally held congresses during 1919. In 1920 the Mensheviks were still electing substantial numbers of representatives to the Soviets in a number of cities, including Moscow.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 209

For the next three years, the Menshevik leadership represented the democratic opposition, within the legal means permitted. Lenin, meanwhile, missed no opportunity to launch insulting attacks on his former comrades. Nevertheless, until 1920 the Menshevik's led a more or less legal existence, even if the term "Social Democrat" became a dirty word. Then the Politburo launched open persecution, beginning with "semi-harsh" measures. On June 22, 1922, it was decided that the political activity of "these accomplices of the bourgeoisie" must be "curtailed," and that this should be achieved for the time being by exile:…
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 86

On 30 November 1917,.. he [Lenin] was assisted in these "initiatives" [governmental changes] by the Left SR's, to whom, after debate in the Central Committee, he decided to give several portfolios. The matter was reviewed by the Sovnarkom on 9 December, and a decision was taken to make it a condition that the Left SR's "must follow the general policy of the Sovnarkom." That is, the Bolshevik Central Committee. After a night of negotiation

between Sverdlov and the Left SR representatives, it was announced at the Sovnarkom that "full agreement" had been reached. Agriculture was given to Kollegaev, Justice to Shteinberg, Posts and Telegraph to Proshyan, Local Self-Government to Trutovsky, State Property to Karelin, and Algasov was made People's Commissar without portfolio but with voting powers….
Although the Left SR's were hardly less radical than the Bolsheviks themselves (they tended to stress peasant interests), this interval in Soviet history represented a rare moment of socialist pluralism…
But, for a time, the collaboration was a fact. Of the 20 members of the Cheka Collegium, seven were Left SR's, including Dzerzhinsky's deputies Alexandrovich and Zaks. In April 1918 the Left SR's helped the Bolsheviks to crush the Anarchists…and also helped to spread Bolshevik influence in the countryside by supporting the…decree of 13 May 1918 which legitimized the confiscation of grain from the peasants.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 171-172

The Soviet Government had a coalition with the Left Socialist-Revolutionists during the first year of its existence. This is not generally realized. It was not until 1919 that the non-Bolshevist commissars were forced out from Lenin's cabinet.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 203

The Bolsheviks began the heroic period of revolution by erring on the side of tolerance and forbearance in the treatment of all the non-Bolshevik political parties. The bourgeois, Social Revolutionary and Menshevik newspapers turned from the first days of October into a harmonizing chorus of howling wolves, prowling jackals and baying mad dogs. Only Novoye Vremya [The New Times], the shameless organ of the darkest Tsarist reaction, attempted super-subtle maneuvering by trying to maintain a "loyal" tone, wagging its tail. Lenin saw through them all and saw the danger of tolerating the whole pack of them. "Are we going to let this rabble get away with it?" Ilyich demanded on every occasion. "Good Lord! What kind of dictatorship have we!" The newspapers of these hyenas pounced upon the phrase "plunder the plunderers" and made the most of it in editorials, in verse, in special articles. "What aren't they doing to that 'plunder the plunderers,'" Lenin exclaimed once in jocular despair. "Who really said it?" I asked, "or is it pure fabrication?"– "Not at all!" Lenin retorted. "I did actually use those words. Said them and forgot about them. And here they've made a whole program of them!" He waved his hand humorously.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 338

EXPROPRIATIONS PROCEEDED SLOWLY AT FIRST AFTER THE REVOLUTION

But there was no sweeping nationalization of business property. By mid-May of 1918 only 304 plants had been nationalized, mainly in mining and heavy industry. Even foreign trade remained in private hands until April 2, 1918, when it was made a state monopoly. Lenin moved slowly toward socialism….
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 130

SU BECAME ONE-PARTY DICTATORSHIP IN SUM. 1918 BECAUSE OF ATTACKS

During this summer of 1918 the Soviet government became a one party dictatorship, ruthlessly suppressing all opposition by terror. Its transformation was occasioned by armed attacks launched against it from all points of the compass by its domestic and foreign foes, employing all possible weapons from conspiracy and blockade to invasion and assassination.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 142

In reply to a question on the monopoly of legality by the Communist Party, Stalin said, "… The monopoly of our party grew out of life, it developed historically as a result of the fact that the Socialist Revolutionary Party and the Menshevik Party became absolutely bankrupt and departed from the stage of our social life.
"What were the Socialist Revolutionary Party and the Menshevik Party in the past? They were channels for conducting bourgeois influence into the ranks of the proletariat. By what were these parties cultivated and sustained prior to October 1917? By the existence of the bourgeois class and ultimately by the existence of bourgeois rule. Clearly, when the bourgeoisie were overthrown the basis for the existence of these parties disappeared. What did these parties become after October 1917? They became parties for the restoration of capitalism and for the overthrow of the rule of the proletariat. Clearly these parties have lost all support and all influence among the workers and the toiling strata of the peasantry."
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 37

MIRBACH MURDER LED TO SUPPRESSION OF OTHER PARTIES

…The murder of Mirbach and the abortive revolt of the Left Social Revolutionaries on the next day, followed by the desertion of the Social Revolutionary General Muraviev to the enemy at Simbirsk, led to the suppression of the [SR] party. By the time the first Soviet Constitution was promulgated (July 19) all the SR's, Mensheviks, and Cadets were at war with the Communists and prepared to cooperate with the Allies and White reactionaries for the overthrow of the Soviet.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 157

STALIN WAS A MEMBER OF THE FIRST POLITBURO

After the ending of the Civil War a party Congress assembled…. Stalin was also one of the eight members of the actual government of the Soviet state… The Politburo.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 87

Stalin's growing importance in the Party was shown when at its April 1917 Conference he was elected to the Central Committee by the highest number of votes after Lenin and Zinoviev.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 29

Among members outside the party, Stalin's reputation was growing. He was the practical leader with a capacity for work and for taking responsibility. He was not a great orator, but he always spoke with good sense. He was a man, too, who could cut his way through

bureaucratic obstacles and make decisions. The high regard in which he was held was demonstrated at the Eighth Party Congress in Moscow from March 18-23, 1919. He was high on everyone's list for election to the Central Committee. Two new subcommittees of the Central Committee were set up by the congress: the Politburo of five members to guide the party in political matters, and the Orgburo to advise in matters of personnel and administration. He was appointed to both subcommittees.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 129

He was a member of the Politburo from the moment of its creation, on October 10, 1917;… Also he held two cabinet portfolios when the government was organized: commissar for workers and peasants inspection, and commissar for nationalities.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 523

After the conference a narrow inner leadership called the Bureau of the Central Committee was elected. It would later be known as the Politburo and would become the official ruling body of one sixth of the earth's land surface for many decades. The first Bureau had four members: Lenin, his faithful assistant Zinoviev Kamenev, and Koba Stalin. In May 1917 Koba was already a member of the Party's four-man leadership.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 66

Koba voted with the majority for the uprising, but did not speak. A Political Bureau was set up for the political direction of the uprising and Lenin saw to it that Koba was included.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 113

UNLIKE MENSHEVIKS AND SR'S LENIN SEEKS BOTH PEASANT AND WORKER SUPPORT

While the Mensheviks seek the support only of the relatively few industrial workers, Leninism in its tactical procedure takes account of the vast mass of the peasants…. Herein it rectifies the policy of the social revolutionaries. That party seeks the support only of the peasantry,…
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 115

To Trotsky it seemed that the only way out of our plight was the establishment of a bourgeois republic, because we were not supported by the working class of the West, and our alliance with the peasantry wasn't working. That was his chief shortcoming. Listen, unity of the proletariat alone is insufficient according to any theory of Marxism. But Lenin–and herein lies his strength–was able to find an approach to the peasantry. He criticized the petty bourgeois essence of the peasantry but also discerned its toiling side. If a correct approach to the peasantry were applied, they would support us. This is Lenin's innovation in Marxist theory, and in practice he proved to be right.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 142

On the contrary, it [the working-class] must put itself at the very head of the movement, striving to win a commanding influence over all sections of the Russian people, particularly of the peasantry who constituted the overwhelming majority of the population….

Contrary to the Mensheviks, the Bolsheviks saw that the closest ally of the working-class was the peasantry and not the capitalist class. They did not envisage a democratic revolution and then a long period of capitalist development.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 21

Its founder and undisputed leader, Lenin, determined on the very day he learned of the outbreak of the February Revolution that the Bolsheviks would topple the Provisional Government by armed force. The strategy consisted of promising every disaffected group what it wanted: to the peasants, the land; to the soldiers, peace; to the workers, the factories; to the ethnic minorities, independence. None of these slogans were part of the Bolshevik program and all would be thrown overboard once the Bolsheviks were in power,…
Pipes, Richard. Russia under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 4

The stumbling block of the revolution, up to Stalin's dictatorship, has been the problem of the peasantry. In a sense, Lenin overlooked the peasantry. He did not include the peasantry in the proletariat. If he had done so, a dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia must have meant a dictatorship by the peasantry since they outnumber the rest of the workers by 10 to 1. In Lenin's view the peasantry must be made to support the proletariat but not control it.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 106

BOLSHEVIKS BELIEVE THE STATE MUST BE DESTROYED, NOT TAKEN OVER

The proletariat–and here comes the fundamental difference from the other Marxist tendencies–must not build further on the foundation of the old state, but, when the old state has been completely reduced to rubble, a new instrument a power must be constructed on its ruins for rule over the other classes.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 116

LENIN LIVED ON PARTY MONEY WHILE TROTSKY SOLD ARTICLES

Lenin lived on the money the party gave him. He received nothing for his articles in the illegal or semi legal press. But Trotsky became famous as a journalist at an early age.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 121

TROTSKY BETTER KNOWN THAN LENIN

At that time [before WWI], therefore, Trotsky was much more widely known than Lenin.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 122

RUSSIAN REVOLUTION LED TO CAPITALISTS LIGHTENING UP EVERYWHERE

The Russian Revolution led after the First World War to an accelerated development of social legislation in most countries and to an easing of the pressure on colonial peoples. That reduced the likelihood of revolution.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 281

LENN AND THE GERMANS USED EACH OTHER

[As in Trotsky's opposition to Stalin] Lenin, too, during the First World War, declared that he hoped for Russia's defeat; for only that could liberate Russia from the Tsarist regime and bring a revolution, and that mattered more to Russia than any victory. A victory, indeed, would place Tsardom in security for decades to come. At that time there were negotiations of some sort between Lenin and the Germans. The negotiations were not carried on directly, but through neutral intermediaries, and were concerned simply with the return of Lenin and his circle from Switzerland to Russia. That, after all, was all that was needed. The German army command was well aware that Lenin had written against the war; it knew also that he wanted to carry the revolution further, and that if he came into power he would at once conclude peace. That was enough. Nobody in Berlin worried at the time about what would happen next. The first thing was to win the war, and to that end it was necessary first of all to demolish the eastern front. Once victory had been achieved all over the world, there would certainly be time enough to deal with the Russian revolutionaries!
For Lenin, too, the one thing was to get back to Russia; then he must seize power and, in order to establish his hold of power, conclude peace. Once that first task had been achieved, there would be time to consider what to do next. Lenin had most carefully avoided compromising himself in any way; nothing could be proved against him. There was nothing wrong about wanting to return to Russia and, without being required to give any express undertaking in return, being allowed through by the Germans.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 292-93

Lenin was not, of course, a German agent. But he had certainly received German funds (the whole matter was publicly aired in the Soviet press in the 1920s). At this point the Germans and Lenin had a common interest– the defeat of Russia. From the German point of view it was the same calculation which had allowed the 'sealed train' with Lenin and his colleagues to pass through Germany on the way to Petrograd in April.
But if Lenin was not in fact a German agent, the story of the German funds certainly made him appear one.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 67

BASIC PRINCIPLE OF LENINISM IS THAT POWER CAN'T BE GAINED PEACEFULLY

The philosophy underlying the Communist dictatorship is Leninism, or the revolutionary interpretation of Marxian socialism worked out by Lenin. The main points in this philosophy, summarized very briefly, are as follows.
Socialism, or communism (Lenin, like Marx, uses these two terms interchangeably), can never come by a process of peaceful evolution, even in countries where such democratic liberties as universal suffrage and freedom of the press and assemblage prevail. Under the capitalist system the small wealthy minority enjoys such advantages in the manipulation of public opinion through the control of newspapers and large publishing houses and the manifold other advantages which are associated with wealth that it is utopian to hope to win away even the majority of the working-class, to say nothing of the majority of the population, from this capitalist influence by argument and propaganda alone. Moreover, the bourgeoisie,

in a moment of revolutionary crisis, would not abide by the rules of its own parliamentary game; should it find its economic privileges seriously threatened it would resort to military or Fascist dictatorship.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 59

LENIN ACCUSED OF BEING A GERMAN SPY

Undeterred by the accusations that he was a German spy, ridiculous to anyone who knew Lenin's lifelong record of bitter hostility to capitalism in all countries….
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 85

STALIN SAVED LENIN IN SUMMER OF 1917

After the events of July 1917, when Lenin, hounded and persecuted by the counter-revolutionary provisional government, was forced to go into hiding, Stalin directly guided the work of the Central Committee and the Central Party Organ, which at that time appeared under a succession of different names. It was Stalin who saved the precious life of Lenin for the Party, the Soviet people and for humanity at large, by vigorously resisting the proposal of the traitors, Kamenev, Rykov, and Trotsky that Lenin should appear for trial before the courts of the counter-revolutionary Provisional Government.
Alexandrov, G. F. Joseph Stalin; a Short Biography. Moscow: FLPH, 1947, p. 53

Lenin and Zinoviev were hesitant: they feared that to avoid trial would confirm, in the eyes of uninformed opinion, the charges leveled against them. This was at first also the view of Lunacharsky and Kamenev. Stalin, on the contrary, advised them to go into hiding. It would be folly, he said, to trust the justice of the Provisional Government. An anti-Bolshevik hysteria was being so unscrupulously whipped up that any young officer or ensign escorting the 'German spies' into prison, or from prison to court, would think it an act of patriotic heroism to assassinate them on the way. Lenin still hesitated to follow Stalin's advice. Stalin then approached the Executive of the Soviets and told them that Lenin was prepared to face trial if the Executive guaranteed his life and personal safety from lawless violence. As the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries refused to shoulder any such responsibility, Lenin and Zinoviev finally made up their minds to go into hiding.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 151

The Congress discussed whether Lenin should appear for trial. Kamenev, Rykov, Trotsky and others had held even before the Congress that Lenin ought to appear before the counter-revolutionary court. Comrade Stalin was vigorously opposed to Lenin's appearing for trial.
Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Ed. History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks): Short Course. Moscow: FLPH, 1939, p. 198

In her reminiscences Krupskaya states: "On the seventh I visited Ilyich at his quarters in the apartment of the Alliluyevs together with Maria [Lenin's sister]. This was just at the moment when Ilyich was wavering. He marshaled arguments in favor of the necessity to appear in court. Maria argued against him hotly. 'Zinoviev and I have decided to appear. Go and tell Kamenev about it,' Ilyich told me. I made haste. 'Let's say goodbye,' Ilyich said to me, 'we

may never see each other again.' We embraced. I went to Kamenev and gave him the Ilyich's message. In the evening Stalin and others persuaded Ilyich not to appear in court and thereby saved his life."
…More categorical than any other against surrender was Stalin:…
To what extent the opponents of Lenin's surrender to the authorities were right was proved subsequently by the story of the officer commanding the troops, general Polovtsev. "The officer going to Terioki [Finland] in hopes of catching Lenin asked me if I wanted to receive that gentleman whole or in pieces…. I replied with a smile that people under arrest very often try to escape." For the organizers of judicial forgery it was not a question of "justice" but of seizing and killing Lenin, as was done two years later in Germany with Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxembourg. Stalin was more convinced than the others of the inevitability of a bloody reprisal; such a solution was quite in accord with his own cast of thought. Moreover, he was far from inclined to worry about what "public opinion" might say. Others, including Lenin and Zinoviev, wavered. Nogin and Lunarcharsky became opponents of surrender in the course of the day, after having been in favor of it. Stalin held out more tenaciously than others and was proved right.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 211-212

MOLOTOV SAYS LENIN WANTED TO GO PAST A BOURGEOIS GOVT TO SOCIALISM

While we opposed Kerensky's bourgeois government as counter-revolutionary, we had not yet arrived at the conclusion drawn by Lenin: a Soviet government, Soviet power based on the Soviets. Nothing of the kind. I defended the democratic revolution and did not dream of a socialist revolution.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 91

MOLOTOV SAYS STALIN ERRED BY SUPPORTING THE BOURGEOIS GOVT

It was after I had been removed from the editorial staff [of Pravda] that the notorious editorial "A Bullet for a Bullet!" written by Kamenev appeared in Pravda. Answer the Germans bullet for bullet, he wrote. This was the defensist line. Yet Stalin was on the editorial board at the time. Herein lies the source of the error. As long as I was on the board, such things did not happen. This was Stalin's mistake.
And here is another one of his mistakes from this period–an article later printed in his collected works. I am still surprised that he concluded it there. Take 1917. There is an article on the question of the war. It follows the line of reasoning that held it necessary to struggle for peace and take advantage of whatever the Provisional Government was doing for peace. This, of course, was not at all the essence of Lenin's line. But this article was published. It is precisely analogous with Kamenev's editorial "A Bullet for a Bullet!" Because it too held that the Provisional Government must be supported "to the extent and so long as" it seeks peace. Perhaps I am exaggerating, but just read it. Why did Stalin include it in his collected works? After all, Stalin mastered the exceptional language of the propagandist–classical language, precise, terse, and clear. Yet he got this notion into his head. But he made a mistake.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 92

MOLOTOV SAYS TROTSKY WAS AN ORGANIZER NOT AN AGITATOR

Did Trotsky play a large role?
Big, but only as an agitator. He took only a small part in matters of organization….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 95

Trotsky himself learned a lot and transformed himself from propagandist to organizer. But he was still unable to reach great heights in this arena. Without taking the transport scandal into account, he created nothing effective when it came to fighting for power. In the field of organization, mediocrities like Molotov beat him all along the line.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 116

LENIN PROPOSED CALLING IT THE COUNCIL OF COMMISSARS NOT MINISTERS

“What shall we call the government?” Lenin asked us. It was decided that “Council of Ministers” smacked bourgeois. Someone proposed “Council of People’s Commissars.” In France the term “commissar” was widely used. Commissars of police, municipal, and so forth. At the time France was closer to us in spirit than Germany,…
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 95

TROTSKY’S ROLE JUST AFTER THE REVOLUTION STARTED WAS COMMENDABLE

This was the only time Trotsky acquitted himself quite well. He was an excellent speaker, and oratorical skill is important in holding an audience. And he had that skill. He was a spellbinder, and that is why later on the fight against him was difficult.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 97

LENIN RELEGATED BUKHARIN TO OBSCURE ROLE IN FIRST POLITBURO

I was chosen as the first alternate to the Politburo so that I could replace the first absent member of the body. Kalinin was second, and Bukharin was third. Since there were five members, Bukharin never actually had the opportunity to replace anyone. Lenin had decided this.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 99

CRITICS DON’T UNDERSTAND THE ACCURACY OF LENIN

When you read our contemporary economists and philosophers…it is evident they are spinning incredible tales as regards foreign policy. The main error, of course, is that they do not understand the kernel, so to speak, of the Leninist approach. Lenin consistently and pointedly undermines capitalism and bourgeois ideology from the most diverse angles. Take

Lenin–his every work, every line is a bomb thrown at imperialism. That's the main thing in Lenin.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 101

LENIN DEMANDS A STATE MONOPOLY OF FOREIGN TRADE

I recall a deputy chairman of the People's Commissariat of Georgia, Mdivani, an opportunist. He allowed the import of foreign goods to Batumi. I was present at the Politburo when Lenin asked him, "What is your reason?" Mdivani answered, "My reason is cheap goods." Some Marxist–"for cheap goods"!
Lenin was opposed to any weakening of the monopoly on foreign trade.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 110

But Lenin saw this as a major error, an inadmissible infringement of the country's interests. In his opinion, it was not only unwise but probably harmful to allow foreign exporters to enter into direct contact with private businessmen inside the country, the nepmany, for then "the foreigners will buy up and take home with them everything of any value."
Lewin, Moshe. Lenin's Last Struggle. New York: Pantheon Books. C1968, p. 35

Lenin added proof upon proof in an attempt to persuade the Central Committee of the correctness of his views. Only the strict maintenance of the [trade] monopoly would remedy the economic weakness of the country. One had to consider the ability of foreigners to offer special prices, not to mention conditions in the international market that were in themselves very advantageous for the Russian agricultural producer. The slightest breach in the defenses would end by destroying the already weak national industries, and help to forge an alliance between the forces of international capitalism and the Russian businessmen on the one hand and the mass of the Russian peasantry on the other against the power of the Soviets.
Lewin, Moshe. Lenin's Last Struggle. New York: Pantheon Books. C1968, p. 36

BUKHARIN SOUGHT UNITY WITH THE SR'S

Bukharin was looking for a union with the Socialist-Revolutionaries. He was drawn in this direction. He maintained personal contacts with them after the revolution.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 117

BUKHARIN WAS DANGEROUS AND LENIN SPOKE OUT AGAINST HIM

CHUEV: Does he [Bukharin] deserve respect?
MOLOTOV: As a person, yes. But he was dangerous in politics. He ran to extremes in life. I can't say that it has been fully proven, at least to my satisfaction, but he joined in a conspiracy with the Socialist-Revolutionaries to assassinate Lenin. He supported arresting Lenin….
Bukharin spoke against Lenin more than once. He called him a utopian. What's more, he called him a traitor!
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 118

TROTSKY WAS A BETTER SPEAKER THAN BUKHARIN, LENIN AND STALIN

Trotsky spoke eloquently with fine diction…. He was a better speaker than Bukharin. First-class, of course…. He could influence politically naive people. Bukharin was an effective speaker. Lenin was a bit weaker. As a speaker Stalin was unique. He spoke in a low voice, but people always listened to him, even before the Revolution.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 121

CHUEV: Stalin spoke good Russian, didn't he?
MOLOTOV: Yes. He gave very good speeches. He read a great deal and had an artistic sense….
He wrote everything himself. The staff never wrote for him…. Back then we all did our own writing.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 168

That, then, is how Stalin speaks to his people. It can be seen that his speeches are circumstantial and somewhat elementary; but you must speak very loudly and clearly in Moscow if you want to be understood as far as Vladivostock. So Stalin speaks loudly and clearly, and everyone understands his words and enjoys them, and his speeches establish a feeling of kinship between the people who hear them and the man who makes them.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 74

His speeches are lengthy but not verbose. The wording is succinct and direct. They make better reading than the speeches of Lenin and Trotsky because they are informed more by purpose than by theory.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 121

LENIN HAD DOUBTS THE REVOLUTION WOULD OCCUR

I recently read some memoirs about Lenin. Krupskaya writes that, before the Revolution, Lenin used to ask her, "Will we live to see it?" He too had doubts….
In 1917 Lenin did not yet know how things would turn out. It is impossible for a person even of his stature to judge historic events in precise detail. It is impossible.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 125

ONLY LIARS CLAIM LENIN TOOK GERMAN MONEY

Rutich writes that Lenin was getting German money for the Bolsheviks, that he came back to Russia in April 1917….
That's pure provocation. Everything about Lenin was spotless. He thundered against German imperialism openly, unceasingly, mercilessly.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 132

STALIN COMPLIMENTED TROTSKY FOR HIS CIVIL WAR RECORD

John Reed rather glorified Trotsky in his book Ten Days That Shook the World. But Trotsky must be given his due, for he was good in those days. He behaved badly in Brest, of course. And in the civil war he displayed good and bad qualities. Without a doubt he fought for Soviet power. How else could he have become head of the Red Army?…
Trotsky had planted his people everywhere, especially in the Army.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 136

[Stalin states]: As to Trotsky, he had "played no special role" in the October revolution. True, he "did fight well," but only as an agent of the Central Committee; and, incidentally, even the left Social Revolutionaries, who later on turned against the revolution, had fought well then. The actual leadership of the rising belonged to a "party center," of which Trotsky was not even a member.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 281

SVERDLOV LEFT NOTHING BUT WAS PRAISED BY LENIN

IVANOVICH, SHOTA: "Did Lenin praise Sverdlov on the day of his funeral?"
Yes, far too much. He was an organizer, a party man, but he left nothing to distinguish himself. Nothing. I don't remember a single article by him.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 141

DZERZHINSKY DENOUNCED ZINOVIEV AND KAMENEV AS KRONSTADTERS

…Dzerzhinsky had certainly become a member of our group, and said, "Zinoviev and Kamenev, where are you leading us? You are just Kronstadtsy!" He was outraged. Dzerzhinsky had a sincere, expansive nature, but he was hot-blooded. Already in 1925 he called Zinoviev and Kamenev "Kronstadtsy."…
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 143

LENIN WAS THE ONLY PARTY GENIUS

…He [Stalin] was close to a genius in tactics; in theory and strategy he was weaker. In our party I consider Lenin alone to be a genius.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 166

Stalin was an incarnation of his epoch, a different period from that of Lenin or Marx…. At a discrete stage Stalin achieved what had not–could not have–been achieved by anyone else. Speaking of Lenin and Stalin, I would say this: the former was a genius, the latter was talented.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 230

LENIN FAVORED CENTRALISM

Lenin had opposed the federal principle, federalism, because he favored centralism.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 196

REVOLUTION WAS CARRIED OUT BY THE MASSES NOT A SMALL GROUP

One gets the impression from some accounts that the Russian Revolution was run by a small group of conspirators led by Lenin, with Stalin as a subservient but ambitious tool, Lenin periodically issuing diktats and directing matters with a political cunning that resulted in the overthrow of the government. The implication seems to be that if that government, led by Kerensky, had only been a bit smarter things might have gone the other way. In fact, of course, the Revolution was a mass movement responding to exploitation and tyranny. After its initial surge in March 1917–as a "bourgeois-democratic" revolution–it came more and more under the dominance of the working class.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 30

It was not the revolutionists who made the Russian Revolution. This in spite of hosts of revolutionists who tried their best to make it. For a century gifted men and women of Russia had been agitated over the cruel oppression of the people. So they became agitators. Into the villages, the shops and the slums they went crying….
But the people did not rise. They did not even seem to hear. Then came that supreme agitator–Hunger. Hunger, rising out of economic collapse and war, goaded the sluggish masses into action. Moving out against the old worm eaten structure they brought it down. Elemental impersonal forces did what human agencies found impossible.
The revolutionists, however, had their part. They did not make the Revolution. But they made the Revolution a success. By their efforts they had prepared a body of men and women with minds trained to see facts, with a program to fit the facts and with fighting energy to drive it through. There were a million of them–perhaps more, possibly less. The important thing is not their number, but the fact that they were organized to act as receivers of the bankrupt, old order, as a salvage-corps of the Revolution.
Williams, Albert. Through the Russian Revolution. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967, p. 231

CONFISCATIONS DURING THE REVOLUTION MUST BE THOROUGH AND COMPLETE

So, in spite of everything, this Revolution must be carried on to the bitter end. The middle classes must be completely crushed, the bridges must be cut (to undo is to create in another sense); one must confiscate and completely expropriate; commerce, industry, everything must be seized.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 118

LENIN AND STALIN OPPOSE A CONCESSION THAT ZINOVIEV AND KAMENEV FAVOR

There was a certain amount of anxiety in the ranks and indeed, a certain amount of hesitation at the top. For instance, the former industrial magnet Urkwarth offered to take, and pay for, a concession of the Ural factories from which he had been expropriated. Kamenev and Zinoviev, in a fit of panic, were in favor of granting this concession. Stalin was against the proposal. Lenin also was against it, but he hesitated. Bela Kun, who was working in the

Ural district, was summoned to inform the Central Committee of the state of mind of the workers and officials on the spot. These were against the concession, which was for Urkwarth merely a means of getting his foot once more into the stirrup, and which would mean more trouble than profit for the Republic. When the meeting that was to decide the matter took place, Zinoviev and Kamenev endeavored to obtain from Stalin a declaration against the concession which they favored (as a matter of fact they admitted afterwards). But Stalin refused to speak before those who came from the Ural had put forward their point of view, which, explained by Bela Kun, led to the concession being refused and the tempting bait being rejected.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 119

It was solemnly asserted at Moscow that: “The State does not grant industrial concessions or conclude commercial treaties, except insofar as neither of them are capable of undermining the foundations of its economy.”
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 125

LENIN WAS THE GREATEST AND EMBODIED THE REVOLUTION

This great bereavement took place at the beginning of 1924. Lenin died on January 21st, at the age of 54. It seemed incredible to all the men who had hitherto surrounded him so closely. They could not realize the fact that they had lost the man in whom the whole Russian Revolution was incarnate –the man who carried it in his head, had planned it, had created it and had saved it from subsequent disaster, Lenin, one of the greatest conquerors of history, the most sincere; the man who has done most for humanity up to the present time.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 146

MARXISTS HAVE SUFFERED AND DIED BY THE MILLIONS FOR THE CAUSE

The Communists have shed the bright red of their blood over all the lands of the Earth. Do people realize that the age-old martyrology of the Jews is gradually being overtaken and passed in numbers by that of the pioneer Socialists? Count them: in the past eight years the accumulation of dead, wounded, and condemned as reached more than 6 million.
Who knows what goes on in all the capitalist gaols of the universe, and who can give us an insight into the thousands and thousands of hellish and bestial scenes for which the guardians of class order and their sadistic genius for human suffering are responsible!
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 235

Let the reader recall the young men he has met in the pages of this book. They were at once dreamers and hard workers, idealists and stern realists–the flower of the Revolution, the incarnation of its dynamic spirit. It seems incredible for the Revolution to go on without them. But it does go on. For they are dead. Nearly everyone in this book is now in his grave. Here is the way some of them died:
Volodarsky–assassinated in the general plot to kill all Soviet leaders.
Neibut–executed on the Kolchak Front.
Yanishev– bayonetted by a White Guard on the Wrangel Front.
Tonkonogy–shot at his desk by the White Guards.

Utkin–dragged from a motor car and shot.
Sukhanov– led into the woods in the early morning and clubbed to death with rifle butts.
Melnikov–taken out of prison, shot, and bludgeoned.
Williams, Albert. Through the Russian Revolution. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967, p. 237

NO POLITICAL PARTIES HAVE AN HONEST POLICY EXCEPT THE BOLSHEVIKS

Look at the neighboring countries, and see how many Parties in power have an honest policy which they follow. Actually there are no such Parties in the world, for they all live without perspective, wandering amidst the chaos of the world crisis and unable to see the way out of the morass.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 240

TROTSKY TRIES TO BELITTLE STALIN'S ROLE IN THE REVOLUTION

Trotsky did his best to systematically denigrate the revolutionary past of Stalin, and almost all bourgeois authors repeat these slanders.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 25 [pp. 15-16 on the NET]

TROTSKY DID NOT JOIN THE PARTY UNTIL AUG. 1917

Trotsky was trying to pull the wool over everyone's eyes, talking about `the party', because he had never belonged to the Bolshevik Party that Lenin, Zinoviev, Stalin, Sverdlov and others forged between 1901 and 1917. Trotsky joined the Party in July 1917.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 25 [pp. 15-16 on the NET]

STALIN WAS ONE OF THE EARLY OUTSTANDING LEADERS OF THE REVOLUTION

Stalin's handling of the Sixth Party Congress raised his prestige and authority. In the elections to the Central Committee he came after Lenin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Trotsky in the number of votes polled. When the Central Committee elected the editorial board of Pravda, Stalin received the most votes and Trotsky failed to gain election. When it was decided to elect a 10-man inner cabinet of the enlarged Central Committee, Stalin again prevailed in the balloting.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 96

Among the Party officials Stalin was preferred to his future rival [Trotsky], and this is well attested by the first acts of the new Central Committee. In the voting for the editorial board of the Bolshevik newspaper Stalin received the most votes, and the motion that Trotsky, if released from jail, should be asked to join it was rejected 11 to 10.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 150

After Lenin's return to Finland Trotsky took charge. He was chairman of the Military Revolutionary Committee of the Petrograd Soviet, set up on Oct. 25. Serving as the headquarters staff of the Revolution, this committee controlled the Red Guard and all military units in the city which supported the Bolsheviks. There was also a special military revolutionary "center," consisting of five members, elected or appointed on Oct. 29. Stalin, but not Trotsky, was a member of this center, which has been described as the real organizing force of the Revolution.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 98

In October 1917 Lenin, meanwhile, was calling on all organizations and all workers and soldiers to engage in outright and intensified preparation for an armed uprising. The party Central Committee appointed an operations center, consisting of Bubnov, Dzerzhinsky, Uritsky, Sverdlov, and Stalin, to supervise the organization of the uprising.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 27

Organizing the uprising had been the responsibility of the five-man practical center, including Stalin, and the Military Revolutionary Committee, which did an enormous amount of work recruiting forces for the decisive onslaught.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 28

STALIN PROTECTS ZINOVIEV AND KAMENEV FROM LENIN'S WRATH

Meanwhile Kamenev and Zinoviev, apparently in a mood of panic, were publicizing their opposition and emphasizing the dangers involved. To Lenin and others it was treason to oppose and to reveal Bolshevik intentions. It was all the more culpable since the Party rank-and-file were increasingly alarmed by their warnings. This was more than Lenin could stand. He had returned to Finland, and from his hiding place there, he demanded that the Central Committee expel them from the party.

At a meeting of the committee on Oct. 17, 1917, Trotsky advocated stern action against Kamenev and Zinoviev and branded them as traitors. He was not influenced by the fact that Kamenev was his brother-in-law; indeed, he was demonstrating that loyalty to the party stood far above personal relationships. Other members supported the case for severe punishment. It was Stalin who brought the note of moderation into the fury of the discussion. His argument in favor of tolerance flowed not from a passive, oil-on-troubled-waters attitude, nor from some incredibly farsighted realization that he might need the support of these two comrades in the future, but from a deep concern for the unity of the party at this critical time. Summarily expelling two comrades of long-standing would cause discord and solve nothing. Kamenev and Zinoviev knew that they had acted irresponsibly, and they would not repeat their mistakes. After his intervention, the proposal to expel them was dropped. Then it was decided to remove Kamenev from the editorial board of Pravda. This, too, was dropped, when Stalin resigned in protest and the committee refused to accept his resignation.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 97

Stalin took part in the decisive Central Committee meetings of October 10 and 24, at which the decision for an armed insurrection was made on the basis of reports by Lenin. Only Kamenev and Zinoviev voted against the decision, and in violation of all conspiratorial norms

they published their objections in the non-Bolshevik newspaper Novaya zhizn. As is generally known, Lenin demanded that Zinoviev and Kamenev be expelled from the party. The only central committee member who opposed Lenin on this question was Stalin.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 46

…for when Lenin was to demand severe disciplinary measures against Kamenev and Zinoviev, it was Stalin who led the opposition to him.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 95

THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY IS DISBANDED AS COUNTER-REV

In January 5, 1918, the Constituent Assembly held its opening session in the Tauride Palace. The Bolshevik and Left Socialist-Revolutionaries deputies walked out of the chamber. On the following morning, when the deputies arrived to resume the session, Red guards barred the entrance to the Palace…. The Constituent Assembly, so long-awaited and discussed, was an effect dissolved, and the people, in a mood of apathy, appeared unconcerned.

On the same date the Central Executive Committee, appointed by the Congress of Soviets, which had a Bolshevik majority, approved the suppression of the Constituent Assembly. The justification was that it was an organ of counter-revolution….
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 102

Its [the Assembly] dispersal presented no difficulty. The Assembly was incapable of rallying any section of the people in its defense.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 186

At the start, the Bolsheviks co-operated with the extreme left wing of the SR's and accorded them a place in the government.

One of the first things to be dealt with was the Constituent Assembly, which had at last been elected by universal franchise for man and woman to settle the new constitution of Russia. Only about 1/5 of its members were Bolshevik; the predominance and the presidency went to the SR's, and it at once called in question the Bolshevik land policy. It was dispersed by force after a continuous sitting of a day and half (January 18th, 1918).
Pares, Bernard. Russia. Washington, New York: Infantry Journal, Penguin books, 1944, p. 108

ADVANCEMENTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE REVOLUTION

Inside the Soviet Union, while the mortality of early Soviet institutions has been comparatively high, and while modifications in Soviet thinking have been numerous and profound, Soviet society has retained a phenomenally large proportion of the innovations which it inaugurated immediately after the revolution. Social ownership of the means of production has been retained and enlarged as the basis of Soviet economy. Social planning has been carried to a high state of proficiency. Racial minorities have been federated, their position has been respected, and despite their long tradition of friction and conflict under

Czarism, they have worked together with remarkable effectiveness. The one-party state has continued. Control within the party has been more highly centralized. The local autonomy of members of the Soviet Federation has been decreased. Opposition was liquidated in the drastic purges of 1936-38. Nevertheless, the test imposed by the Nazi invasion of 1941 showed the Russian people solidly behind their leadership.

When Eric Johnston, President of the United States Chamber of Commerce, returned from an extensive inspection trip of Russia in the summer of 1944, he wrote a series of signed newspaper articles summing up his observations. “The Soviet’s life is based upon the State’s ownership of all the means of production…. There is absolutely no evidence that the Soviet Union intends to abandon, even in the smallest degree, this principle of the State’s ownership of all the means of production. In fact, the people’s devotion to this system has been strengthened by the successes of war…. The older, top-ranking Communist leaders installed this system of collectivism 27 years ago. They believed it saved Russia from German enslavement. These older leaders are not going to change the system. The directors of factories and farms are men in their thirties. They know no other system for comparison…. Today, not even telescopic X-ray vision could see any private enterprise clothing in the Russian Bear’s wardrobe.” (New York Times, July 30, 1944)

Granted the correctness of Mr. Johnston’s contention, and in the article he goes on to argue that the Russian rank-and-file support their leaders in this position, it is evident that the revolution has brought benefits that make it appear superior to Czarism. What are some of those benefits?

1. A people, living in the dark, has been enlightened. An illiterate famine-ridden exploited community, saturated with superstition, has been replaced by a literate, scientifically-minded generation, convinced that it can play a major role in shaping its own destiny and in modifying the destiny of the entire human race.

2. A technically backward community has been converted, within one generation, into one of the most technically advanced areas of the world. This transformation has been effected as a result of social plans which the masses helped to make and to carry out. The collectivization and mechanization of agriculture is one of the most important aspects of this technological revolution.

3. A widely-flung nation, consisting largely of farmers scattered in some 300,000 villages and enjoying few social services beyond those grudgingly rendered by a poorly served ecclesiastical apparatus, has come into possession of an elaborate social security and social service organization including public health, public education, public recreation, multiple social insurance, electrification, postal service, roads.

4. Industrialization, technical improvements, the broadening of scientific activity, the encouragement of the arts and the growth of the social services have created an unprecedented demand for trained personnel. Consequently, within a decade after the revolution the Soviet Union was turning out tens of thousands of trained men and women who were learning and following a wide variety of technical and professional careers. In the language of the capitalist world, the revolution greatly expanded the Russian middle-class. In Soviet language, the revolution created a mass technological intelligentsia.

5. Socialistic construction offered energetic, ambitious boys and girls of the new generation an opportunity to make a career for themselves in the professions of their choice. Youth responded, as young people anywhere respond under similar circumstances, crowding into the schools, activating organizations, pouring time, energy, and enthusiasm into the multiple channels opened to them by the revolution….

7. Czarism confined opportunity to a relatively small group at the apex of the social pyramid. In accordance with feudal tradition, the top leaders were generally born to authority, whether they were capable of exercising it or not. The revolution opened the gates of opportunity to the masses, and through them flooded a great wave of popular enthusiasm to know, to plan, to build and create.
Nearing, S. The Soviet Union as a World Power. NY: Island Workshop Press, 1945, p. 16-18

The goal of the party founded by Lenin was to create a genuinely socialist society. After the October Revolution quite a lot was done toward that goal through the efforts of the party and the people. The October Revolution made the factories the property of the workers' state and gave land to the peasants, thereby laying the economic foundation for a truly socialist democracy. The workers won extensive social rights and freedoms, women received equal rights with men, the road to culture and education was opened to the masses, and the way to abolition of national and class antagonisms was cleared. It would be wrong to deny these achievements…. In place of relationships of enmity, rivalry, and exploitation those of friendship and co-operation came into existence more and more.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 853

It would be wrong to deny that much has been achieved in the social and cultural life of the country: employment, social security (albeit on a very low basis), universal education of quite a high caliber, bringing the rudiments of culture to the broad masses, free (if poor quality) medical treatment, low prices for basic foodstuffs, extraordinarily low rents for (uncomfortable) state-owned apartments, children's summer camps, kindergartens and creches at nominal charges, and various other social amenities. The trend towards gradual but perceptible improvement inspired the people.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 560

(Sinclair's comments only)

There is a great deal in Russia which I would like to see different. I said so in my birthday greetings. On the other hand, there are developments in Russia which I consider to represent the most extraordinary progress ever made by any backward nation in the course of 20 years. A hundred million people have been taught to read and write. Tens of millions of children of oppressed workers and peasants have been sent to high schools and colleges. Racial minorities have been set free to have their own culture and speak their own language. Persecution of the Jews has been stopped. Women have been freed from age-old slavery and have been permitted to earn their own money and shape their own lives. Small-scale peasant farming has been replaced by modern scientific agriculture, and that means that the backbone of religious superstition has been broken; because everywhere throughout Europe and Asia it is the peasant who is the mainstay of reaction in ideas.

Sinclair and Lyons. Terror in Russia?: Two Views. New York : Rand School Press, 1938, p. 13

An account provided by Malakhov about the fate of his generation conveys a general picture very similar to that given by Benediktov:

“I am amazed how we had the strength for all that. When did we sleep and eat? And when did we find time to love, to rejoice, and to raise our cultural level? Our Komsomol girlfriends also combined work, studies, and social affairs and still managed to be very pretty, sweet, modest, kind, and loving. And they were able to manage at home, too, without shirking any kind of work. And how chaste the relationships were among the young women and men! We were afraid to offend our young girlfriends with awkward advances, immodest words, or crude behavior…. At night we slept soundly, for we were tired from our hard and intensive labor, and we did not lie awake listening for the knock on the door. What’s more, the door to the house was seldom locked, for it was always open to our friends and neighbors, and thieves had no use for our poor possessions. These days it is acceptable among young people if everything is not just so at home or at work to write, to demand, to complain to all levels of authority. In my time such things simply could not be; there was no one and nowhere to complain to…. There were perhaps some people “overzealous” in their demands on themselves and their comrades. It was considered shameful to visit restaurants; divorce was condemned, as were unofficial marriages and modish or ostentatious clothing. On the other hand, high-value was put on labor, knowledge, friendship, patriotism, social activities, discipline, and proletarian internationalism. Narcotic addicts and prostitutes were simply unheard of in our working milieu, and drunkenness and absenteeism were punished severely…. Our life was not idyllic. There were many hardships; there was hunger and cold, the destruction of basic tools and equipment as a result of the civil war. There was an acute ideological war and sabotage and wreckers (yes, wreckers: these were not statements of the imagination of state authorities suffering from acute paranoia)…. We wanted universal knowledge. We studied philosophy and literature. We were interested in scientific innovations. We delved into politics; we learned to know music and the fine arts, everything that our family and school could not give us.”
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 246

DUMA TRIES TO LULL PEOPLE AND DIVERT THEM FROM THE REAL BATTLE IN THE STREETS

The miserable Duma with its miserable Cadets is high and dry in this midstream. It wants to reconcile the revolution with the counter-revolution, so that the wolves and the sheep may lie down together–and thus “at one stroke” lull the storm of the revolution. That is why the Duma has so far done nothing but beat the air; that is why it has not been able to rally any part of the people around it, and is left high and dry. The street still remains the main arena of struggle. The facts prove this. Moreover the same facts tell us that in today’s struggle, in the street fighting, and not in the palaver of the Duma, the forces of counter-revolution are weakening and disintegrating day by day, while the forces of revolution are growing and mobilizing themselves;…
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 27

STALIN SAYS LAND MUST BE TAKEN FROM NOBLES AND GIVEN TO PEASANTS

The land was taken away from the peasantry and handed to the nobles; all this land must be taken back without any compensations or remunerations for the nobility!
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 32

[1939 essay on life in Voronezh Oblast village sent by rural correspondent Grebennikov to Krest'ianskaia Gazeta]

And only Soviet rule loosened the grip of landowners, which for many years squeezed the village of Kazinka, and only Soviet rule allowed the people of Kazinka to breathe freely in their own expansive domain. The people of Kazinka understood this and were always in the forefront in establishing the Kalinin kolkhoz. They took more than one kolkhoz in tow and allowed more than one shock brigade to help sovkhozes. The kolkhoz itself had a Red Banner fluttering at its board office for several years with the inscription: "Labor is a matter of honor, a matter of valor and heroism!"
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 299

Whoever thinks that under our conditions alliance with the peasantry means alliance with the kulaks has nothing in common with Leninism. Whoever thinks of conducting a policy in the countryside that will please everyone, rich and poor alike, is not a Marxist, but a fool, because such a policy does not exist in nature, comrades.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 11, p. 52

OPPOSITION PRESS SHUT DOWN IN SUMMER OF 1918 BECAUSE OF RUMOR-MONGERING & LYING

In the spring of 1918 the Bolsheviks were fighting fairly energetically against the entire opposition press. In May and June alone approximately 60 bourgeois, social revolutionary, and Menshevik publications were shut down,… The main reason for closing Martov's paper, Vperyod, was not so much his polemic against Stalin as a number of false reports it had carried, which under the existing conditions could cause panic. Sverdlov spoke at a session of the Central Executive Committee on May 9, 1918, demanding that publication of Vperyod be stopped. On May 11 the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee, on motion by Sverdlov, decreed that "all newspapers printing false rumors and absurdly untrue reports be immediately shut down until this question has been reviewed by a tribunal on the press.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 53

The Capitalist press was not destroyed until 1918. The Socialist newspapers and magazines languished until the spring of 1919.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 204

SVERDLOV WAS THE ORIGINAL LEADER UNDER LENIN

At plenary sessions of the Central Committee all appointments of personnel are made by open voting, not by secret ballot, and there is no indication that Lenin, or even Trotsky, abstained when the slate of the new Secretariat was submitted for approval….

Until the spring of 1919 the functions that later were carried out by the Orgburo & Secretariat were actually performed by Sverdlov, who had been assigned to head the Secretariat as early as the Sixth Congress. It was Sverdlov, and not Trotsky or Stalin, who was second in authority and importance as a leader of the Bolshevik party. After his death in March 1919 Lenin said:

“That work he performed as an organizer, in choosing men and appointing them to responsible posts in all the various departments, will be performed in the future only if we appoint whole groups of men to handle the different major departments that he had sole charge of, and if these men, following in his footsteps, come near to doing what this one man did alone.”
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 68

BOLSHEVIKS PARDON FORMER ENEMIES AND WORK WITH THEM

It is well known that during the civil war in Russia the Bolsheviks not only arrested but shot Social Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, and Anarchists. Quite a few Bolsheviks also fell from bullets fired by Social Revolutionaries and Anarchists, especially on territory controlled by Social Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, and Anarchist detachments, armies, or “governments.” Nevertheless, when the White armies of General Denikin were threatening Moscow in 1919, Lenin ordered the release of Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks from the jails, and they immediately went voluntarily to the battlefront, sometimes as military commissars, to fight for Soviet power. An alliance was also made with the rebel army of the Anarchist Makhno, which was officially made a unit of the Red Army and went on to smash the best regiments of Denikin’s army in the southern Ukraine.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 311

IN 1918 OTHER PARTIES EXPELLED FROM THE ASSEMBLY BUT REMAIN LEGAL & LATER ALLIES

On June 14, 1918, citing Right Social Revolutionary and Menshevik participation in the fight against the Soviet regime, the Central Executive Committee decreed the expulsion of the Right Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks from all Soviets. Earlier, in April 1918, all Anarchist groups had been expelled from the Soviets. In July 1918, after the rising of the left Socialist-Revolutionaries, the same decree was issued for them. But even after their expulsion from the Soviets, the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties continued to exist as legal, active political organizations. Moreover, when the Menshevik Central Committee at the end of 1918 opposed foreign intervention and collaboration with the bourgeoisie and rejected the proposal for a Constituent Assembly, the Central Executive Committee rescinded the decree of June 14 with respect to the Mensheviks. In February 1919 the same was done with respect to those Right Socialist-Revolutionary groups that took a position against foreign intervention. Some anarcho-syndicalist groups also existed legally.

In the summer and fall of 1918 the main forces opposing the Bolsheviks in the incipient civil war were the left “petty bourgeois” parties–the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, Anarchists, various nationalist groups–in alliance with the Czech Legion. By the end of 1918 the monarchist generals supported by armed units from England, France, Japan, the United States, and several other countries had become the main anti-Bolshevik force. This changed the political situation inside the Soviet republic. In 1919, for example, the so-called Irkutsk Political Center, led by Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, came out against the leader of the Whites in Siberia, Adm. Kolchak. The Maximalist Socialist-Revolutionaries and Bundists also opposed Kolchak in 1919, and the Bolsheviks did not decline temporary agreements with those groups. During 1919 the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks held legal congresses and other meetings in the Soviet Republic. Imprisoned Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks were freed by an amnesty, and in many cases they left immediately for the front lines of the civil war. Some Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks even became political commissars in units of the Red Army. During Denikin’s offensive in 1919 the Bolsheviks concluded a very important military-political alliance with Makhno, an anarchist whose army was a major force in the southern Ukraine at that time. The successful raids in Denikin’s rear carried out by Makhno’s units, which were formally made part of the Red Army, helped to weaken the White’s offensive against Moscow and later to smash the armies of Denikin and Wrangel.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 641

ATTEMPT TO KILL LENIN ALMOST SUCCEEDED

Plan after plan of the counter-revolutionists and foreign imperialists to assassinate Lenin miscarried. But on the last of August, 1918, the plotters almost succeeded.
Williams, Albert R. Through the Russian Revolution. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967, p. 36

PROPERTY IS PROTECTED NOT DESTROYED BY THE MASSES WHO REVOLT

… Next day the hostile press spread tales of gruesome atrocities against the Women’s Battalion, alongside of stories of sack and pillage of the Palace by the Red Guards.
Yet nothing is more alien to the essential nature of the working-class than destructiveness. Were it not so, history might have a different story to tell of the morning of November 8. It might have to record that the magnificent edifice of the Czar was left a heap of crumbling stones and smoking embers by the vengeance of a long-suffering people.
Williams, Albert. Through the Russian Revolution. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967, p. 138

So events gave the lie to another dire prophecy. Kerensky, Dan, and others of the intelligentsia had shrieked against the Revolution, predicting a hideous orgy of crime and plunder, the loosing of the basest passions of the mob. Once the hungry and embittered masses got in motion, they said, like a maddened herd they would go trampling down, wrecking, and destroying everything. “Even Gorky was prophesying the end of the world” (Trotsky).

And now the Revolution has come. There are, indeed, isolated acts of vandalism; rich-clad bourgeois still return home minus their great fur coats; mob's work havoc before the Revolution can rein them in.

But there is one outstanding fact. The first fruits of the Revolution are law and order. Never was Petrograd safer than after passing into the hands of the masses. Unprecedented quiet reigns in the streets. Hold-ups and robberies drop almost to zero. Robbers and thugs quail before the iron hand of the proletariat.

It is not merely negative restraint–order rising out of fear. The Revolution begets a singular respect for the rights of property. In the shattered windows of the shops, within hands' reach of passing men in desperate need, are foodstuffs and clothing. They remain untouched. There is something pathetic in the sight of hungry men having food within their grasp and not grasping it, something awesome in the constraint engendered by the Revolution. It exerts its subtle influence everywhere. Into the far-off villages it reaches. No longer are the peasants burning the great estates.

Yet it is the upper classes who assert that in them lies true respect of the sanctity of property. A curious claim at the end of the World War for which the governing classes are responsible. By their fiat, cities are given to the torch, the face of the land covered with ashes, the bottom of the sea strewn with ships, the structure of civilization shot to pieces, and even now still more terrible instruments of destruction are being prepared.

What basis is there for true respect of property in the bourgeoisie? Actually they produce little or nothing. To the privileged, property is something that comes by cleverness, by chance inheritance, by stroke of fortune. With them it is largely a matter of titles, deeds, and papers.

But to the working classes, property is a thing of tears and blood. It is an exhausting act of creation. They know its cost in aching muscles and breaking backs….

What men have brought forth in pain and labor they cannot wantonly annihilate, any more than a mother can destroy her child. They, out of whose thews and muscles the thing has issued, will best guard and cherish it. Knowing its cost, they feel its sacredness. Even before works of art the rude, untaught masses stand with reverence. Only vaguely do they glimpse their meaning. But they see in them the incarnation of effort. And all labor is holy.

The Social Revolution is in truth the apotheosis of the rights of property. It invests it with a new sanctity. By transferring property into the hands of the producers it gives the keeping of wealth into the hands of its natural and zealous guardians–the makers of it. The creators are the best conservators.

Williams, Albert. Through the Russian Revolution. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967, p. 139

UNLIKE THE RICH THE MASSES VIEW THE REVOLUTION AS FREEDOM

To the rich and the privileged, to those who sit on roof gardens or ride in parlor-cars, the Revolution is a thing of terror and horror. It is the anti-Christ. But to the despised and disinherited, the Revolution is like the Messiah coming to "preach good typings to the poor; to proclaim release of the captives and to set at liberty them that are bruised." No longer can Dostoyevsky's convict mutter, "We are not alive, though we are living. We are not in our graves, though we are dead." In the House of the Dead, Revolution is Resurrection.

Williams, Albert. Through the Russian Revolution. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967, p. 196

PEOPLE TURNED AGAINST THE CHURCH BECAUSE OF ITS WEALTH AND HOARDING

All this church wealth was collected by bearing down upon the peasants and workers. But when the Revolution came, overthrowing the Czar as head of the State, he was necessarily overthrown as head of the church. It was only natural that the people should look with suspicion on the wealth under the control of the church. So that is why they turned from religion, because to them it stands for hoarded wealth. Another reason is that the church, of course, being under the control of the Czar, was opposed to the Revolution. The priests under the Czar did all in their power to stop the coming of the Revolution. They even sanctioned and participated in the killing of dangerous revolutionists. In spite of them the revolution came, and so of course today the people do not look with favor upon the church which once tried so hard to suppress their efforts to be free from the Czar's yoke. Understanding this, I am not surprised that they resent religion as they do. Rather I am more surprised that they didn't go further at the time of the Revolution and actually destroy all traces of the church.
Dykstra, Gerald. A Belated Rebuttal on Russia. Allegan, Mich.: The Allegan Press, 1928, p. 122

SOME CLERGY ACCEPT THE REVOLUTION AND LOSING THEIR WEALTH

Here we lunched with 22 priests, monks, and abbots. They showed us through the monastery. We tried our best in the conversation to get them to say something against the new attitude toward religion. And the most that we could get out of them on the subject was this: That they didn't control the lands or have the money they had before the Revolution, but the government left them the use of everything. The people who wanted to could come to church. And they were satisfied with this state of affairs.
Dykstra, Gerald. A Belated Rebuttal on Russia. Allegan, Mich.: The Allegan Press, 1928, p. 126

CONDITIONS WERE BETTER AFTER THE REVOLUTION THAN NOW UNDER PERESTROIKA

And another thought keeps gnawing at my mind. Perestroika has been under way in our country for a number of years, and life in this vast and fertile land, so rich in talent and natural resources, is only getting worse. How is it that in the early 1920s, after three years of the blood bath of the First World War, four years of the fratricidal Civil War, and the ruthless requisitions of War Communism, it took less than two years not only to feed the people, something we've been dreaming of ever since, but to restore a fairly comfortable way of life and to ensure an abundance never seen again?
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin's Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 98

STALIN HELD MANY HIGH POSITIONS FROM THE START OF THE REVOLUTION

At the same time, it should be remembered that, from the first moment of the revolution, Stalin was a member of the highest party bodies: first in the Central Committee, then the Politburo and Orgburo. By degrees, especially as the Civil War approached its end, Stalin's position became stronger and he became one of the key figures in the governing nucleus of the party.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 48

More strangely still, he [Stalin] was voted and moved into all his positions of power by his rivals.
Three of the offices he held immediately after the civil war were of decisive importance: he was the Commissar of Nationalities, the Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate, and a member of the Politburo.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 228

He was appointed Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate in 1919, on Zinoviev's proposal. The Rabkrin, as the Commissariat was called, was set up to control every banch of the administration, from top to bottom, with a view to eliminating the two major faults, inefficiency and corruption, which the Soviet civil service had inherited from its Tsarist predecessor. It was to act as the stern and enlightened auditor for the whole rickety and creaking governmental machine; to expose abuses of power and red tape; and to train an elite of reliable civil servants for every branch of the government. The Commissariat acted through teams of workers and peasants who were free at any time to enter the offices of any Commissariat and watch the work done there. In the end, teams of the Rabkrin regularly attended private departmental conferences and even the meetings of the Council of Commissars. The system was devised as a method of training an elite for the civil service; but as a result of it the Rabkrin was able to keep its eye on every wheel of the governmental machine.
The whole bizarre scheme of inspection was one of Lenin's pet the ideas. Exasperated by the inefficiency and dishonesty of the civil service, he sought to remedy them by extreme and ruthless 'control from below', and the Commissariat was to be the means. The choice of Stalin for the job gives a measure of Lenin's high confidence in him, for the Inspectorate was to be a sort of a super-government, itself free from every taint and blemish of officialdom.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 230

Suffice it to say here that, as the head of the Inspectorate, Stalin came to control the whole machinery of government, it's working and personnel, more closely than any other commissar.
His next position of vantage was in the Politburo. Throughout the civil war, the Politburo consisted of five men only: Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, Kamenev, and Bukharin. Ever since the break between Bolsheviks and Social Revolutionaries, this had been the real government of the country. Lenin was the recognized leader of both government and party…. The day-to-day management of the party belonged to Stalin. The Politburo discussed high policy. Another body, which was, like the Politburo, elected by the Central Committee, the Organization Bureau (Orgburo), was in charge of the party's personnel, which it was free to call up, direct to work, and distribute throughout the army and the civil service according to the demands of the civil war. From the beginning of 1919 Stalin was the only permanent liaison officer between the Politburo and the Orgburo. He ensured the unity of policy and organization; that is, he marshaled the forces of the party according to the Politburo's

directives. Like none of his colleagues, he was immersed in the party's daily drudgery and in all its kitchen cabals.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 231

Lenin, Kamenev, Zinoviev, and, to a lesser extent, Trotsky, were Stalin's sponsors in all the offices he held. His jobs were of the kind which could scarcely attract the bright intellectuals of the Politburo. All their brilliance in matters of doctrine, all their powers of political analysis would have found little application either at the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate or at the General Secretariat. What was needed there was an enormous capacity for hard and uninspiring toil and a patient and sustained interest in every detail of organization. None of his colleagues grudged Stalin his assignments.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 234

From among the major leaders at the Party Lenin brought Kamenev and Trotsky into the Politburo. And also Koba. This was the nerve center. Zinoviev and Bukharin he made only associate members. Lenin also set up an Organization Bureau, to supervise the current work of the Party, and made Koba a member of this body too. Even this was not enough. He appointed Koba to two Peoples Commissariats — Nationalities and the very important Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate. It was still not enough. Throughout this period a great number of commissions came into being to manage the day-day life of the country under the Politburo's guidance. Lenin appointed Koba to all the particularly important commissions, usually steering Trotsky in the same direction…. Lenin often authorized Koba to conduct meetings of the government in his absence…. This, then, was the new Koba–member of the Politburo and the Orgbureau, People's Commissar twice over, representative of the Central Committee and the Revolutionary Military Council on the Petrograd, western, and southern fronts. Add to this all those commissions….
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 162

The first post-victory crisis found Stalin on Lenin's side, and he was now considered an indispensable organizer and committeeman. Thus, at the session of the Central Committee of November 29 which appointed several subcommittees for dealing with current work, Stalin was put on practically all the important ones: the editorial board of Pravda, the committee to supervise the Bolshevik press, the group to deal with the Ukrainian question. He had inestimable gifts as a committeeman and organizer: brevity and the ability to get to the point.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 161

He [Stalin] never complained about assignments: already his capacity for hard work was well-known…. He had a basic understanding of Marxist theory. He was a fluent writer and an able editor.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 83

NO EVIDENCE STALIN WAS AN AGENT OF THE CZARIST SECRET POLICE

The Avalbar affair, taken with other peculiar events, has long since led to the suspicion that Stalin acted as an agent of the Okhrana. There are documents which show, or might show,

that he was indeed such an agent: but on the evidence at present available, they seem to be forgeries….
Nevertheless, on the evidence we have (including recent Soviet research), the charge that Stalin acted for the Okhrana must be dismissed. But there is a milder version, as it were, in which Stalin is charged with betraying rival Social Democrats, including Bolsheviks, to the police, no doubt by anonymous tip-offs. At any rate, there were several occasions when Stalin seemed to be the logical suspect. Again, however cumulative the stories, proof is lacking.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 39

But it is not hard to see that all these “proofs” of Stalin’s connections with the Tsarist secret police are based on questionable second-or even third-hand reports. They have as little credibility as the accounts in the foreign press.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 579

Of course the Okhrana had quite a few documents on Stalin, especially since he frequently was arrested, interrogated, sent into exile, and escaped from exile. None of the documents known to me confirm the story that he collaborated with the police.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 581

Thus there is no proof that Stalin had connections with the Tsarist secret police….
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 583

Prompted by Khrushchev’s dramatic denunciations, Orlov was soon in print again, this time to declare that the time had come for him to uncover a secret about the former Soviet leader which was too dark even for Khrushchev to reveal, namely that Stalin had been an Okhrana informant and had betrayed his Bolshevik comrades before the Revolution. In another Life article, Orlov claimed he first learned of the sensational evidence from Katsnelson. He revealed how his cousin had made a special point of visiting Paris to tell him in February 1937, as he laid flat on his back in the clinic recovering from two broken vertebrae. Katsnelson was then not only deputy chief of the NKVD in the Ukraine, but also an influential member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party.
…The tale related to documentation which had supposedly come to light in the voluminous archives of the Tsarist secret police. It had been discovered by an NKVD officer named Stein,…
Fully aware of the danger inherent in his dramatic discovery, Stein had withheld the explosive documentation from Yagoda, Katsnelson had told Orlov. Stein had traveled to Kiev to show it to his former superior, who was also a trusted personal friend and Katsnelson’s boss, Balitsky, the NKVD chief of the Ukraine. That, as Orlov explained, was how his cousin came to know the contents of the Okhrana file. In the privacy of the hospital bedroom Katsnelson revealed how they had taken the documents to two of their closest associates, Gen. Yakir, the commander of all military forces in the Ukraine, and Kossior, the Ukrainian Party chief who was also a member of the Politburo and Secretary of the Communist Party. Yakir had then gone to Moscow to brief Marshall Tukhachevsky, the Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army, who harbored an intense personal distrust of Stalin. Armed with the ammunition documenting the treachery of the Big Boss, Tukhachevsky and the Deputy, Commissioner of Defense, Gamarnik, entered into a conspiracy to overthrow Stalin.

“In February 1937 the Red Army generals were still in the process of ‘gathering forces’, as Zinovy phrased it,” according to Orlov, who explained how they “had not reached agreement on a firm plan for the coup d’etat.” The essence of their plan depended on persuading Stalin to summon a conference in Moscow on the military problems of the Ukraine’s defense. This would enable the conspirators and their trusted aides personally to seize Stalin in the Kremlin, while two elite Red Army regiments sealed off the approaches to Moscow. When Katsnelson saw Orlov in Paris, the conspirators were still undecided whether to dispense summary justice by shooting Stalin on the spot, or to present the incriminating documents to a plenary session of the Central Committee. Orlov said he had given encouragement to his cousin, cautioning him that to delay widened the circle of plotters, increasing the risk that one of them would betray the conspiracy.
“In case of failure, if Elena and I are shot, I want you and Maria to take care of my little girl,” Orlov said Katsnelson had requested as they kissed each other farewell. It was the last he saw of his cousin. Over the coming weeks he listened anxiously for news of the coup, in Radio Moscow broadcasts. On July 11, 1937 when he heard the announcement that Marshall Tukhachevsky and a number of Red Army generals had been arrested on charges of treason and executed, he knew the plotters had been betrayed. Those shot with Tukhachevsky included Yakir. Orlov later discovered that Kossior and his cousin had been executed soon after. When he heard that Gamarnik and Stein had shot themselves too, he took this as confirmation that Stalin had moved swiftly to protect his deadly secret.
The official reason for what developed into a major purge of the Red Army was that Tukhachevsky and his fellow officers had been plotting to overthrow Stalin in league with the Nazis. On the basis of what he had learned from his cousin Orlov believed this was just a convenient cover. It had been easy to fabricate as a result of information Stalin received from the Czechs a year earlier, when President Benes had instructed the Czechoslovak secret service to let Moscow know that they had picked up a Soviet named Israelovich in Prague in 1936 following a clandestine meeting with two German general staff officers. Orlov, who had once had dealings with Israelovich, insisted that he was a loyal NKVD officer, but that it had suited Stalin’s purpose–and that of the Czech President–to convey the impression that Israelovich was a GRU spy who had served as Tukhachevsky’s go-between with the Nazis.
Orlov’s account of Tukhachevsky’s conspiracy rests mainly on the information provided to him by Katsnelson. But another article in the same issue of Life also charged that Stalin was an Okhrana informant. This was put forward by Isaac Don Levine, who had ghost-written Krivitsky’s memoirs and who was a tireless researcher into Soviet history. The evidence he cited, however, was based on what is now regarded as a forged 1913 letter to the Okhrana chief of the Yenmisiek province of Siberia, where Stalin had been exiled. It passed on information that in 1906 and 1908 the Georgian had provided “valuable denunciatory information” to the Tsar’s secret police. The authenticity of this document could not, according to the FBI, be established as “100 percent genuine.”
Costello, John and Oleg Tsarev. Deadly illusions. New York: Crown, c1993, p. 368

There were rumors that he had been enlisted as an agent by the Okhrana, the Tsarist secret police, but this has never been proved.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 8

In fact the most exigent analysis of the evidence gives no serious grounds for thinking that Dzhughashvili was a police agent….

Yet the Okhrana preferred to keep its main informers out of prison; and Dzhughashvili, although he sometimes received light sentences, was incarcerated or exiled too frequently and lengthily to have been a police employee. He was to spend the Great War through to the February 1917 Revolution in Siberia even though the state authorities could have used him productively if he really had been working for them.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 72

But no reliable documentary evidence that Koba was a police agent has yet appeared, even though many researchers have sought it in the archives of the secret Paris office of the police, a rich body of material that has been available for many years at the Hoover Institution. And the fact that the police arrested Stalin in 1913, sent him to a particularly remote place in Siberia, and did not release him or allow his escape as long as the regime survived demonstrates that by this time, at least, the police did not treat Stalin as one of their agents.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 17

STALIN PUT ON FIRST CENTRAL COMMITTEE IN APRIL 1917

The interesting point is something else–that Stalin had been nominated by Lenin as his chief supporter. He was bound to carry weight as a former leading advocate of Kamenev's line. And judging by the continued fractiousness of many delegates, his contribution may have been decisive to Lenin's victory.
On April 27, 1917, the Conference elected a new Central Committee. Lenin spoke in support of two candidates–Kamenev, of whom Lenin said that his conduct in 1915, in not opposing the war, had been purged, and that his 'wavering' in the early post-revolutionary months should be forgotten. Kamenev had a good record, and could not be expected to agree with the new policies without argument. As for Stalin, 'Comrade Koba has been known to us for a great many years. We saw him in Cracow where our bureau was located. His activity in the Caucasus was important. A good worker in all responsible jobs.'
Then, for the first time, Stalin was elected to the Central Committee. The voting was Lenin 104, Zinoviev 101, Stalin 97, Kamenev 95.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 64

By the end of April another national conference of Bolsheviks elected a new Central Committee of nine members, among them Lenin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Stalin, Sverdlov. This was the first time Stalin was confirmed in leadership by a large vote in a direct, open election. To the cadres of the party he was now a familiar figure, although to outsiders he was still a name only. At the conference he was the rapporteur on the problem of nationalities.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 142

STALIN DELIVERS THE MAIN REPORT AT THE SIXTH CONGRESS

… On July 28, 1917, the Bolsheviks Sixth Congress opened–a small, semi-legal affair, interrupted by a lack of quorums. Stalin, absent at first, in the end delivered the main report.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 67

STALIN WAS ONE OF THE FIRST RUSSIAN DELEGATES TO THE COMINTERN

At the founding of the Communist International on March 4, 1919, Stalin was present with Lenin, Trotsky, Zinoviev & Bukharin, as one of the Russian delegates.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 91

STALIN WAS NOT A COWARD OR A SCHEMER AS TROTSKY CLAIMS IN OCT 1917

Surprisingly enough, he [Stalin] was not even present at the session of the Central Committee that took place on the morning of the insurrection. “Not that he was a coward. There is no basis for accusing Stalin of cowardice,” [this is Trotsky’s comment] “he was simply politically non-committal. The cautious schemer preferred to stay on the fence at the crucial moment. He was waiting to see how the insurrection turned out before committing himself to a position. In the event of failure he could tell Lenin and me and our adherents: “It’s all your fault!” One must clearly recapture the red-hot temper of those days in order to appreciate according to its deserts the man’s cool grit or, if you like, his insidiousness.” Trotsky’s explanation seems self-contradictory: the insidiousness which he attributes to his rival appears after all to be tinged with cowardice. It is impossible to accept Trotsky’s interpretation for yet another reason: Stalin did in fact commit himself as early as October 10, when the first vote on the insurrection was taken in the Central Committee. He then voted with Lenin and Trotsky. On Oct. 16 he again voted and spoke for the insurrection, this time not in the narrow conclave of the Central Committee but at a much wider conference at which were present delegates from the Petersburg organization, the party’s military branch, the trade unions, and the Petersburg Soviet as well as delegates from factory committees, railroad workers, etc. A “cautious schemer preferring to stay on the fence at the crucial moment” would hardly have stepped down so heavily on Lenin’s side before the eyes of a gathering of that sort.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 167

OTHER PARTIES ALLOWED AFTER THE REVOLUTION WERE UNDERMINING THE CAUSE

In his own department Stalin met no sabotage by civil servants: for no special department dealing with the affairs of the various non-Russian nationalities had previously existed. He had to build up his Commissariat from scratch….
He had hardly begun the job when the first Council of People’s Commissars ceased to exist. The right wing of the party, the former opponents of the insurrection, strongly represented in the Government, worked behind the scenes for a reconciliation with the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries. They urged their party to share power with the moderate Socialists. The demand was supported by Rykov, the Commissar of the Interior, Milyutin, the Commissar of Agriculture, Nogin, the Commissar of Industry and Trade, Lunacharsky, Kamenev (who had in the meantime been elected President of the Republic), and Zinoviev. These Commissars resigned and so compelled Lenin to open negotiations with the other parties. The attempt at reconciliation failed, however, because the Mensheviks insisted that

Lenin and Trotsky, the two inspirers of the insurrection, should not be included in the coalition government. There was some hesitation about that condition in the Bolshevik Central Committee; but the majority saw in it an attempt ‘at beheading the Bolshevik party’ and rejected it. Stalin voted against the exclusion of Lenin and Trotsky and for bringing negotiations with the Mensheviks to an end. A new series of resignations from the Government and the Central Committee followed, which was only stopped when the recalcitrants were threatened with expulsion from the party. Lenin, Trotsky, the Stalin were the first to sign the statement containing the threat. The crisis did nevertheless lead to the formation of a new government which included the left wing of the Social Revolutionaries. This group, the only one willing to co-operate with Lenin and Trotsky, did so primarily in order to carry to its end the agrarian revolution.
It is difficult to understand the crucial role which Stalin came to play in the Soviet Government from its inception, unless due allowance is made for the effect that the ‘softness’ of most Bolshevik leaders had on Lenin. Their vacillations filled him with apprehension and alarm. He saw his government confronted with almost insuperable adversities: internal chaos, economic paralysis, inevitable counter-revolution, and a legacy of war. He looked around to see which of his colleagues in the Government and in the Central Committee could be relied upon to form a close nucleus capable of the determined and swift action which would be needed in the emergencies to come. He thought of setting up an inner Cabinet rather than of any dictatorial triumvirate. Soon after the revolution, the Bolshevik Central Committee had appointed an executive of four members: Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky, and Sverdlov. After the formation of the Bolshevik-left Social Revolutionary coalition, the Government delegated important and urgent business to an inner cabinet which consisted of five commissars, three Bolsheviks and two Social Revolutionaries. The three Bolshevik members were Lenin, Trotsky, and Stalin.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 178-180

LENIN TRIES TO MEDIATE BETWEEN STALIN AND TROTSKY

Technically, Stalin’s interference with military matters was illegal. His demand that no appointments be made by central headquarters without the knowledge of himself and Voroshilov was also beyond his terms of reference. However, matters of food and military operations were now interconnected; and Stalin felt that as a member of the Government and one of the top leaders of the party he was entitled to act as he did, whatever his formal standing vis-a-vis the army. Trotsky, on his part, insisted that as long as Stalin was attached to Tsaritsyn headquarters he was subordinate to the higher military command and should not use his position in the Government or in the Central Committee to undermine military authority. Though Trotsky’s insistence on this was technically correct, it was psychologically unrealistic. Stalin had a strong sense of his high place in the hierarchy. He refused to climb down in front of his old friends. Lenin, whatever he may have thought about the tone of Stalin’s dispatches, was careful not to add fuel to the quarrel. He valued the work of both men, though he measured each of them with a different yardstick, and he was anxious to eliminate friction between them. Without showing Stalin’s most offensive dispatches to Trotsky and without transmitting all of Trotsky’s criticisms to Stalin, he tried to curb the one and placate the other. With Trotsky’s agreement, Stalin was granted the plenary powers he had asked for.

Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 203

Lenin studied the messages with a discerning eye. He took the criticisms of Trotsky with a grain of salt. When Trotsky, annoyed at the charges, resigned, the Politburo passed a unanimous motion solemnly entreating him to stay in office. (Stalin, who had obliquely asked for Trotsky's dismissal, also cast his vote for the motion.)
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 214

MOST MENSHEVIKS EVENTUALLY WORKED WITH THE BOLSHEVIK GOVERNMENT

Unlike the Jacobins, the Bolsheviks did not execute their Girondists. The most eminent spokesmen of Menshevism, Martov, Dan, Abramovich, were either allowed to leave or were exiled from Russia after their party had been banned. A handful of those who stayed behind were imprisoned, but most Mensheviks, reconciling themselves to defeat, loyally served in the Soviet administration and even on the staffs of the leading Bolsheviks.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 346

THE SU PROLETARIAT IS CENTRAL TO LENIN'S THOUGHTS EVEN THOUGH IT IS SMALL

The town workers had always had the central place in all Lenin's thoughts in exile. Though they were only a small fraction of the population, they were the nucleus of the so-called "dictatorship of the proletariat."
Pares, Bernard. Russia. Washington, New York: Infantry Journal, Penguin books, 1944, p. 129

And Lenin's fundamental position in the history of the Russian Revolution was determined by his assertion that Marxism applies to Russia, and that in spite of the overwhelming numbers of the peasants, the industrial proletariat must occupy the position of leadership. To depart from that proposition will be to depart from the very foundations of Marxism, and of Lenin's application of it to Russia.
Eastman, Max. Since Lenin Died. Westport, connecticut: Hyperion Press. 1973, p. 117

The proletarian dictatorship was triumphant but the proletariat had nearly vanished. It had never been more than a small minority of the nation; and it had played a decisive part in three revolutions not because of its numbers but because of the extraordinary strength of its political mind, initiative, and organization.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 7

Germany, at that time, had an enormous and class-conscious working-class; though the Russian working-class was also politically highly educated, it was, numerically, extremely small.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co.,1971, p. 37

ZINOVIEV AND KAMENEV FAVOR A COALITION GOVT WHICH LENIN OPPOSES

A new government was formed called The Soviet of People's Commissaries, the Sovnarkom, and it was composed entirely of Bolsheviks. Again Zinoviev and Kamenev were in opposition to their leader and wished to make a coalition government of various shades of socialist politicians, including Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. But Lenin overruled them.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 37

SOVIET GOVT GUARANTEES FAR MORE CIVIL RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES THAN THE CZARIST GOVT

It can easily be demonstrated that the vast majority of the Soviet people have experienced a significant improvement in all types of rights: (1) basic civil liberties and participatory rights: before 1917 the Russian Empire was a Monarchist absolutism in which no effective participation or civil liberties to oppose the system or to advocate the interests of the working people or minorities were allowed; (2) civil rights: a policy of forced Russification existed [previously] as well as a policy of systematic persecution of the Jews; (3) productive property was in the hands of the few, with most of the urban population being propertyless, workers having no rights in their jobs; and finally, (4) in terms of distributive rights, there was no right to work, housing, education, medicine, social security, etc. for the common people….
That there is an advanced level of rights in the USSR today in comparison with countries with an equivalent level of economic development and living standard of the common people in the Russian empire in 1917 is also equally demonstrable. The situation in Soviet Central Asia in all five areas (including civil liberties) are considerably more advanced than in those areas across the Soviet Union's southern borders, which traditionally shared the same cultures, for example, Turkey, Iran under the Shah, Afghanistan before its 1978 revolution, as well as such countries as Pakistan.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 26

EARLY ON LENIN CHOSE STALIN FOR A LOT OF IMPORTANT JOBS

And yet we are faced with the fact that Lenin, in the decade after 1905, deliberately selected Stalin for increasingly important Bolshevik Party tasks, making him one of the 10 most important Bolsheviks and therefore, after 1917, one of the 10 most important men in Russia.
Randall, Francis. Stalin's Russia. New York: Free Press,1965, p. 31

Above all, Stalin's rise as an effective administrator depended on his capacity for work, unrelenting and immensely varied. Here was a man, perhaps the only one at Lenin's disposal, who could take on almost any kind of job, whether or not he had any background in the matter at hand, learn enough about it to make definite decisions under severe pressure of time and deal with the most pressing problems. The results were not necessarily ideal, but on balance they were successful, sometimes brilliantly so, and the principal thing was to maintain the offensive if possible, to substitute direction for drift.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 50

LIFE UNDER THE BOLSHEVIKS WAS DRASTICALLY BETTER THAN UNDER THE CZAR

It [the Revolution] destroyed the czarist autocracy. It disestablished Russian Orthodoxy (while at the same time founding a new orthodox faith in Marxism-Leninism, as Marxism according to Lenin later came to be called). It secularized and greatly liberalized the institution of marriage and family ties. It abolished the police-administered system of internal passports by which the old regime controlled the residence and movements of its subjects, and eliminated the Pale of Settlement (area of permitted residence) for Russia's Jews. Within the centralized structure of the party-state it supplanted tsarism's outright colonial rule and Russification policies in the outlying regions, inhabited mainly by non-Russian minorities, with at least the forms of governmental autonomy and a certain measure of linguistic and cultural autonomy. It sought wide popular participation in public affairs through the party-directed mass organizations. It proclaimed equality of the sexes and opened up opportunities for education and careers to people of heretofore lowly station and limited prospects. It publicized the czarist government's wartime secret treaties and renounced their arrangements for further territorial aggrandizement.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 32

Between 1887 and 1898 the output of iron and steel almost trebled, and that of textiles doubled. The gross abuses which tend to characterize early stages of industrialization were rife: exploitation of female and child labor; enormously long hours; minimal wages; exposure to a rigorous climate; no guards on the machinery; frequent accidents with no compensation; heavy and capricious fines; housing in common barracks, or at worst, a place to sleep on the factory bench.
Bad sanitary conditions and excessive drinking were commonplace. One foreign engineer describes pre-revolutionary housing as having less than 300 square feet of floor space for more than 20 workers of both sexes and all ages–with windows that did not open.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 12

TROTSKY UNFAIRLY DESCRIBED STALIN'S ROLE IN THE EARLY DAYS OF THE REVOLUTION

It was disingenuous of Trotsky to write of Stalin in those days [October 1917], "The cautious schemer preferred to stay on the fence at the crucial moment." Each Bolshevik leader had a specific task assigned to him. Stalin's was to stay away from the fighting, to be held in reserve.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 154

TROTSKY ALMOST UNDERMINED THE OCT. 1917 VOTE TO START THE REVOLUTION

On October 10, 1917, the historic meeting of the Central Committee of the Party took place at which it was decided to launch the armed uprising within the next few days….
Although at this meeting Trotsky did not vote against the resolution directly, he moved an amendment which would have reduced the chances of the uprising to nought and rendered it abortive. He proposed that the uprising should not be started before the Second Congress of Soviets met, a proposal which meant delaying the uprising, divulging its date, and forewarning the Provisional Government.
Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Ed. History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks): Short Course. Moscow: FLPH, 1939, p. 205

CERTAIN PARTY MEMBERS PROPOSED THAT OTHER PARTIES BE IN THE FIRST SOVIET GOVT

Certain notorious opportunists within the party–Kamenev, Zinoviev, Rykov, Shlyapnikov and others–also made a sally against the Soviet power. They demanded the formation of an "all-Socialist government" to include Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who had just been overthrown by the October Revolution. On November 15, 1917, the Central Committee of the Bolshevik party adopted a resolution rejecting agreement with these counter-revolutionary parties, and proclaiming Kamenev and Zinoviev strikebreakers of the revolution.
Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Ed. History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks): Short Course. Moscow: FLPH, 1939, p. 211

STALIN SAYS TROTSKY DID NOT PLAY A SPECIAL ROLE IN STARTING THE REVOLUTION

[In "Trotskyism or Leninism" Stalin stated] I am far from denying Trotsky's undoubtedly important role in the uprising. I must say, however, that Trotsky did not play any special role in the October uprising, nor could he do so; being chairman of the Petrograd Soviet, he merely carried out the will of the appropriate Party bodies, which directed every step that Trotsky took. To Philistines like Sukhanov, all this may seem strange, but the facts, the true facts, wholly and fully confirm what I say.
…A practical center was elected for the organizational leadership of the uprising. Who was elected to this center? The following five: Sverdlov, Stalin, Dzerzhinsky, Bubnov, Uritsky. The functionss of the practical center: to direct all the practical organs of the uprising in conformity with the directives of the Central Committee.
Trotsky, was not elected to the practical center, which was called upon to direct the uprising. How is this to be reconciled with the current opinion about Trotsky's special role?… for neither in the Party, nor in the October uprising, did Trotsky play any special role, nor could he do so, for he was a relatively new man in our Party in the period of October. He, like all the responsible workers, merely carried out the will of the Central Committee and of its organs…. This talk about Trotsky's special role is a legend that is being spread by obliging "Party" gossips.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 6, p. 342-343

STALIN FILLED IN AS LEADER IN THE SUMMER OF 1917

But it is true that, although he did not appear before the masses, Stalin, alongside of Sverdlov, carried out in July and August extremely responsible work at headquarters, at conclaves and conferences, in contacts with the Petersburg Committee, and the like.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 213

Civil War

DEPRESSING MILITARY STATUS OF WWI

It was attacked by the armies of all the capitalist world. Moscow and Leningrad and the central part of Russia were separated by attacking armies from their chief food and fuel bases for two and a half years. The granary of the Ukraine, the coal of the Donetz, the oil of Baku, the mines of the Urals, the cotton of Turkestan were in enemy hands. At the height of the foreign intervention Soviet Russia was invaded by armies of 14 countries.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 65

The factories were empty, the land unplowed, transport at a standstill. It seemed impossible that such a country could survive the fierce onslaught of an enemy with large, well-equipped armies, vast financial reserves, ample food, and other supplies.
Besieged on all sides by foreign invaders, imperiled by endless conspiracies at home, the Red Army retreated slowly across the countryside, fighting grimly as it went. The territory controlled by Moscow dwindled to 1/16 of Russia's total area. It was a Soviet Island in an anti-Soviet sea.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 81

By the end of May 1918 only 1/6 of Russian territory was still under Bolshevik rule.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 46

WILSON BORROWED FROM BOLSHEVIKS

Such a peace they described as a "peace without annexations and without indemnities," a phrase later made famous by President Woodrow Wilson, who borrowed it from the Bolsheviks.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 142

STALIN AND TROTSKY CLASH EARLY ON OVER USING CZARIST GENERALS

But to staff a proletarian class war army with officers drawn from its class enemies without first ensuring their political reliability, was to ask for trouble of a most fatal kind. This Trotsky did not see.
The results were to lead, among other things, to Trotsky's first big conflict with Stalin. It arose from Stalin's appointment as Commissar in charge of securing food supplies from the south of Russia.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 125

Cautious as ever, Stalin had refrained from commenting on the recruitment of Czarist specialists until he had had time to test the scheme in operation. Two factors convinced him that the small gains in loyal servants did not compensate for the risk of treachery….
Due to the influence of Trotsky and his associates in the War Commissariat, Stalin's attack upon the military specialists had been ignored. At Trotsky's recommendation the supreme

command of the Red Army was given to the 28 year old ex-lieutenant of the Guards, Mikhail Tukhachevsky.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 104

Nosovich's treachery, and that of a number of other former tsarist officers, reinforced Stalin's suspicions of the military experts which he had made no effort to hide.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 40

"Now I understand," General Chtchadenko said, "how Comrade Stalin succeeded in solving our troubles at Tsaritsyn.
The telephone rang again.
"Who's bothering us now?" Stalin asked. "Some idiot from the Commissariat, I suppose! Nadia, run upstairs and find out what it's about."
As she started up the stairs, Mdvani asked, "Are you going to stay in Moscow for a while, Koba, or are you going to keep on being Lenin's traveling salesman?"
"I don't know yet," said my Uncle Joe. "I don't ask anything better than to stay in Moscow, but the Old Man [Lenin] doesn't seem to want me here. That's Trotsky's influence. He [Trotsky] hopes that I'll break my neck in Tsaritsyn some day or that the Whites will capture me and hang me in the public square."
Nadejda came hurrying down the stairs.
"They need you right away at Lenin's, Sosso! Trotsky wants Voroshilov and Minin court-marshaled for insubordination to his orders; and he has named Sytin commander-in-chief on the southern front, and you are to take orders from him."
Stalin's face flushed scarlet.
"The S.O.B.!" he exploded. "Sytin! One of the Czar's generals–and one of the shiftiest of them, too! I'm not taking any orders from him! I'm going to tell the Old Man [Lenin] what I think about that!"
How right my uncle's instinct was history was to demonstrate later, when Sytin was discovered to be linked with the White Russian General Denikin.
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 45

To appease Trotsky Lenin had decided that Stalin be sent to the Eastern front to inquire into the question of drunkenness in the army. Kolchak's army had invaded European Russia and taken Perm. The Third Army had fled in confusion, losing 18,000 men and a vast number of guns, especially machine guns, abandoning stores, ammunition, and transport. Trotsky's pet ex-officers had deserted en mass to the side where their true sympathies lay.
And so, although going ostensibly to close up vodka shops and patch up discipline, Stalin was in reality setting off to perform the same service to the Soviet as when he went to Tsaritsyn the year before.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 55

Stalin: Trotsky held to old officers, specialists, who often turned traitor.
We, on the contrary, selected people= loyal to the Revolution, people connected with the masses, by and large, noncommissioned officers from the lower ranks, although we were clearly aware of the enormous value of honest specialists.
Lenin had the impression at first that I did not give a damn for specialists. He called me in to see him in Moscow. Trotsky and Pyatakov tried to prove that and interceded for two specialists who had been fired by me. At that very moment, a report came in from the front

that one of them had turned traitor and the other had deserted. Lenin, after reading the telegram, exposed Trotsky and Pyatakov and acknowledged the correctness of our actions.
Dimitrov, Georgi, The Diary of Georgi Dimitrov, 1933-1949. Ed. Ivo Banac. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 132

STALIN TAKES OVER MILITARY LEADERSHIP

By May 1918 the Soviet government was surrounded within a sixth of the territory of the country. But eight armies were defending the encircled Republic. They were not well equipped armies….
When Stalin was appointed to his new post he had no intention, nor had the government, that he should interfere with military affairs.
He had none of Trotsky's inhibitions concerning the workers, and rejected outright Trotsky's ideas about the Army.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 126

But, using a plan of attack drawn up by Stalin as a member of the Revolutionary Military Committee, the Red Army initiated a sudden counter-offensive [against Denikin's sweep toward Moscow].
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 91

Voroshilov states, "The position became more and more strained. Comrade Stalin exercised enormous energy, and in the shortest possible time developed out of extraordinary plenipotentiary for food supplies, into the actual leader of all the Red forces in the Tsaritsyn front.
Life of Stalin, A Symposium. New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1930, p. 53

Voroshilov states, "And only Stalin, with his magnificent organizational capacities was able, having had no previous military training (Comrade Stalin had never served in any army!) so well to understand special military questions in the then extremely difficult circumstances.
Life of Stalin, A Symposium. New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1930, p. 59

STALIN TOOK OVER GENERALSHIP WITH GOOD REASON

To suggest that he now began to interfere with military affairs because he disliked Trotsky is absurd.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 127

On arrival at Tsaritsyn Stalin found a very perilous military situation. The armies of the counter-revolution were investing [infesting] Tsaritsyn; and at the same time the city had become a place of refuge for counter-revolutionary elements. Large numbers of enemies of the Bolshevik Revolution had fled thither–officers of the Imperial army, high officials, and wealthy merchants. The enemy was not only beleaguering the city but within it as well, preparing to strike. Stalin, special plenipotentiary of the party, saw that his real task, the safeguarding of food supplies, could not be achieved unless the military problem was first solved. He assumed full powers for this purpose on his own responsibility. Strictly, in doing this he was incurring the guilt of what amounted to a punishable unauthorized initiative. He

appropriated the supreme military authority, without any express instructions to do so from the center.
Within the city he set up a terrorist police organization which ruthlessly pursued the enemies of Bolshevism. Anyone who might be dangerous, anyone who might be open to suspicion, was eliminated. Stalin reported over the head of the local authorities, and over the head of the appointed Peoples Commissar, Trotsky, direct to the party executive and to Lenin. Formally he was infringing the laws of subordination in force even in the Red Army. He intervened also with iron resolution in matters of army personnel, with an energetic purge at the local headquarters. The enemies within the city were destroyed, the staffs of the Red troops subjected to a new and sharp discipline. The military plans came under his influence. And Tsaritsyn was saved. The first round of the civil war was won.
This brought Stalin's first conflict with Trotsky.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 69

When he was sent to Tsaritsyn to carry out a commission quite un-connected with the military command, he seized the opportunity for a relentless initiative.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 85

Trotsky whole behavior showed that he regarded himself as above Stalin. And he made no secret of his displeasure…. Stalin made no attempt at self-defense, bowing before the storm of indignation of the supreme commander of the red army. Stalin maintained throughout a conciliatory attitude. The cause, he considered, mattered more than any personal issue. Trotsky demanded Stalin's recall, and protested against Stalin's interference in military matters. Lenin, as usual, tried to smooth away the trouble. He acknowledged the reports and proposals of both parties, and then did nothing. He simply kept silent. It is stated that Stalin was nevertheless recalled at Trotsky's instance; but not until he had done his job. In any case, Stalin had shown his military capacity. From then on he held a new post until the end of the Civil War: he was the party's special plenipotentiary at the fronts.
One thing was clear: Stalin's activity at Tsaritsyn had brought military success.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 70

In the summer of 1918 Stalin saved Russia and the Revolution.
British and French troops, united with White Russians, had made common cause with Muscovite counterrevolutionaries in order to destroy the Bolsheviks for all time. The stricken land lay in ruins: no railways, no weapons, and above all not enough bread–for the wheat belts of the Ukraine and Siberia had been cut off by the enemy. The only available wheat came from the Volga and Northern Caucasus, but had to be shipped on this river by way of the town of Tsaritsyn. In that district the small peasants were oppressed by the Kulaks and wheat speculators. Everything depended on the possibility of having Red troops–consisting mostly of badly armed workers with a cap on their head and a gun–transport the wheat into the country's interior. The fate of the Revolution literally hung for several weeks on the defense of this town.
Stalin, arriving there with a few thousand workers, mistrusted the old Czarist officers who were playing a double game or at least under suspicion. But Trotsky, as Minister of War, opposed Stalin's strategy and cabled other orders. Stalin threw them into the wastepaper basket or wrote on the top: "To be laid aside." He saved the town, reconstructed this part of the disrupted army, and hindered the enemy from joining his allies in the Urals and on the Volga….

Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 63

Voroshilov states, "The chief work given to Stalin was the organization of food supplies to the northern provinces, and he was possessed of unlimited powers for the carrying out of his task….
Life of Stalin, A Symposium. New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1930, p. 55

On May 29, 1918, in connection with the increasingly grave food situation in Moscow and the central provinces of Russia, the Sovnarkom appointed Stalin general director for food supplies in the south of Russia and granted him extraordinary powers. In this capacity, on June 4 Stalin left for Tsaritsyn. There he found confusion and chaos not only in food and military matters but in transport, finance, and so on. Utilizing the authority granted him, Stalin took full power in the entire Tsaritsyn Region.
There is no doubt that he did significant work in restoring order and supplying food to the industrial centers of Russia….
Gradually Stalin assumed all the main military functions in the Northern Caucasus. He wrote to Lenin:
There's a lot of grain in the south. In order to get it, we must have a smoothly functioning apparatus that will not encounter any obstacles from trains, army commanders, etc.. Also the military men have to help the food-supply people. The food question naturally gets intertwined with the military question. For the good of the cause I need military powers. I already wrote about this but received no answer. Very well, in that case I myself, without formalities, will remove those commanders and commissars who are ruining the cause. The interests of the cause prompt me to do this and the absence of any papers from Trotsky will not stop me.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 56

In 1919 Stalin was sent as a special plenipotentiary to the key Volga city of Tsaritsyn. His mission was simply to assure the delivery of food supplies from this entire region. What he found was a disastrous military situation, with the city not only surrounded by the White Army but heavily infiltrated by counter-revolutionary forces. He saw that the food supply could not be safeguarded unless the military and political situations were dealt with. He instituted an uncompromising purge of counter-revolutionary elements within both the officer corps and the political infrastructure, took personal command of the military forces over the heads of both the local authorities and Trotsky, and then proceeded to save the city, the region, and the food supply. Trotsky, furious, demanded his recall. As for the citizens of Tsaritsyn, their opinion became known six years later, when they renamed their city Stalingrad.
After this episode, rather than being recalled, Stalin was dispatched far and wide to every major front in the Civil War. In each and every place, he was able to win the immediate respect of the revolutionary people and to lead the way to military victory, even in the most desperate circumstances. Certain qualities emerged more and more clearly, acknowledged by both friends and enemies. These were his enormous practicality and efficiency, his worker-peasant outlook, and the unswerving way he proceeded to the heart of every problem. By the end of the war, Stalin was widely recognized as a man who knew how to run things, equality sorely lacking among most of the aristocratic intellectuals who then saw themselves as great proletarian leaders.
Franklin, Bruce, Ed. The Essential Stalin; Major Theoretical Writings. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p. 12

It was apart from Lenin, at the front in the Civil War, that Stalin first distinguished himself in a remarkable way.
Stalin saved Tsaritsyn and the wheat. The defense of Tsaritsyn against the Whites has been called in an exaggerated way the “Red Verdun.” It was Stalin who organized it, and for that reason the city bears today the name of Stalingrad.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 43

STALIN ALSO SETS UP CHEKA CONTROL

With him, Kaganovich, and others whom he knew to be reliable Bolsheviks, Stalin established a cheka or committee to deal with counter-Revolution in the rear…. Nosovitch, the chief of military direction appointed by Trotsky, went over to the enemy.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 128

KILLING BOLSHEVIKS ACTIVATED THE CHEKA AND TERROR

The social Revolutionaries turned again to terrorism. Two Bolshevik leaders, Uritsky and Volodarsky, were assassinated, and Dora Kaplan attempted the assassination of Lenin. He was severely wounded, and undoubtedly the event shortened his life by years.
In the days immediately following the attempt on Lenin thousands were shot for merely looking bourgeois.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 129

The masses, enraged that the dark forces of reaction had struck down the man who stood as the symbol of all their liberties and aspirations, struck back at the bourgeoisie and at the monarchists with the Red Terror.
Many of the bourgeoisie had to pay with their lives for the assassinations of the commissars and the attempt upon Lenin. So fierce was the wrath of the people that hundreds more would have perished had not Lenin pleaded with the people to restrain their fury. Through all the furor it is safe to say that he was the calmest man in Russia.
Williams, Albert R. Through the Russian Revolution. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967, p. 37

[In 1918] the demise of the Soviet regime seemed imminent, especially as it appeared that open season had been declared on its commissars. In Petrograd, the SR, Kanegisser shot and killed Uritsky; in July, commissar of the Latvian Riflemen, Nakhimson, was killed; food commissar of the Turkestan Republic, Pershin, died at the hands of insurgents in Tashkent; in May 1918, Podtelkov and Krivoshlykov, well known Bolsheviks of the Don Region, were hanged on a Cossack gallows; Lieutenant-General Alexander Taube, who had gone over to the Bolsheviks from the tsarist army to become commander of the Siberian headquarters, fell into White hands and was tortured. But the worst blow fell in Moscow, when, after speaking in front of the Mikhelson factory workers, Lenin were shot by the SR Fannie Kaplan.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 38

But already in July the left Social Revolutionaries provoked the first real outburst of Bolshevik terror. In an attempt to disrupt the peace and to force the Bolsheviks back into war against Germany, the left Social Revolutionary Jacob Blumkin assassinated the German Ambassador Count von Mirbach. A series of insurrections staged by the same party broke out in various places including Moscow, to which the Government transferred its seat after the conclusion of peace. On August 30 Lenin was wounded and two other Bolshevik leaders, Uritsky and Volodarsky, were assassinated by Social Revolutionaries. Trotsky narrowly escaped an attempt on his life. The Bolsheviks officially retorted with mass reprisals; and their self defense was at least as savage as the onslaught to which they had been subjected.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 191

When Bolshevik leader Uritsky was assassinated in St. Petersburg, and Fanny Kaplan wounded Lenin, in an effort to assassinate him, a system of hostages was introduced, mass executions of innocent “class enemies” took place as reprisals and a “red terror” regime began.
Fishman and Hutton. The Private Life of Josif Stalin. London: W. H. Allen, 1962, p. 49

Yet we did not interfere with public expression of dissident views, although the Mensheviks deliberately sabotaged vital defense activity through their hold on the railway unions, and others elsewhere–until the assassination of Volodarsky and Uritsky and the murderous attempt on the life of Lenin, August 30, 1918. It was in those tragic days that something snapped in the heart of the revolution. It began to lose its “kindness” and forbearance. The sword of the Party received its final tempering. Resolution increased and, where necessary, ruthlessness, too.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 338

Having deprived the parties and the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries of the Right and Center of Soviet legality in June, 1918, after their direct participation in the Civil War against the Soviet government had been established not only through acts of individual terror, but sabotage, diversion, conspiracy and other overt acts of war, the Bolsheviks were compelled to add the Left Social Revolutionaries to the proscription list after the latter attempted their treacherous coup d’etat in July.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 338

STALIN AND TROTSKY CLASH OVER MILITARY TACTICS

Should Kolchak be pursued and his forces completely smashed, or should all attention be diverted to defeat Denikin? Trotsky, who in his memoirs fully admits his blunder, decided on leaving Kolchak to concentrate on Denikin. Stalin was emphatically opposed to this plan, and the central committee supported him in his contention that such a decision would leave Kolchak time to recuperate…. The Red Army, he urged, must advance and “liquidate” him and his Army. It did advance, and Kolchak and his Army were liquidated.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 131

Stalin now urged Lenin to remove Trotsky from his position as War Commissar. [Stalin wanted Trotsky out. Trotsky resigned. Lenin and the Central Committee refused his

resignation. Stalin agreed and backed down]. But one thing is certain — by this time Stalin had become convinced that Trotsky was a danger to the Revolution.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 132

Trotsky was given a new post which suited to his organizational and oratorical talents. He was made War Commissar…. Trotsky repeatedly opposed the military decisions of the Bolshevik Central Committee and flagrantly exceeded his authority. In several cases, only the direct intervention of the Central Committee prevented Trotsky from executing leading Bolshevik military representatives at the front who objected to his autocratic conduct.
In the summer of 1919 Trotsky, stating that Kolchak was no longer in menace in the East, proposed shifting the forces of the Red Army into the campaign against Denikin in the South. This, Stalin pointed out, would have given Kolchak a much needed breathing spell and the opportunity to reorganize and re-equip his Army and launch a fresh offensive. “The Urals with their works,” declared Stalin as military representative of the Central Committee, “with their network of railways, should not be left in Kolchak hands, because he could there easily collect the big farmers around him and advance to the Volga.” Trotsky’s plan was rejected by the Central Committee, and he took no further part in the campaign in the East, which led to the final defeat of Kolchak’s forces.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 191

In the fall of 1919 Trotsky drew up a plan for a campaign against Denikin. This plan called for a march through the Don Steppes, an almost roadless region filled with bands of counter revolutionary Cossacks. Stalin, who had been sent to the Southern Front by the Central Committee, rejected Trotsky’s plan and proposed instead that the Red Army advance across the Donetz Basin with its dense railroad network, coal supplies, and sympathetic working-class population. Stalin’s plan was accepted by the Central Committee. Trotsky was removed from the Southern Front, ordered not to interfere in with operations in the South, and “advised” not to cross the line of demarcation of the Southern Front. Denikin was defeated according to Stalin’s plan.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 191

Trotsky was trying to form a regular army. That required men of experience; so he enrolled officers of the old Imperial army. But they were unreliable. So were the army commanders who had risen from obscurity. Some of these proved traitors, some changed sides, among these latter the commander in the Caucasus…. The military specialists were also unreliable. At that time the whole Soviet State was decentralized. “All power to the local soviets”, ran the slogan.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 68

Quoting Nosovich Voroshilov states, “When Trotsky, worried because of the destruction of the command administrations formed by him, with such difficulty, sent a telegram concerning the necessity of leaving the staff, and the war commissariat on the previous footing and giving them a chance to work, Stalin wrote a categorical, most significant inscription on the telegram: ‘To be ignored’!”
Life of Stalin, A Symposium. New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1930, p. 58

The same message in which he [Stalin] asked for military powers gave the first hint of his conflict with Trotsky. It contained the following remark: ‘If only our war “specialists” (the

shoemakers!) had not slept and been idle, the [military] line would not have been cut; and if the line is restored this will be so not because of the military but in spite of them.' This was the point over which the famous Tsaritsyn dispute started.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 197

The food transports from the northern Caucasus arrived in Moscow as Stalin had promised. Thus the Council of People's Commissars had reason to be grateful to its envoy at Tsaritsyn. Stalin, having failed to receive an answer to his first and somewhat timid request for special military powers, insistently repeated his demand in a cable to Lenin dated July 10, 1918. The message, which was first published only in 1947, contained a violent attack on Trotsky, an attack which by implication was also a remonstrance with Lenin. If Trotsky continued to send his men to the northern Caucasus and the Don without the knowledge of the people on the spot, Stalin stated, then 'within a month everything will go to pieces in the northern Caucasus and we shall irretrievably lose that land…. Rub this in to Trotsky…. For the good of the cause military plenary powers are indispensable to me here. I have written about this but received no reply. All right, then. In that case I alone shall, without any formalities, dismiss those commanders and commissars who ruin the job…. The lack of a paper mandate from Trotsky will, of course, not stop me.'
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 202

By the end of the summer of 1918 the danger that threatened Moscow from the east had been removed. As long as it existed the General Staff attached only secondary importance to the southern front. But in October the Czechs had been thrown back to the Urals, and Trotsky could turn his whole attention to the south, brooking no interference with his battle orders. The southern front was now too small for both antagonists. One of them had to go, and it was Stalin. Lenin did his best to sweeten the pill. He sent the President of the Republic Sverdlov to bring Stalin back to Moscow in a special train with all the necessary honors. The episode was characteristic of Lenin's handling of the man: he had a shrewd eye for his weaknesses and was very careful not to offend needlessly his touchiness and amour propre. Trotsky's manner was the exact opposite. The underrated his opponent, made no allowance for his ambition, and offended him at almost every step. This flowed from his natural manner rather than from deliberate intention. On its way to Moscow the train that carried Sverdlov and Stalin met Trotsky's train which was bound for Tsaritsyn. Prepared by Sverdlov's diplomatic labors, the meeting between the antagonists took place in Trotsky's carriage. According to Trotsky's version, Stalin somewhat meekly asked him not to treat the 'Tsaritsyn boys' too severely. Trotsky's answer was sharp and haughty: 'The fine boys will ruin the revolution which cannot wait for them to grow up.' Subsequently Voroshilov was transferred from Tsaritsyn to the Ukraine.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 205

Then Trotsky, in his capacity as War Minister, launched his first serious attack against his enemy Stalin, by ordering the Tsaritsyn commanders to obey only the orders of their Superior Sytin, but Stalin refused to accept Trotsky's order. He left for Moscow to talk over matters with Lenin and six days later returned to Tsaritsyn and, backed by Voroshilov, took over again. The Whites once more managed to encircle the town but the so-called "Steel Division" succeeded in saving Tsaritsyn. Trotsky again, stung by his enemy's tremendous success, induced Lenin to recall his "Miraculous Georgian" to Moscow, but Stalin stalled, and eventually established his claim to the victory.

Fishman and Hutton. The Private Life of Josif Stalin. London: W. H. Allen, 1962, p. 49

The rising importance and prestige of Stalin may be understood by the fact that before accepting the invitation of the revolutionary council to go to the Southern Front he stipulated that Trotsky should not be allowed to interfere in any way with the campaign there. He also obtained permission to retire the officers of Trotsky's choice and replace them with men of his own choosing. This was the first great rebuff to Trotsky in the revolution and he received it at the hands of Stalin.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 63

The Soviet gave Stalin carte blanche. Trotsky's plan of campaign was shelved. Stalin took matters into his own hands, being nevertheless careful to keep in personal touch with Lenin by telegraph, informing him of his proposed changes and his plan of action. He poured scorn on Trotsky's pet idea of an attack over the Steppes, calling it stupidity and obstinacy… "what does this cockerel know of strategy?" An advance through Cossack country could have but one effect, that of rousing the whole Cossack population to fury.
The new plan of campaign was for an advance through the center toward Little Russia with Kharkov as an objective, thence to threaten Rostov on the Don. "Here," he wrote Lenin, "we would find ourselves among a friendly and not a hostile population which must facilitate our advance. We should find ourselves in possession of an important railway artery and cut the line Voronezh– Rostov which has been vital for Denikin's supplies. We outflank the Cossacks and threaten them from the rear. If we are successful in our advance Denikin will most probably wish to reinforce his center with Cossacks which they will not want to do, and we could count on that breeding trouble among the Whites. Then we should get supplies of coal (from the Donetz Basin) and Denikin would be deprived of coal."
Stalin urged Lenin to approve this plan of attack as the only one promising success, declaring that his presence on the Southern front would be a waste of time, "futile, criminal, useless" if the plan were over-ridden, and that he would in that case rather go to the devil than remain there.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 64

On this Voroshilov comments: "The road from Tsaritsyn to Novorossisk might have turned out to be much longer because it went through an environment of class enemies. On the other hand the way from Tula to Novorossisk might prove much shorter because it went through working-class Kharkov and the mining region of the Donetz Basin. In Stalin's estimation of the correct line of attack can be seen his chief quality as a proletarian revolutionary, the real strategist of the Civil War."
Lenin signed the order for the cancellation of Trotsky's instructions and the Central Soviet advised Stalin to go ahead. His judgment was at once confirmed by success.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 65

LENIN MISTAKENLY ADVOCATES ATTACK TOWARD WARSAW

Indeed, the whole conception of advancing on Warsaw was an error. For this Lenin was primarily responsible, and time and again he referred to it publicly as his mistake.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 135

Lenin had demanded the disastrous Warsaw campaign. Stalin has been blamed for not abandoning Lemberg, but the real mistake was Lenin's insistence on pushing the Polish invaders back as far as Warsaw.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 23

Lenin was carried away by the vision of the Red Army in Warsaw and of a communist Poland giving its full support to the revolutionary movement. He felt acutely the isolation of Russia, which with all its internal problems was bearing the socialist banner alone. This vision was shared by many within the party and gave rise to a wave of enthusiasm, as members rallied to the cry "Onwards to Warsaw!" But there were realists, Stalin foremost among them, who saw the dangers of this policy. In June 1920 he wrote that "the rear of the Polish forces is homogeneous and nationally united. Its dominant mood is 'the feeling for their native land.'… The class conflicts have not reached the strength needed to break through the sense of national unity." It was a clear warning against accepting Lenin's facile belief that the Polish proletariat was ready for revolution.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 136

The issues at stake were momentous. Lenin hoped that the entry of the Red Army into Poland would spur on the Polish working-class to Communist revolution. His main interest, however, was not in Poland but in Germany, which at the time was in a state of revolutionary ferment. His objective was to affect a junction between the Russian and the German revolutions….
Lenin was supported by Zinoviev and Kamenev, who, now as in 1917, saw little hope for communism in Russia without a revolution in the west. Underlying their policy was a gross under-estimation of the resistance which the Polish people, including the Polish working classes, enjoying the honeymoon of their national independence, were to put up to Soviet invasion.
A clearer view of the mood in Poland prompted both Trotsky and Stalin to oppose talk about a march on Warsaw. Even before the recapture of Kiev by the Reds, Stalin warned the party in Pravda that 'the hinterland of the Polish forces is…to Poland's advantage, very different from that of Kolchak and Denikin… It is nationally uniform and coherent…. Its predominant attitude is… patriotic…. If the Polish forces were to operate in Poland it would undoubtedly be difficult to fight against them.' He repeated the warning in much blunter terms after the beginning of the Russian offensive: 'I think that the bragging and the harmful complacency of some comrades are out of place: some of them are not content with the successes on the front but shout about a "march on Warsaw"; others, not satisfied with defending our republic against hostile aggression, boastfully declare that they could make peace only with "Red Soviet Warsaw". I need not point out that this bragging and complacency conform neither with the policy of the Soviet Government, nor with the balance of forces on the front.' After all the sober warnings, he cast his vote with the 'bragging and complacent' adherents of the offensive. The opponents of the march on Warsaw, Trotsky and the two Poles Dzerzhinsky and Radek (the famous Polish-German revolutionary pamphleteer who had joined the Bolsheviks) were defeated. As sometimes in the past, so now, Stalin was swayed by his master's view, this time against his own better judgment.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; a Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 215

The mutual criticisms were well justified, though the chief cause of the defeat lay not so much in the mistakes committed during the offensive as in the very decision to carry it deep into Poland.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; a Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 217

The battle turned into a complete Soviet rout, with the Red Armies fleeing in disorder. In October an armistice was signed, in 1921 confirmed as the Peace of Riga. Far from becoming a Soviet republic, Poland now secured frontiers far to the east of the Curzon Line and including substantial Ukrainian and Byelorussian populations-a fact that would be of enormous importance in European politics between 1921 and the end of World War II.
…Who was responsible for this disastrous debacle for the Soviet Army? The primary political responsibility was undoubtedly Lenin's, since he had persuaded himself that Polish workers and peasants were dying with impatience to greet Dzerzhinsky and his fellow Polish Bolsheviks (many of them also employees of the Cheka), while, as Stalin had correctly predicted, the Communist offensive in fact generated a patriotic upsurge among all classes of the population….
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 188

WHAT THE RED ARMY FACED DURING THE INTERVENTION

The intervention war did not the end until the closing months of 1922, when the last Japanese soldier left Vladivostok promising to return. By the end of 1920, however, all Russia in Europe and a part of Siberia were free from the foreign foe, and a counter-Revolution had been mastered…. I saw Regiment's march through the streets of Leningrad and Moscow in 1920 clad in the uniforms of almost every country in Europe–French, British, Italian, German, Polish, Russian, and many others. If ever there was an Army which fought "with sweat and blood and tears," clothed in rags and tatters, on a minimum of food, and pan with a minimum of equipment, it was this army of the Revolution between 1918 and 1922…. It is doubtful if at any period during these years the Red Army had rifles for more than 600,000 to 700,000 men, or more than 1000 guns and 3000 machine guns.
But one and all made the same mistake. They supported the forces which were for the restoration of the power of the landlords and for depriving the peasants of their new freedom of possession of their own land. This alone doomed intervention to disaster…. Not one government declared war on Soviet Russia, but 14 governments sent armies to make war or on her, to destroy her administration, to re-establish the landlords in possession of the land and the capitalists in possession of the factories, the mills, the mines, and the State.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 138-139

Scarcely was the 1917 revolution concluded than civil war and armed intervention began. British, French, and American troops invaded northern Russia through Murmansk, and the port of Archangel was captured. British, Japanese, and American troops occupied Vladivostok. British armed forces seized the Georgian oil centers of Baku and Batum, where the young Stalin had led the oil workers' struggles. The French army occupied Odessa. Polish forces invaded and occupied the Ukraine. In the meantime, reconstituted tsarist armies, supported by the imperialist governments, had begun a full-scale civil war. An army of 150,000 led by Gen. Denikin advanced into South Russia, seizing Kiev and Kharkov. Gen.

Yudenich menaced Petrograd. In Siberia, Adm. Kolchak, with an army of 125,000, seized Perm and other towns, proclaimed himself Supreme Ruler of Russia, and threatened to advance upon Moscow.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 34

Let us draw near to what Mr. Winston Churchill, as Stalin recently recalled, defined as “The invasion of the fourteen nations.”
The Army of the White adventurer, Kolchak, champion of the Tsar, received from the French Government 1,700 machine guns, 30 tanks, and dozens of field guns. In Kolchak’s offensive thousands of Anglo-American soldiers, 70,000 Japanese soldiers and about 60,000 Czechoslovakian soldiers took part.
Denikin’s army of 60,000 men was entirely equipped in arms and munitions of war by England. It received 200,000 rifles, 2,000 guns, 30 tanks. Several hundred English officers acted as either advisers or instructors to Denikin’s Army.
The disembarkation of the Allies at Vladivostock comprised two Japanese divisions, two English battalions, 6,000 Americans, 3,000 French and Italians.
England’s spent in the Civil War in Russia 140 million pounds and (a less important item for the people meddling with the world) the lives of 50,000 soldiers.
From 1918 to 1921 England and France never ceased killing Russians and laying Russia waste. Let us just note, in parentheses, that, at the end of 1927, there were still 450 engineers and 17,000 workmen employed in repairing the damage done in one single oilfield in the Caucasus by the passage of Western civilization. And the destruction wrought in Russia by the monstrous interference of the great European and American countries may be estimated at about 44 billion gold rubles.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 112

Let us remember that the Whiteguards were mobilized in France, and made an armed state within the State, developing their various organizations and their military formations under the benevolent eye of the authorities…. These hired desperados of Czarism marched, fully armed, beneath the Arc de Triomphe,…
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 113

The summer of 1918 brought further threats to Lenin and his government. The Allied intervention, instigated primarily by Winston Churchill, but supported by the United States, France, Japan, and Italy, had led to detachments of British, French, and American troops occupying Murmansk, Archangel, Vladivostock, and other Russian towns.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 120

To these famished, frozen, typhus-stricken Russians sailed no ships of goodwill laden with books, tools, teachers, and engineers but grim ships of war and transports laden with troops and officers, guns, and poison-gas. Landings were made at strategic points on the coast of Russia. Monarchists, landlords, and Black Hundreds flocked to these rallying centers. New White armies were conscripted, drilled, and equipped with hundreds of millions of dollars of supplies. The Interventionists started their drive on Moscow, seeking to plunge the sword into the heart of the Revolution.
Out of the East rolled the hordes of Kolchak following the trail of the Czechs across Siberia. Out of the West struck the armies of Finland, the Letts, and Lithuanians. Down from the forests and snowfields of the North moved the British, French, and Americans. Up from the

seaports of the South plunged the tanks, airplanes, and Death Battalions of Denikin. Out of the Estonian marshes–Yudenich. Out of Poland– the veteran legions of Pilsudski. Out of the Crimea–the cavalry of Baron Wrangel.
Williams, Albert. Through the Russian Revolution. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967, p. 234

DESCRIPTION OF HOW BAD WHITE CONTROLLED AREAS WERE

In all the regions that had been overrun by the armies, the richest food-growing regions of Russia, the marching forces of each side had requisitioned the reserves of the peasants, and the peasants had almost ceased producing. Thousands of draft animals had perished. Hospital and medical supplies were gone. There was a universal shortage of consumer goods. The paper roubles were almost valueless. The cities and the towns were in a hopeless state of despair. Nothing could be more drab and colourless than Petrograd as I saw it in 1920. Shop windows were boarded up. Streets were dangerous for vehicles because of their battered condition. Buildings grimly recorded the bespattering of their walls by machine-gun fire. Railways were cluttered with shattered rolling-stock. Not more than a tenth of the locomotives available at the outbreak of the Great War were running. Bridges by the thousand had been destroyed. Coal production was down to 7,000,000 tons per annum. There was a dearth of everything. Hunger stalked town and village alike, and brigandage was rife throughout the countryside. Money payments gave way to payments in kind. Industrial labour had shrunk to half pre-war figures and output was down to 18 per cent of the level of 1913. Ten million peasants were using wooden ploughs.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 142

SU INVADED BY 14 COUNTRIES, INCLUDING FINLAND

By the summer of 1919, without declaration of war, the forces of 14 states had invaded the territory of Soviet Russia. The countries involved were: Great Britain, France, Japan, Germany, Italy, the United States, Czechoslovakia, Serbia, China, Finland, Greece, Poland, Romania, and Turkey.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 79.

Instead of acting with vision and cooperating with revolutionary Russia the Allies decided to attack Russia from all sides, supporting every would-be tyrant and dictator who aspired to rule and could organize a band of mercenaries.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 93

TROTSKY AND TUKHACHEVSKY CAUSE POLISH DEBACLE

The Red Troops, Commanded by General Tukachevsky and War Commissar Leon Trotsky had dangerously over-extended their lines of communications. Now they suffered the consequences, as the Polish counter offensive drove them back along the entire front.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 94

WHITE ARMIES WERE LED BY PRE-FASCISTS

There were a few sincere nationalists among them, but the white armies were overwhelmingly dominated by reactionaries who were the prototypes of the fascist officers and adventurers who were later to emerge in central Europe.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 100

TROTSKY ALLIED HIMSELF WITH EX CZARIST OFFICERS, SUBVERSIVES, AND SR'S

The former Social Revolutionary terrorist, Blumkin, the assassin of Count Mirbach, became chief of Trotsky's personal bodyguard.
Trotsky also allied himself with a number of former Tsarist officers whom he befriended and, despite frequent warnings from the Bolshevik Party, placed in important military posts. One ex tsarist officer whom Trotsky became intimately associated with in 1920, during the Polish campaign, was Tukhachevsky, a military leader with Napoleonic ambitions of his own.
The aim of the combined Left Opposition was to supplant Lenin and take power in Soviet Russia.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 193

CHEKA KILLED FAR LESS THAN PEOPLE TURNING IN OPPONENTS

Where the vengeance of the Cheka claimed hundreds of victims, private spite took a toll of thousands and tens of thousands. Just imagine what it meant in practice. If a wife was tired of her husband or he of his wife, if a servant had a grudge against his former master or an employee against his former boss, it meant a few words to the Cheka and then–silence.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 117

In point of fact, is doubtful whether the total number of Cheka executions throughout the whole period up to 1922 surpasses 50,000….
Though lives were cheap in Russia and Cheka leaders pitiless in defending the revolution when in danger, they would have defeated their own object by the wholesale slaughter of workers and peasants on the scale reported abroad. Nor are such men as Dzerzhinsky or Latsis, now head of the State Salt Trust, the bestial butchers they have been depicted.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 118

The "Chekists" soon came and took me off with them. They cross-examined me without any of the tortures or "scientific methods" of which professional anti-Soviet writers abroad have told such alarming stories.
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 47

VILLAGES DETERMINE IF LOCAL ARMIES ARE RED OR WHITE

I am certain that the same was true of the Civil War in Russia, and I know, moreover, that when soldiers of any faction were reported in the neighborhood of the average Russian Village, the first act of its inhabitants was to drive their cattle off into Woods or some other place of refuge. After that scouts were sent to report whether the soldiers were red or white.

If the former the local priest made himself scarce and the newcomers were “hailed with delight” by the village Soviet. If the troops were white, they received an official welcome from the council of elders led by the priest bearing a holy icon.
Duranty, Walter. I Write as I Please. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1935, p. 195

REDS HAD NO 5TH COLUMN AMONG WHITES DURING CIVIL WAR

The desertion of officers from the Red side to the White was an event of daily occurrence in the Civil War. At Tsaritsyn, and again on the Ural front, the Fifth Column was particularly strongly represented among the staff officers of the Red Army and among the population. There was treason everywhere.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 73

The “Reds”, needless to say, had no such Fifth Column among the “Whites”, the counter-revolutionaries.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 72

STALIN SAVES PERM AS HE SAVED TSARITSYN

Stalin’s activities at Tsaritsyn and in the Urals, and later on other fronts, were not those of a strategist so much as of the sword of the revolution in the struggle against the Fifth Column. This he himself admitted, half unconsciously, in a letter which will be referred to later. Here in the Urals Stalin’s energy came once more into play; and not only in the struggle against the Fifth Column, or in the reorganization of the staffs. He restored the fighting capacity of the Third Army as an organization. He secured from the central Government the dispatch of reinforcements, and Perm was re-taken by the Reds. But in the course of his fulfillment of this task there came further friction with the actual head of the Red Army, Trotsky. Once more Trotsky demanded Stalin’s recall; and Lenin repeated his tactic of at first completely ignoring this quarrel between Trotsky and Stalin, sending no answer to Trotsky’s demand, and then recalling Stalin when he had done his work.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 74

In recognition of his activity in defending the town of Tsaritsyn, the so-called “Red Verdun” of the lower Volga, against the troops of the Cossack general Krasnov, the name Tsaritsyn was changed to Stalingrad.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 90

Moreover at the very time that Stalin was recalled to Moscow he was, at Trotsky’s suggestion, appointed a member of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic.… On January 1, 1919, Stalin and Dzerzhinsky were sent to the Eastern Front to investigate setbacks suffered there by the Red Army, particularly the causes of the surrender of Perm. After the situation on the Eastern Front improved, Stalin— and Dzerzhinsky returned to Moscow.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 59

There is no question that Stalin contributed to the successful defense of Tsaritsyn from the Ataman Krasnov's Cossack bands in 1918, and thus an extremely important strategic bastion was preserved from the Whites.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 176

Late in 1918 Stalin was sent on a fact-finding mission to Siberia, where he salvaged a collapsing wing of Trotsky's Red Army.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 70

STALIN WORKED WITH TROTSKY DEFENDING PETROGRAD

Stalin's next commission required actual collaboration with Trotsky… It is difficult to tell who contributed the more to the defense of Petrograd, Trotsky or Stalin.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 75

Stalin evolved a plan for the use of the Red Navy to capture the two forts that threatened the city by an attack on them from the sea. The Naval specialists declared that this was impossible. Stalin nevertheless went on with his plan, and won. His success was a first proof of his strategic gifts. He was no longer simply the "purger", or the reorganizer of army commands; for the first time he had elaborated a strategic plan and won with it.
Both Trotsky and Stalin were decorated for their defense of Petrograd.
Lenin accordingly wanted to abandon Petrograd for the time. Trotsky, the official commander of the Armed Forces of the Revolution, was against this plan. Stalin at once supported Trotsky.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 76

The White threat to Petrograd in May 1919 brought him [Stalin] there on a special mission, and, predictably, he discovered there a major plot of treason, found the directives of the commander-in-chief (Trotsky's protEgE) harmful, and saved the day by his initiative–all of which developments he communicated without inhibition to Lenin.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 182

And what had saved the day in the field? Stalin's "indelicate interference" had led to the Reds' recapture of the crucial forts of Red Hill and Gray Horse. The naval specialists resisted his orders, protesting that they violated the rules of naval science. But, said Stalin, "I feel bound to declare that for all my respect for science, I will act the same way in the future." …Stalin displayed real talents in command. He did not panic. He immediately assessed the enemy's weak points: on the Northern Front the Whites had "neither sufficient rear space, nor adequate manpower, nor food."…
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 183

It was Stalin who won the Battle of Petrograd; but he won it as an abrek not as a general. On his return to Moscow he was welcomed as a triumphant conqueror.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 114

It began very successfully for Yudenich. Feeling that we would not be able to manage all the fronts simultaneously, Lenin proposed to surrender Petrograd. I opposed it. The majority of the Politburo, including Stalin, decided to support me.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 308

IN THE SOUTH STALIN DEMANDS COMPLETE CONTROL AND TROTSKY'S EXPULSION

There now remained only one threatened front in the civil war, the front held by Denikin's volunteer army, later commanded in the Crimea by General Wrangel. On that front Stalin met old acquaintances from Tsaritsyn–Voroshilov, Budenny, Frunze, and other revolutionary army leaders. They formed a group in which Stalin felt at home. These commanders were not intellectuals, although Frunze, the son of a non–commissioned officer of the regular army, had studied for a time at a technical college. It was, indeed, the robust lower middle-class environment in which Stalin could let himself go–his own class, among whom he had not to feel the unexpressed sense of superiority of the intellectuals. Before undertaking this new task Stalin made conditions, or, rather, a condition. He openly revealed his opposition to Trotsky. After his successes in the Urals and at Petrograd, he was no longer prepared to put up with Trotsky's arrogance. He demanded that it should be clearly understood that Trotsky must no longer interfere with his activities. He went further: Trotsky must not even approach a front on which he, Stalin, was serving as special plenipotentiary of the central Government, lest he should upset Stalin's authority. The whole southern front was to be withdrawn from Trotsky's sphere. He also demanded the recall of a number of officials, and also the appointment of new commanders, of his own choice, on the southern front. Stalin's new self-confidence proved to be well justified. Lenin agreed to his demands.

STALIN'S SOUTHERN STRATEGY

Here on the southern front Stalin's great strategic talent showed itself unmistakably. For he was no longer content with carrying out his famous purges on the front placed under him: as in Petrograd, he had the military plans submitted to him. His report to the Central Committee of the party was now that of a strategist. He rejected and annulled the plan of the supreme command on the southern front. The plan had provided for a breakthrough from west to east, through the Don basin. As the Red troops had suffered a setback, this plan had not been carried out, but the supreme command had held to the plan. One of the army commanders, Korin, had been ordered to advance over the Don steppes against Novocherkask. Stalin rejected this plan, giving some military reasons for doing so: 'The steppes are not suited for a crossing by infantry and artillery.' But his main reason was that the military specialists had paid no attention to the political conditions. In one of his reports to the Central Committee he pointed out that such a thrust would automatically have the effect of an attack on the villages of the Don Cossacks. The advance as planned would lead through a region whose population was strongly opposed to the revolution and the Soviet power. The Cossacks would naturally defend themselves, greatly strengthening the position of the enemy, as it would enable Denikin to assume the role of rescuer of the Don region. Stalin demanded the immediate abandonment of the plan. The attack must not be directed over the Don steppes against Novocherkask, but from Kharkov in the direction of Rostov. The Red troops would then be marching through the Donetz basin, through an industrial, mining region, with a

population friendly to Bolshevism. Stalin foresaw that this advance would split the enemy armies into three groups, with a number of political results. In the event, for instance, of a retreat the counter-revolutionaries would require the Cossacks to evacuate their villages, and in view of the mentality of those peasant soldiers this would undoubtedly lead to a conflict between Cossacks and the military leaders of the counter-revolution.
The Central Committee accepted Stalin's view. The old plan was thrown over, and Stalin's plan was carried through–to success. Stalin, who had only recently spoken of himself as a 'civilian', had revealed his great strategic talent.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 77-79

On another occasion he formulated conditions to Lenin: he wanted the original plan of operations dropped and his own substituted. "If that is not done, my work on the southern front becomes pointless and criminal. That gives me the right or rather imposes on me the duty, to go to the devil rather than remain here. Yours, Stalin."
Similarly as in Tsaritsyn, Stalin threw back the Germans in the Ukraine, liberating Kharkov twice in the years 1918 and 1919. To somebody listening today, in the summer of 1942, to the war reports on the radio, the recurrence of the same battles in the same place seems completely dreamlike….
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 65

Denikin was routed and fled to the sea. The great Southern fighting force of the Whites was destroyed and though out of its ruin emerged the puny, bedraggled army of general Wrangel occupying the Crimea, the menace to the Soviet State was definitely lifted.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 66

STALIN WAS A VERY GOOD MILITARY LEADER

Not a little of Stalin's strategic strength on the southern front lay in the fact that, consciously or unconsciously, he concentrated the troops he had and sent them in this or the other direction. What he did was essentially to restrict the bluffing character of the operations in the south and to lead the attack in an entirely realistic fashion. This was bound to give him superiority over the enemy's thinned-out front.
History shows over and over again how on the battlefield a clear-sighted amateur who possessed, as did Stalin, strategic ability and a certain courage facing the facts, was able to beat the professional strategists, who were handicapped by their traditional training.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 81

His success justified his ambition. Tsaritsyn was a success, the Urals were another, and Petrograd and the southern front were yet greater successes.
In Petrograd he had made his first attempt to be his own general as well.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 86

Taking advantage of the preoccupation of the main Red Army with the pursuit and annihilation of Admiral Kolchak, his ally in the South, Gen. Denikin had commenced a rapid advance in the direction of Moscow. The Soviet armies on this front were under the sole direction of Stalin and his immediate subordinates, Voroshilov and Minin. The campaign against Denikin therefore, serves as a practical illustration of Stalin's capacities in the

military as well as the purely political sphere. We have already seen indications of his inspiring leadership in the heroic defense of Tsaritsyn in face of overwhelming odds; now he was to deal with a problem involving the fate, not only of one city, but of the whole of Soviet Russia.
Reinforced by sections of the victorious Siberian armies, Stalin and Voroshilov brought the advance of the Whites to a sudden halt and, as new divisions continued to arrive, the invader was slowly pushed back towards his base lines around Kiev.
As if to deny Stalin the victory he had so carefully planned, a new enemy appeared in the north. Having recruited a powerful army of White Russians, French, and Poles, Gen. Yudenich crossed the Estonian border into Russia and finding no serious opposition, commenced an advance on Petrograd.
This presented Stalin with a cruel choice at which a lesser man would certainly have balked; should he weaken his own forces by sending them against Yudenich or should he maintain his successful drive against Denikin? Lenin, tremendously impressed by his lieutenant's military successes, seriously advised the abandonment of Petrograd until such time as Stalin had liquidated Denikin, proposing to eject Yudenich at a later date.
This provoked the one recorded instance were Stalin opposed a decision of Lenin; he demanded that Petrograd be defended to the last as Tsaritsyn had been defended a few months before. To assist in the defense of the city he undertook to detach half the effective strength of his own forces, leaving the remainder to resist Denikin's counter-offensive as best they might. He found an unexpected ally in this debate in Trotsky who, for once, made no secret of his admiration for what he termed "Stalin's Revolutionary zeal."
In face of this unusual combination, and impressed by Stalin's disinterested loyalty in placing the saving of Petrograd before his own military requirements, Lenin yielded, even going so far as to defend Stalin's views at the meeting of the Soviet Commissar's which discussed the problem.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 47

Eleven days later Stalin entered Baku as a deliverer, while Denikin was hurriedly evacuating his broken armies at the Black Sea port of Novorosisk. Having seen his grandiose schemes smashed by the genius of a man who had never received a single day's orthodox military training, Gen. Denikin gave up his command and fled to Constantinople, leaving his troops to try and reach the White army of Gen. Wrangel in the Crimea as best they could.
On this note of personal triumph for Stalin, the liquidation of the Czarist forces from Russia was completed. The Bolshevik Central Committee was loud in its praise of Stalin's remarkable achievement, he was twice decorated with the coveted Order of the Red Flag and was unanimously elected to the Supreme Revolutionary War Council. Among the many tributes paid him was one from his old opponent, Karl Radek, who admitted in an article in Pravda of February 23, 1935: "Stalin was the leader of the proletarian army and the military genius of the civil war."
…it is certainly possible that the abilities of Wrangel might have brought success to Czarism even at this 11th hour, had he not been opposed by a man of the caliber of Stalin.
…with Stalin's entry into Sebastopol on November 15, 1920, the last vestige of Czarism disappeared forever.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 50

It seems that Stalin also contributed to the decisions on the third and fourth fronts in 1919. On the northern front he, in command of the army, hindered the union of Kolchak's troops

with the Czechs. When General Yudenich, with Finnish and British troops and ships, went against St. Petersburg, Stalin forced him to retreat.
But during those days of the Civil War, Stalin never had the power which the Central Committee entrusted to Trotsky. Lenin's confidence in a dozen instances gave Trotsky carte blanche by a general approval of all orders issued by Trotsky for a given date. Stalin, on the other hand, was always restricted to specific tasks.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 66

Voroshilov states, "As he became closer and closer in touch with the military apparatus, Comrade Stalin became convinced of its absolute helplessness, and in certain sections of its direct unwillingness to organize resistance to the ever more insolent counter-revolution.
Life of Stalin, A Symposium. New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1930, p. 52

Voroshilov states, "These were days of great trial. You should have seen Comrade Stalin at that time. Calm as usual, deep in thought, he literally had no sleep for days on end, distributing his intensive work between the fighting positions and the Army Headquarters.
Life of Stalin, A Symposium. New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1930, p. 59

Voroshilov states, "And one more characteristic was shown absolutely clearly on the Southern front–Stalin's way of working with 'shock troops,' his way of choosing the main direction for the army to take, concentrating the best sections of the army, and crushing the enemy. In this respect, and also in the selection of the direction for the army to take, Stalin achieved great skill.
Life of Stalin, A Symposium. New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1930, p. 76

Voroshilov states, "What is most apparent is Comrade Stalin's capacity of quickly to grasping the concrete circumstances and acting in accordance with them. The most relentless enemy of mental slovenliness, indiscipline, and individualism in warfare, Comrade Stalin, where the interests of the revolution so demanded, never hesitated to take upon himself the responsibility for exceptional measures, for radical changes; where the revolutionary situation so demanded, Comrade Stalin was ready to go against any regulations, any principal of subordination.
Comrade Stalin was always an advocate of the most strict military discipline and centralization in conditions,…
Life of Stalin, A Symposium. New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1930, p. 79

Voroshilov states, "Comrade Stalin always insisted on personal responsibility for work undertaken, and was physically incapable of tolerating 'departmental red tape.'
Comrade Stalin paid great attention to the organization of supplies to the troops. He knew and understood the meaning of good food and warm clothes for the soldiers. At Tsaritsyn and Perm, and on the Southern front, he left no stone unturned to guarantee supplies to the troops and thus make them stronger and steadier.
Life of Stalin, A Symposium. New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1930, p. 80

He knew the ways of winning men. He has always been a good mixer, with personal qualities that make very few enemies and many loyal friends. During the civil war, on the front near Petrograd, Stalin noticed that one of the soldiers did not cheer him as a commander, which is Red Army custom. He halted and asked why. The soldier said nothing

but pointed to his feet. It was December and he was wearing straw sandals. Stalin took off his boots and gave them to the soldier, putting the sandals on his own feet. He wore them for many days.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 49

Stalin was not a military man. Nevertheless he coped ably with the leadership of the armed forces. Ably. There was no people's commissar heading the air force but Stalin. The Navy, led by Stalin, and the artillery, led by Stalin.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 202

CHUEV: Golovanov, in his memoirs, writes that Stalin, and not the marshal of artillery Voronov, determined the main thrust of artillery at Stalingrad.
MOLOTOV: That's right.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 202

He (Stalin) made numerous visits to all the fronts at the request of the Central Committee, and his reports back to them and to Lenin and others show that the same organizational talents demonstrated in the pre-revolutionary period and in the revolution were applied to the war situation. Everywhere he showed his characteristic common-sense realism, unerringly pointing to key weaknesses and proposing practical solutions. He shuttled between the eastern front, against Kolchak, the southern front, against Denikin, and the Petrograd front, against Yudenich. Nor was his role confined to that of organizational specialist. It was his plan for the attack on Denikin–approved by the Central Committee–that resulted in the final defeat of his armies in the freeing of Kiev and Kharkov.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 35

Is it true that Stalin really was an outstanding military thinker, a major contributor to the development of the Armed Forces and an expert in tactical and strategic principles?
From the military standpoint I have studied Stalin most thoroughly, for I entered the war together with him and together with him I ended it.
Stalin mastered the technique of the organization of front operations and operations by groups of fronts and guided them with skill, thoroughly understanding complicated strategic questions. He displayed his ability as Commander-in-Chief beginning with Stalingrad.
In guiding the armed struggle as a whole, Stalin was assisted by his natural intelligence and profound intuition. He had a knack of grasping the main link in the strategic situation so as to organize opposition to the enemy and conduct a major offensive operation. He was certainly a worthy Supreme Commander.
Here Stalin's merit lies in the fact that he correctly appraised the advice offered by the military experts and then in summarized form–in instructions, directives, and regulations–immediately circulated them among the troops for practical guidance.
As regards the material and technical organization of operations, the buildup of strategic reserves, of the organization of production of materiel. and troop supplies, Stalin did prove himself to be an outstanding organizer. And it would be unfair if we, the Soviet people, failed to pay tribute to him for it.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987,
APPENDIX 1
Portrait of Stalin by Zhukov, p. 143

“There were times, especially in October, 1919, at which the new Republic seemed to be on the point of succumbing. But neither the White Armies, nor Poland’s entry into the war, nor the peasant risings, nor famine could overcome its indomitable will-power, and, galvanized by Lenin, it’s ragged battalions triumphed over fourteen nations.” These words appeared in a report by Monsieur Mallet, a reactionary journalist who had the capitalist cause at heart and was, in every respect, very much biased.
At this point I want to reveal the personal part played by Stalin during this period.
Wherever on the Civil War front the danger was greatest, there Stalin was sent.
“Between 1918 and 1920, Stalin was the only man whom the Central Committee kept sending from one front to another, to the point at which the Revolution was in the gravest peril.” (Kalinin.)
“Wherever the Red Army faltered, whenever the counter-revolutionary forces were piling success on success, when at any moment the excitement and confusion and discouragement might turn into panic, at that point Stalin would arrive. He would not sleep a wink, but would take complete charge and would organize, smash, and drive until the turning point was reached and the situation was in hand.” (Kaganovich)
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 61

So that, in his own words: “I was turned into a specialist for cleaning out the Augean stables of the War Department.”
This is one of the most astonishing periods of Stalin’s career, and one of which the least is known. The way in which he behaved, and the success which he obtained on the battle fronts during two years, would have been sufficient to make a professional soldier famous and a popular hero.
Here are a few glimpses which Voroshilov and Kaganovich give us into the “military work” during this turbulent time of the man whom Kaganovich calls: “One of the most famous organizers of the victories of the Civil War.”
In the course of two years, Stalin found himself on the Tsaritsyn front with Voroshilov & Minim, on the Third Corps front at Perm with Dzerzhinsky, on the Petrograd front (against Yudenich’s first advance), on the western front at Smolensk (the Polish counter-offensive), on the southern front (against Denikin), again on the Polish front in the west, in the region of Jitomir, and again on the southern front (against Wrangel).
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 62

Increasingly Lenin had come to rely on Stalin, who was in most things the antithesis of Trotsky. He rarely addressed the troops or meetings of any kind, but when he did he spoke in simple terms. He was the realist, who coldly assessed men and situations, and was usually sound in his conclusions. He remained calm and self-possessed. He was difficult only in his antagonisms towards certain people and when his advice was rejected.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 140

His [Zhukov] relations with Stalin were on occasions stormy, but they were based on mutual respect. From many incidents related by Zhukov in his memoirs, written after Stalin’s death, it is clear that he never questioned Stalin’s authority and that he regarded him as a leader of profound wisdom and mastery of affairs, even in the military field.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 315

Stalin dominated the [Tehran] conference. He was brief and incisive in his comments, clear about his objectives, patient and inexorable in pursuing them. Brooke considered that he had an outstanding military brain, and observed that in all his statements he never once failed to appreciate all the implications of a situation with quick, unerring eye, and “in this respect he stood out compared with Roosevelt and Churchill.” The head of the U.S. military mission in Moscow had noted that no one could fail to recognize “the qualities of greatness in the man.” Combined with this essential greatness, there was a charm and at times a human warmth….
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 388

Taking care not to show surprise at the question, Konev replied after a little thought, “Stalin is universally gifted. He is brilliantly able to see the war as a whole and this makes it possible for him to direct it so successfully.”
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 395

It was his victory, too, because he had directed and controlled every branch of Russian operations throughout the war. The range and burden of his responsibilities were extraordinary, but day by day without a break for the four years of the war he exercised direct command of the Russian forces and control over supplies, war industries, and government policy, including foreign policy.
As he himself acknowledged, he had made mistakes and miscalculations, some with tragic consequences and heavy casualties. The first and perhaps the greatest of his mistakes was his political misjudgment of German plans to invade Russia. He had obdurately refused to believe that Hitler would launch his invasion in June 1941, and, seeking to buy time by placating him, he had taken none of the obvious defense measures.
Again he had been held solely responsible for the terrible Russian losses of 1941 and 1942, and criticized for not following the traditional Russian strategy of retreating into the vastness of the Russian plain….
Defenses organized in depth, however, would hardly have halted the surge of the highly mechanized Wehrmacht in 1941. It had effortlessly crushed the Polish Army, which some British military experts in 1939 had rated above the Red Army in efficiency and morale. It had conquered France and expelled the British from the continent. Acutely aware of the inadequacies of the Russian defenses and the weakness of the Red Army in 1941, Stalin knew that they could not withstand a German attack. He gambled for time so that his urgent mechanization and training programs could build up the Red Army’s strength. He lost the gamble.
Stalin knew the military history of his country and well understood the strategy of falling back and using its great spaces. By temperament, however, he was positive and aggressive, eager to attack rather than defend, and this was characteristic of his conduct of Russian strategy throughout the war. He was at the same time capable of tremendous self-control, as he demonstrated in waiting for the Germans to attack in the battle of Kursk, and in general during 1943-45 he was constantly on guard against premature and ill-prepared offensives.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 420

From the first months of the war Stalin gathered around him able senior officers, rejuvenating the High Command. He chose them on merit, and, an astute judge of men, he was constantly raising fairly junior officers to high rank. By the time of the battle of Moscow, he had selected his key commanders in Zhukov, Vasilevsky, Rokossovsky, Konev, and

Voronov. To them were added by the time of the battle of Stalingrad Vatutin, Eremenko, Malinovsky, Meretskov, Cherniakhovsky, and others.
Stalin was unchallenged as supreme commander. His most able generals, like Zhukov, Rokossovsky, Konev, and others, who were outstanding among the generals of all countries involved in the war, accepted his authority unquestioningly. In fact, he dominated them not by virtue of office but by force of character and intellect. He inspired deepest respect and also affection. At times he exploded in anger, demanding immediate action; at other times he spoke gently, encouraging and inspiring confidence.
With his disciplined mind and tenacious memory he developed considerable military expertise and technical knowledge. Western officers and engineers present at discussions with him were impressed by his quick and accurate understanding. Alan Brooke, chief of the British general staff, remarked on several occasions on his mastery of military matters. His own commanders considered their reports carefully before submitting them, for he would unfailing way put his finger on any weakness or loose thinking in their presentation…. Moreover, as Zhukov stated, he was always prepared to reverse his own opinions when presented with sound reasons. But he made the final decisions.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 422

It was his victory, above all, because it had been won by his genius and labors, heroic in scale. The Russian people had looked to him for leadership, and he had not failed them. His speeches of July 3 and November 6, 1941, which had steeled them for the trials of war, and his presence in Moscow during the great battle for the city, had demonstrated his will to victory. He was for them a semi-mystical figure, enthroned in the Kremlin, who inspired them and gave them positive direction. He had the capacity of attending to detail and keeping in mind the broad picture, and, while remembering the past and immersed in the present, he was constantly looking ahead to the future.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 424

In examining Stalin's strategic thinking, I have to say right away that he was superior to many of his advisers in a number fields,…. As Supreme Commander-in-chief his strength lay in his absolute power. But it was not this alone that raised him above the other military leaders. Unlike them, he could see the profound dependence of the armed struggle on an entire spectrum of other, non-military factors: economic, social, technical, political, diplomatic, ideological and national. Better than the other members of the Headquarters Staff, he knew the country's real possibilities in terms of its agriculture and industry. His thinking was more global, and it was this that placed him above the others in the military leadership. The military facet was only one of many.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 474

It was while the military strength of the Soviets was at its nadir that the revolts of the Social Revolutionaries and the attempt on Lenin's life took place.
At that moment of supreme danger, nearly all members of the government left Moscow and hurried to the most vital sectors of the front. At the Kremlin Lenin with the few technical assistants directed the entire struggle, keeping in constant touch with the men on the spot. Two men were sent to retrieve the position where it looked most menacing. To try to save the capital from the military threat the Commissar of War, Trotsky, set out in his armored train, which was to become legendary in the civil war, to Svyazhsk, near Kazan. Stalin, accompanied by an armed guard of nearly battalion strength, went to Tsaritsyn on the Volga

to try to save the capital from the starvation that threatened it. He was to arrange the transport of grain from the northern Caucasus to Moscow. His assignment, which was essentially civilian, was expected to last a short time, after which he was to proceed further south to Baku. But his stay at Tsaritsyn was prolonged by unforeseen circumstances; and the longer it lasted the deeper did it involve himself in the conduct of the civil war in the south and in a controversy with Trotsky, until in the end his trip to the Volga town became a landmark in his career.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 195

The day after his arrival on June 7, 1918, he reported to Lenin on his first moves. He found a 'bacchanalia of profiteering' in the Volga area and his first step was to decree the rationing of food and control of prices at Tsaritsyn. The Soviet official in charge of trade would be arrested. 'Tell Schmidt [The Commissar of Labor] not to send such rascals any more.' This was the language of the energetic administrator with a penchant for control and repression–both, given all the circumstances, probably justified. He had no liking for the ultra-democratic chaos that was left over from the Revolution. 'Railway transport has been completely disorganized by the joint efforts of a multitude of Collegium's and revolutionary Committees.' After they had deposed the old managements in industry and administration, the Bolsheviks first tried control by committee. They were now engaged in scrapping that ultra-democratic but unworkable system and re-establishing individual management and individual responsibility. The left Communists passionately objected to the change. Stalin left no doubt where he stood. He appointed commissars to overcome the chaos in transport. After a month at Tsaritsyn he asked for special military powers on the southern front. In view of the operations of Krasnov's Cossacks, the provisioning of Moscow had become primarily a military matter. In reply to a communication from Lenin on the outbreak of the Social Revolutionary mutinies, he assured Moscow that 'everything will be done to prevent possible surprises here. Rest assured that our hand will not tremble.' The rail connection between Tsaritsyn and the farming land of the northern Caucasus 'has not yet been restored. I am driving and scolding everybody who needs it. Rest assured that we shall spare nobody, neither ourselves nor others, and that we shall deliver the bread….' In his messages practical soberness mixed with a queer relish for expressions of ruthless determination.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 196

The regeneration of the army, of its morale, and of its commanding staff was one of Russia's most remarkable achievements, for which credit was due to Stalin.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 497

It must be admitted that Koba is a first-rate tactician….
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 111

At that time Lenin was continually receiving official military reports from both Trotsky and Stalin simultaneously. Trotsky's reports are known to us from his published memoirs; but up to the present only a few of Stalin's reports have been seen in print. One of these, which was sent in the autumn of 1919 and makes only 70 lines on the printed page, threw over the whole official strategic plan and introduced another. This was accepted by the Government in Moscow. The result of Stalin's 70 lines of print was to change the whole situation in Russia's favor. Denikin was driven into the Black Sea and the Ukraine was liberated. Here was another proof that successful strategy in war does not come from the plans thought out

by the professors in military academies but rather from the practical man-on-the-spot who understands all the immediate circumstances and has the character and insight to seize the decisive moment.
Ludwig, Emil. Leaders of Europe. London: I. Nicholson and Watson Ltd., 1934, p. 362

In the message to Lenin of July 7 already quoted, Stalin had pressed to be given military as well as civilian authority. Three days later, Stalin sent a further message:
“For the good of the cause I must have military powers… but I have received no reply. Very well. In that event I myself, without formalities, will remove the army commanders and commissars who are ruining things. That’s what the interest of the cause bids me do, and naturally the absence of a piece of paper from Trotsky won’t stop me.”
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 99

Charged with restoring the passage of grain from this turbulent region, Stalin shouldered a weighty burden. But he never flinched; he carried his responsibilities with pride and imparted his determination to his fellow travelers.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 165

he [Stalin] spent the Civil War mainly on or near the fighting fronts. Recalled to Moscow in October 1918, he resumed his work in the Party Central Committee and Sovnarkom. But by December he was off again. The White Army of Admiral Kolchak had swept into the Urals city of Perm and destroyed the Red Army units there. Stalin and Dzerzhinsky were sent to conduct an inquiry into the reasons for the military disaster. They returned and made their report at the end of January 1919. Stalin stayed in Moscow again until being dispatched in May to Petrograd and the Western Front against the invasion by General Yudenich from Estonia. In July he moved on to a different sector of the same front at Smolensk. In September he was transferred to the Southern Front, where he stayed into 1920.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 172

The Central Committee recognized his worth by its successive use of him on the Southern Front, the Western Front, again the Southern Front, the South-Western Front and the Caucasian Front. Qualities which earned him praise were his decisiveness, determination, energy, and willingness to take responsibility for critical and unpredictable situations.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 173

Avoidance of unnecessary risk was one thing, and Stalin took this to an extreme. But it is scarcely fair on Stalin to claim that he was a coward. Probably his behavior stemmed rather from an excessive estimate of his own indispensablility to the war effort. He looked on his military and political subordinates and thought they could not cope without him. Nor was he afraid of personal responsibility once he had got over the shock of 22 June 1941. He lived or died by his success in leading army and government. He exhausted every bone in his body for that purpose. And Zhukov credited Stalin with making up for his original military ignorance and inexperience. He went on studying during the fighting, and with his exceptional capacity for hard work he was able to raise himself to the level where he could understand most of the military complexities in Stavka [the Supreme military command].

Khrushchev later caricatured Stalin as having tried to follow the campaigns on a small globe he kept in his office, and this image has been reproduced in many subsequent accounts. In fact Stalin, while scaring his commanders and often making wholly unrealistic demands upon them, earned their professional admiration.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 457

I would only add that Stalin was just as categorical with other people. He required similar discipline from every representative of the GHQ. We were permitted to move as we thought fit only within the boundaries of the fronts whose actions we were to coordinate. If we wished to move to other fronts we had to obtain special permission from Stalin. My feeling is that the lack of any indulgence to a GHQ representative was justified in the interests of efficient control of hostilities. Stalin very attentively followed the course of events at the front, quickly reacted to all changes in them and firmly held troop control in his own hands.
Vasilevskii, Aleksandr M. A Lifelong Cause. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1981, p. 285

Pestkovsky writes that Stalin became “Lenin’s deputy in the leadership of fighting revolutionary actions. He was in charge of watching after military operations on the Don, the Ukraine, and in other parts of Russia.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 246

The front attracted him [Stalin], because here for the first time he could work with the most finished of all the administrative machines, the military machine. As a member of the Revolutionary Council of War who was at the same time a member of the Central Committee of the Party, he was inevitably the dominant figure in every Council of War, in every army, on every front. When others hesitated, he decided. He could command, and each command was followed by a practically automatic execution of his order .
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 295
Not until 1941 was Stalin to participate again in military command. His introduction to this art in 1918-20 had not been without its frustrations and defeats, but Stalin had emerged not only on the winning side, but also as a political-military chief whose contribution to the Red victory was second only to Trotsky’s. Stalin had played a smaller role than his rival in the overall organization of the Red Army, but he had been more important in providing direction on crucial fronts. If his reputation as a hero was far below Trotsky’s, this has less to do with objective merit than with Stalin’s lack of flair, at this stage of his career, for self-advertisement.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 63

Stalin, although not a trained soldier, absorbed military knowledge in the Russian Civil War, where he moved from one chaotic front to another. His role in civil war strategy is documented in war records and memoirs. In one operation, he mounted an unorthodox seaborne assault, which military professionals opposed, calling it too risky. When it proved successful, Stalin told Lenin that he had lost faith in ‘experts’. He was deeply involved in a series of important military operations and dutifully telegraphed the results to Lenin.
Axell, Albert. Stalin’s War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 14

STALIN'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO CIVIL WAR VICTORY ARE UNDENIABLE

Stalin's contributions to victory in the Civil War are beyond dispute.
He had had unqualified success in the tasks assigned to him. In accordance with the tradition of the Bolshevik party, his resolution in action, his initiative in emergency, and his independence often to the verge of rebellion against discipline, were credited to him as high virtues. He had been justified by success, and that was the thing that mattered above all.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 87

DESPITE SUCCESSES PARTY WILL NOT GIVE STALIN A MILITARY OR STATE ROLE

It was plain, however, that in spite of all Stalin's proved ability the intellectual nucleus of the party executive had not the least intention of giving him any high position in the State, or any high military post; and he himself seems to have made no effort to secure one.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 88

STALIN'S GOOD WAR RECORD HELPED GET GEN. SEC. POSITION

Stalin had given entire satisfaction, carrying out the orders and directives with care and accuracy and without any attempt to push himself forward. This record stood in his favor in connection with the post of secretary of the party.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 90

TROTSKY WAS RUTHLESS DURING THE CIVIL WAR AND INTERVENTION

Had not Trotsky ordered every tenth man in his troops to be shot when the troops fell back in the civil war?
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 309

Trotsky shot down those sailors whom he had previously called the pride of the revolution. This is why, in his autobiography, he devotes only two lines to this ghastly incident.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 75

Also Trotsky, though more of a philosopher, did not recoil from terrorism. Trotsky, had he been in Stalin's place, would have concluded the pact with the Germans, forseeing that one of the parties would break it.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 111

As the struggle progressed, it was easily dramatized and personified as a fight between Stalin and Trotsky, who did indeed represent opposite poles and had moreover been long on unfriendly terms. I spoke earlier of their clash at the siege of Tsaritsyn (Stalingrad), and other contemporary stories illustrate their mutual hostility. For instance, Trotsky once was holding a meeting of army commanders at the front, and had given orders to the sentry that no interruptions were permitted on pain of death. Stalin arrived from Petrograd as

representative of the Supreme War Committee, brushed the sentry aside and interrupted Trotsky's conference.
Trotsky greeted him quietly, but when the council was over he had the sentry condemned to death for disobeying the orders. The next day the local Red forces held a parade in honor of Stalin and his colleagues of the Committee. When it was over a firing squad appeared on the parade ground, and sentence of death was read over the unlucky sentry.
Before Stalin could protest, Trotsky made a Napoleonic gesture. "This soldier," he said, "deserves death for disobedience to orders, because obedience, no matter what be the circumstances, is a soldier's first duty. But he has a splendid record of courage and devotion, therefore I have decided to exercise my powers as Commissar of War to cancel the verdict of the court-martial and dismiss him with a warning."
The troops roared applause, but Stalin went back to Petrograd with a sour report for Lenin about Trotsky's "aping the arrogance of a Tsarist general."
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 104

As Joel Carmichael writes:
"Trotsky also gave full expression to the ferocity inherent in civil war; in the nature of things anything short of the death penalty can be thought rectifiable by the victory of one's own side.
Trotsky's wholehearted identification with an Idea made him implacable–"merciless" was a favorite word of his own. He had a certain admiral (Shchastny) executed on an indictment of sabotage. This admiral had been appointed by the Bolsheviks themselves; he had saved the Baltic Sea Fleet from the Germans and with great difficulty brought it from Helsingfors to Kronstadt and the mouth of the Neva. He was very popular among the sailors; because of his strong position vis-a-vis the new regime he behaved quite independently. This is what annoyed Trotsky, who was, in fact, the only witness to appear against him, and who denounced him without itemizing any charges; he simply said in court that [Shchastny] was a dangerous state criminal who ought to be mercilessly punished….
Trotsky also instituted a savage general measure– the keeping of hostages: he had a register made up of the families of officers fighting at the fronts."
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 105

Suffice it to say that what the Soviet government did reluctantly at Kronstadt was a tragic necessity; naturally, the revolutionary government could not have "presented" the fortress that protected Petrograd to the insurgent sailors only because a few dubious Anarchists and Social Revolutionaries were sponsoring a handful of reactionary peasants and soldiers in rebellion. Similar considerations were involved in the case of Makhno and other potentially revolutionary elements that were perhaps well-meaning but definitely ill-acting.
Far from spurning the cooperation of revolutionists of all the currents of Socialism, the Bolsheviks of the heroic era of the revolution eagerly sought it on every occasion and made every possible concession to secure it. For example, Lenin and I seriously considered at one time allotting certain territories to the Anarchists, naturally with the consent of the local population, and letting them carry on their experiment of a stateless social order there. That project died in the discussion stage through no fault of ours. The Anarchist movement itself failed to pass the test of actual events on the proving ground of the Russian Revolution. Many of the ablest and sanest of the Anarchists decided that they could serve their cause best by joining the ranks of our Party.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 337

Another well-known incident was his taking of harsh reprisals against a regiment that abandoned its position without orders. Trotsky ordered not only the commander and the commissar but also every tenth Red Army man in the regiment to be shot.
Through such severity Trotsky accumulated many enemies among party and military workers.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 105

After the battle [with Wrangel], Trotsky is said to have ordered the execution of the surviving 5000 Makhno followers.
Pipes, Richard. Russia under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 134

Trotsky had not shrunk from using terror in the Civil War; but he can be said to have been as little fond of it as a surgeon is fond of bloodshed.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 292

During the period when Trotsky held power, he was, whatever his personal magnetism, a ruthless imposer of the Party's will who firmly crushed the democratic opposition within the Party and fully supported the rules which in 1921 gave the ruling group total authority. And the crushing of the Kronstadt rebellion was as much his personal battle honor as the seizure of power had been. He was the leading figure among the doctrinaire Leftist Bolsheviks who were finding it hard to stomach Lenin's concessions to the peasantry, and preferred a far more rigorous regime, even before Stalin came round to the same view. Trotsky might have carried out such policies less crudely than Stalin. But he would have used, as ever, as much violence as he thought necessary–and that would not have been a small amount.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 412

… He [Trotsky] had shown himself no less ruthless than Stalin. Indeed, at the time of the Civil War, he had ordered executions on a greater scale than Stalin or anyone else….
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 413

After the fall of Kazan, Trotsky left for the front and signed an order with the following warning: no mercy for the enemies of the people, the agents of imperialism, or the lackeys of the bourgeoisie…. Showing his fist of steel, he ordered the commander and the commissar of a regiment shot because they had retreated without orders. The execution of the commander did not produce any commentary; that of the commissar (a man named Panteleev) was a real sacrilege in the eyes of the Communists because one of their own had been shot. The incident was discussed throughout the civil war;…
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 81

(The recollection that Trotsky had had a Communist commissar, Panteleev, shot was also very much alive among the Old Bolsheviks.)
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 161

Trotsky was also reviled for shooting political commissars for disobedience or cowardice.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 169

To add to the beauty of this system, Trotsky proposed the idea of vast labor camps to build socialism.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 69

Now that Trotsky was no longer in power, my informant had no reason to hide his feelings. It was astonishing to find so much hatred towards Trotsky in a man so profoundly demoralized. Yet his hatred was as violent as it had been on the first day. To him, Trotsky was neither the hero of the October revolution nor the chief of the victorious Red Army, but only the bloody executioner who had subdued the popular revolt of Kronstadt. He did not like the Trotskyists and had no great liking for me.
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 182

UNLIKE KERENSKY THE BOLSHEVIKS ALLOWED FINLAND TO BE INDEPENDENT

The Kerensky Government refused even to recognize the independence of Finland, though Finland had always been an independent State, bound to Russia only by a single constitutional bond, that of a common dynasty.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 331

Finland's independence was a direct gift from the Bolshevik Revolution. When the Tsar fell, Finland, then part of the Russian empire, asked for independence. The Kerensky government refused. Neither Britain, France, nor the USA then wanted Finland's independence, which implied the breakup of the tsarist empire, their ally in the first world war. As soon as the Bolsheviks took power, Stalin, then Commissar of Nationalities, moved that Finland's request be granted, saying: "Since the Finnish people… definitely demand… independence, the proletarian state…cannot but meet the demand."
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 74

BOLSHEVIKS WERE AS MORAL AS WAS REALISTIC TO BE

Much of what has been said about the "lack of morality" of the Bolsheviks gives evidence of a mental narrowness and inability to appreciate the real reasons for the lawlessness which was admittedly used. Lenin, Stalin, Krassin, and many a hundred others gained nothing for themselves from the escapades of their subordinates. Kamo allowed his comrades a mere 50 kopeks a day. Their whole lives were governed by the hope that, by their efforts, a new and better system should sweep the Romanovs into oblivion. Who will lightly condemn the steps they took to achieve that end? Lenin himself summed up the position with admirable fairness: "That man who is afraid to soil the whiteness of his hands should not go into politics."
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 31

The strength of the government is in fact determined by the strength of this group of leaders….
Their private lives are reputedly clean. It is generally admitted that there is no graft in high places. Their habits are relatively simple.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 404

In one, perhaps unsuspected, respect, many Americans find the Russians a bit stuffy. That is in their moral outlook. This may come as something of a surprise after the deluge of false propaganda, when the Soviets first came to power, about “free love” and “nationalization of women”. There were certain excesses among Russian young people, particularly intellectual groups, after the Revolution, but this was frowned upon by the Communist leaders, who are often almost puritanical in their private lives and attitudes. I saw recent examples of this when I was last in the Soviet Union. Some American relief shipments contained playing cards. The Russians did not like this at all. Cards are, I found out, associated with gambling in their minds.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 84

One of the big surprises in these documents is that the Stalinists said the same things to each other behind closed doors that they said to the public: in this regard their “hidden transcripts” differed little from their public ones.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 22

TROTSKY ERRS AS COMMISSAR OF WAR

Because of his acknowledged success as a propagandist and his ability to inspire crowds, Trotsky was given the job of “Commissar for War,” with complete power, subject to the approval of Lenin and Stalin. The drawbacks to this choice were very soon demonstrated.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 45

DURING THE CIVIL WAR BOLSHEVIK TERRITORY REDUCED TO VERY SMALL SIZE

In the summer of 1918 the territory under Soviet control shrank to a few starving provinces around Petrograd and Moscow; and only the most desperate display of revolutionary energy staved off what seemed to be an inevitable collapse.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 31

In the second place the Soviet had to cope with a hundred new obstacles–desertion of the intelligentsia, strike of the old officials, sabotage of the technicians, excommunication by the church, the blockade by the Allies. It was cut off from the grain fields of the Ukraine, the oilfields of Baku, the coal mines of the Don, the cotton of Turkestan–fuel and food reserves were gone. “Now,” said their enemies, “the bony hand of hunger will clutch the people by their throat and bring them to their senses.” To prevent supply trains reaching the cities, agents of the imperialists dynamited the railway bridges and put emery into the locomotive bearings.
Williams, Albert. Through the Russian Revolution. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967, p. 233

He [Stalin] appealed to the soldiers to draw inspiration from the memories of the civil war, when ‘three-quarters of our country was in the hands of foreign interventionists’ and the young Soviet Republic had no army of its own and no allies.

Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 468

PEASANTS SUPPORT BOLSHEVIKS OVER THE WHITES

The Civil War in Russia was fought along class rather than territorial lines, the Bolsheviks finding their chief support in the industrial workers, while the motive power in the White movement was furnished by the former propertied and official classes, which had suffered most in the revolutionary upheaval. The peasantry, which constituted the majority of the population, wavered uncertainly in its attitude, now raising insurrections against the ruthless grain requisitions which the Bolsheviks employed to feed the starving cities, now turning sharply against the Whites when they saw that the victory of the latter threatened the return of the hated landlords. If one may judge from the intensity and scope of the insurrections, the peasants regarded the Bolsheviks as the lesser of two evils, perhaps because they felt that some day the requisitions would cease, whereas the return of the landlords would mean the permanent loss of the land which they had seized in the first period of the Revolution.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 32

Fighting went on with equal violence on both sides of the Kolchak lines. Iron ore production stopped completely. The population was even more impoverished than it had been before. No one knew what historical issues were at stake. They all knew that Kolchak represented the landlords and capitalists while the Red Army gave the land to the peasants and the mines and factories to the workers, that the Red Army drove the hateful tax collectors and epauletted White officers away or shot them.
Scott, John. Behind the Urals, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1942, p. 61

…There were a little over 200,000 communists in the October Revolution. The more exact figure would be 240,000.
The country's population was 150 million, more than half illiterate;… We somehow had to find a way to drag the country onto the high road of progress. Nothing could have been achieved had we not utilized the services of temporary allies, even if they were only one-quarter allies. Unaided, we would have been incapable of building socialism.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 289

In spite of depictions to the contrary, the Bolshevik Party was a democratically run, working-class Party that little by little became a dominant political force. Its power was based on nothing but the trust of the masses, a trust won by months of struggle in the soviets, factories, unions, and streets. When the March revolution broke out, the Party had 24,000 members; in October, 400,000.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 31

To what extent did these masses support the new government setup by the Bolsheviks? How wide a following did the Revolution find in the people? The People's Business said: "A Revolution is a rising of all the people. But what have we here? A handful of poor fools deceived by Lenin and Trotsky."
True, the membership of the Bolshevik Party was a "handful" among the great populations of Russia–not more than one or two percent. If that was all, the new government might well be stigmatized as "the tyranny of an infinitesimal fraction over the great majority." But one fact

must be borne in mind,: Bolshevik sentiment is not to be gauged by the Bolshevik Party. For every Bolshevik in the official Bolshevik Party there were 30 to 50 Bolsheviks in the general population.
The high standard of admission, the hard duties and drastic discipline of the Bolshevik Party, made the masses unwilling to join it. But they voted for it.
Williams, Albert. Through the Russian Revolution. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967, p. 173

Roman Gul, a White Guard officer, wrote in his book Campaign on the Ice, “The people did not want to join the Whites… after all, they were the former masters… The peasant did not trust us. That was disastrous for the peasant and for Russia as a whole.” The same class hatred of peasants for their former masters helped the Bolsheviks. As soon as the “masters” reappeared, the peasants forgot Bolshevik oppression completely. The masters made this easier for them–they tried to reintroduce tsarist laws and took land away from the peasants to restore it to the landowners. As a result, the might of the Denikin’s and Kolchak’s armies was destroyed by the merciless peasant war that flared up in their wake.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 165

LOCAL SOVIET OFFICIALS DECIDED TO KILL THE ROMANOVS

In the summer of 1918 the Tsar, the Tsarina, their son, and four daughters, were confined in the Ural town of Ekaterinburg. The Soviet power had been overthrown in Siberia and was tottering in the Urals; the combined forces of the Czechs and White Russians were approaching Ekaterinburg, which was actually taken on July 28. Under these conditions the local Soviet authorities decided to take no chances on a rescue; and on the night of July 17th the Tsar, the Tsarina, their children, and a few personal attendants were taken into a cellar and mowed down with bullet fire.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 33

STALIN STRONGLY OPPOSED USING EX-CZARIST OFFICERS

… Lenin and Trotsky had to a knowledge that they could not manage without the advice of the old officers. They therefore accepted the services of a few of these professionals, and always had them watched by tried and trusted party comrades. …when Lenin gave Stalin his first command at the front, near Tsaritsyn, Stalin discovered a conspiracy among the officers, who were about to turn on the new rulers. Stalin’s reports and telegrams were filled with the bitterest contempt for the professionals, who did everything wrong: “what these fellows call the science of war I can only deplore, though I have the highest respect for science as such.”
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam’s sons, 1942, p. 63

In later years Stalin used to enjoy telling us that he refused to have anything to do with the bourgeois officers whom Trotsky dispatched to Tsaritsyn and that they invariably turned out to be traitors.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 18

In order to enlist bourgeois officers into the Red Army, Lenin knew he would have to give them the freedom to make decisions on their own. Commissars were to watch over the

bourgeois officers but not to interfere with them. Just imagine: a former colonel of the old tsarist army would suddenly be given a command in the Red Army. During the Civil War, I saw many misunderstandings arise between officers and the commissars who were standing over them. As Stalin was later to remind us so frequently, there were many instances of treason among the bourgeois officers. A certain amount of treason had to be expected. These people had been brought up under the old capitalist regime. Some came over to our side out of fear, some came for the novelty, others came because they had no alternative–they had to earn a living. And some came out of treachery.
But the party had no choice. We had to win over as many specialists as possible to our cause. It was part of Lenin's genius that at such a critical moment he was able to learn some lessons from the capitalists and take advantage of their experience and expertise.
Stalin, for his part, remained a specialist-eater all his life.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 20

Trotsky, safe at Moscow, became more and more irritated by Tsaritsyn. His policy in creating the new Red Army was to staff it almost exclusively from the ex-officers of the old army. The policy of Stalin and Voroshilov was to consider such officers as unreliable and to staff the army from the young enthusiasts of the revolutionary movement. Trotsky, moreover, did not forgive the ignoring of his telegram. He went to Lenin and insisted upon Stalin's recall.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 47

Somewhat weakly, it must be said, Trotsky agreed and allowed Stalin to join the war staff on the Southern front. That was an error if Trotsky firmly believed that it was fatal to allow young communists to run the army rather than ex-officers of the Tsar's army.
In any case, he proceeded to get rid of all Stalin's "heroes" in Tsaritsyn. In December he demanded of Lenin that Voroshilov be relieved as he could not work with him. And with Voroshilov the rest of the staff was dismissed and Trotsky had a new staff of his own choosing and a new commander.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 53

LENIN GOT STALIN RED BANNER AWARD FOR WAR PERFORMANCE

Stalin's services and the Civil War received special recognition in a decision adopted by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, on Lenin's motion, on November 27, 1919, awarding him the Order of the Red Banner.
Alexandrov, G. F. Joseph Stalin; a Short Biography. Moscow: FLPH, 1947, p. 69

ROMANIA CAUSED A LOT OF TROUBLE FOR THE SU

Romania occupied Bessarabia after the October Revolution and behaved in a hostile and provocative manner toward the USSR. Romania kept causing trouble along the border. Shots were fired at our bank of the Prut River. In a word, there was always tension in that area.
Schecter, Jerrold. Trans & Ed. Khrushchev Remembers: the Glasnost Tapes. Boston: Little, Brown, c1990, p. 51

WAR COMMUNISM WAS NECESSARY

The civil war was preventing us from switching over to normal methods of work. That's why we had the so-called food requisitioning system. Balking at nothing, the state took from the peasants what it needed. If you had more, the state would take more from you; if someone else had a great deal, the state would take everything; if another had nothing, the state would take nothing. There was no other way out.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 151

There were, however, other reasons for the breach between the countryside and the Bolsheviks. First of all, the cities and towns had to be fed, but they were unable to provide goods for the peasants in return for their produce. The peasants declined to accept paper money, which they found worthless, and this led to a system of unpopular food requisitions. The Bolsheviks seem to have done their utmost to supply the peasants with goods, but the shortages in the cities were already so great that little could be done. They also tried to institute a rationing system of food and commodities in the urban centers, but "speculation" and black markets were so rife that in March, 1918, Lenin founded the Extraordinary Commission (Cheka). Its chief function was at first to combat speculation, but growing clouds in town & country alike dictated its use as an instrument against counter-revolution, which soon became its principal task….
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 46

TERRORISM STARTED EARLY-ON BY COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARIES

But fresh terrorist attempts resumed in 1928. Terrorists armed with bombs were apprehended at the border. Terrorists of the socialist-Revolutionary type. They were audacious….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 214

In Tsarist days the question of individual assassination had been a matter of more than academic discussion between the Bolsheviks and other revolutionary groups. It was practiced consistently by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the anarchists, but the Bolsheviks had always condemned it, not from humanitarian motives but as ineffective and likely to provoke costly reprisals. Lenin also made it clear that he preferred mass action to individual action, and thought that time and energy were better spent in mass education and preparation for action than in isolated terrorist blows. The Socialist-Revolutionaries, however, thought differently, and on the night of August 30th, 1918, a Socialist-Revolutionary girl named Fannie (or Dora) Kaplan seriously wounded Lenin as he was leaving a factory meeting in Moscow. The next day Uritsky, head of the Petrograd Cheka, was shot dead by another Socialist-Revolutionary assassin. These two acts unleashed the celebrated "Red Terror," which for once required no exaggeration by the Soviet's enemies abroad.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 51

[Excerpts from the Cheka weekly of 1918 concerning the response of the Cheka to an attempt on Lenin's life and the murder of Uritsky]
You, Comrade workers and rural poor, do not be afraid. View the red terror as a necessity to force the bourgeoisie and its lackeys to be quiet. Furthermore, be aware that the capitalist rulers in the Ukraine, on the Don, are shooting workers and peasants, the number of victims

reaching 20,000. They are not standing on ceremony in Finland either, and the jails are full; they are packing our brothers in where there are already as many as 80,000 incarcerated. Remember that we will not move them with our softness and good and will toward them, because they are acting with a purpose, striving to extinguish and deny the rights of the workers and peasants. Thus we answer and we must answer a blow with a blow 10 times stronger.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 14

In periods of intense revolutionary conflict tsarist officials and members of the Black Hundreds used the most refined tortures on many revolutionaries, including women. Many embittered counter-revolutionaries revived torture on a mass scale during the civil war. The Bolsheviks, for their part, often shot captives but rarely resorted to other forms of violence.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 487

The exact number of people destroyed by the Cheka during the civil war will probably never be known, but there can be no doubt that the Whites killed many more Communists, Komsomol members, captured Red Army men, and ordinary workers and peasants. The White armies rarely took prisoners or established concentration camps. The very first campaigns of the Volunteer Army, led by Generals Kornilov and Denikin and resulting in the occupation of most of the Northern Caucasus in 1918, were accompanied by the execution of thousands and thousands of Red Army men, not to mention civilians active in support of the Soviets.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 655

The proposition “but in end justifies the means” was devised, not by revolutionaries, but by their opponents.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 661

“But the Red Terror!” someone interjects. That was to come later when the Allied armies were to come to Russia, and under their protecting wing the Czarists and Black Hundreds were to loose upon peasants and workers the White Terror of the Counter-Revolution– a hideous orgy of butchery and lust in which helpless women and children were to be massacred in droves.
Then in defense the workers, goaded to desperation, were to strike back with the Red Terror of the Revolution. Then capital punishment was to be restored and the White conspirators were to feel the swift chastising hand of the Revolution.
There are furious charges and counter charges about Red and White Terrors. Out of the controversy four facts emerge and may be stated here.
The Red Terror was a distinctly later phase of the Revolution. It was a defensive measure, a direct reply to the White Terror of the Counter-Revolution. Both in number and fiendishness the outrages of the Reds pale before the atrocities committed by the Whites. Had not the Allies intervened in Russia and again stirred up civil war against the Soviets, in all probability there would have been no Red Terror and the Revolution would have continued as it began–practically a “bloodless revolution.”
Williams, Albert. Through the Russian Revolution. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967, p. 161-162

I should like to speak here with meticulous objectivity. I do not know how the White Guards behaved elsewhere–perhaps in some places they acted nobly as knights, or at least human beings. All I can record is that those I saw behaved like a horde of savages devoid of any ethical sense, plundering, terrorizing, and “punishing” wherever they went. In no sense were they even an army. I have read much about the Tsarist army and believe that there was much that was worthy of respect and praise in its history; but the White Guards I saw merely sullied its name.
They took revenge. They took revenge for our nationalist aspirations, for the coming of the Red Army, for the fall of Tzarism, for their own loss of privileges. They took revenge for it all. The population of Ekazhevskoye and Surkhokhi in Ingushetia was completely wiped out. Scores of places in Ossetia and Kabardia were barbarously pillaged. Local Quislings appeared, betraying those who loved their country. Law and decency vanished. Women were raped, men faced firing squads, innocent civilians were subjected to all manner of degradation. Those who called themselves the White Army in fact did everything they could to make us loathe them with every fiber of our being, and to long for the Red Army.
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 13

In the torrent of violence unleashed by the revolution and it’s inevitable companion, civil war, it was natural that the enemies of the regime should identify Lenin as the author of their misfortunes. The SR’s were conspicuous in this regard, and they were also accustomed to the use of terror as a means of settling political problems. Kaplan’s attempt on Lenin’s life was not the first. On 14 January 1918, in Petrograd, his car was fired on as he was driving to Bolshevik headquarters at the Smolny Institute with his sister Maria and the Swiss socialist Fritz Platten, having given a speech in the Mikhailovsky riding school to troops leaving for the front. “They had gone only a few hundred yards,” an anniversary number of Pravda recalled, “when bullets started peppering the back of the car.” Platten grabbed Lenin by the head and pushed him down. When the car was examined at the Smolny, it was found to have been holed in several places, a number of bullets having shattered the windscreen. Platten’s hand was covered in blood, having been grazed by a bullet as he was shielding Lenin.
A year later, Lenin had another close call, this time at the hands of gangsters. On the evening of 19 January 1919, Lenin, his sister, and his bodyguard Chabanov were driving out of Moscow to a forest school at Sokolniki, where Krupskaya was living on her doctor’s advice. As they approached a railway bridge, the car was stopped by three armed men. Lenin and his companions thought it was no more than a routine identity check, but, as Maria recorded, “we were amazed when the people who had stopped the car made us get out right away and, ignoring the pass he showed them, started going through Ilyich’s pockets, holding a revolver to his temple and taking his Browning and Kremlin pass.”
“What are you doing?” Maria cried. “This is Comrade Lenin! Who are you? Show us your permits!” “Criminals don’t need permits.” And with this, they leapt into the car, keeping their revolvers pointed at us, and gave it full throttle in the direction of Sokolniki.”
Lenin was obviously satisfied with the deal he had made with the gangsters, since he referred to it as the precedent for successful compromise. “Imagine,” he wrote in an article entitled “Left-wing Communism, an Infantile Disease,’ “that your car has been stopped by armed bandits. You give them your money, your identity papers, your revolver, and the car itself. In exchange you are excused their pleasant company…. Our compromise with the

bandits of German imperialism was just such a compromise. Brest-Litovsk, in other words, was a case of “your money or your life’.”
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 229

STALIN SAVES THE DAY ON MILITARY FRONTS SUCH AS TSARITSYN

At Moscow, the Revolutionary-Socialist rising was brewing. To the west, Muraviev was abandoning the cause. In the Ural district the Czech counter-Revolution was developing and consolidating. To the extreme south, the English were advancing on Baku. “Everything was blazing in a circle afire.” Stalin arrived at Tsaritsyn. A continuous stream of telegrams passed between Lenin and him. Stalin had not come to Tsaritsyn as an army inspector, but in order to organize the food supply through southern Russia. The situation at Tsaritsyn was vitally important. The revolt of the Don region and the loss of Tsaritsyn also meant the loss–the disastrous loss–of the whole wheat area of the Northern Caucasus.
From the moment of his arrival: “I am bullying and swearing at all those immediate. Rest assured, Comrade Lenin, that no one is being spared, neither myself nor anyone else–and that whatever happens we will send you wheat. If our military specialists (who are blockheads) had not been idle or asleep, our line would never have been pierced, and if we managed to re-establish it, that will not be thanks to them but in spite of them.”
For Stalin found the whole region in the state of “incredible disorder.” The Soviet organizations–Syndicalist and Communist– and also the military organizations had become completely dislocated and were all at sixes and sevens. On all sides they were confronted by the tremendous spread of the Cossack counter-Revolution which had received powerful reinforcements from the German Army of Occupation in the Ukraine. The White troops had seized, one by one, the districts around Tsaritsyn, putting a complete stop to the “corn collection” awaited by Moscow and Petrograd and, moreover, seriously threatening Tsaritsyn itself.
At the first superficial glance, Stalin realized that he must take over the military command, which was weak and wavering. On July 11th he telegraphed to Lenin: “Matters are complicated by the fact that the Headquarters Staff of Northern Caucasia is absolutely incapable of fighting the counter-Revolution…. Considering themselves to be employees of General Headquarters, and to be charged solely with preparing plans of campaign, they hold themselves quite aloof, like onlookers, and take no interest whatever in the operations….”
Stalin was not the sort of man to be content merely with finding things out. Where action was necessary, he acted: “I do not think I am justified in looking on at such indifference when Kalinin’s front (in Northern Caucasia) has it supplies cut off and when the whole of Northern Russia is cut off from its wheat-fields. I will rectify this weakness and many other local weaknesses too. I am taking and will take the proper measures, even to the extent of removing the regimental and staff officers who are ruining the cause–in spite of any formal difficulties which I will over-ride if necessary. For this, naturally, I take full responsibility on myself with the superior authorities.”
Moscow replied telling him to set the whole Red organization on its feet: “Re-establish order, form the detachments of troops into a regular Army, appoint a proper command, get rid of all insubordinates.” This order came from the Revolutionary War Council, mentioning that “this telegram is sent with Lenin’s approval.”
When this summary order, these two lines of writing in which was compressed a colossal task, arrived at Tsaritsyn, the situation had grown much worse. The remains of the Red Army

of Ukraine were pouring in, helter-skelter, retiring before the advance of the German Army over the Don steppes.

It seemed impossible that order could be established in such a situation. But the indomitable will-power of one-man set itself to do so. Out of the earth itself he made a Revolutionary War Council rise which there and then set to work to reorganize the regular Army. Army Corps were swiftly created and divided up into divisions, brigades, regiments. All counter-revolutionary elements were removed from the staff, from the supply system, and from the military formations behind the line–as well as from all the Soviet and Communist organizations there. There were plenty of staunch Bolsheviks of the old kind to give them a firm foundation and set them on their feet. And that is what happened. Everything was put into order again, and at the very edge of the counter-revolutionary canker of the Don there arose a strong and clear-headed Red Staff, presenting an unbroken front to the brigands on both sides of the line.

But that was not all. The whole town was contaminated with White elements. Revolutionary-Socialists, Terrorists, and Ultra-Monarchists, all met together there. (This constant, inevitable collaboration of so-called pure Revolutionaries with the worst enemies of the Revolution–they attacked it together as fiercely as they could–calls for no comment.) Tsaritsyn served as a shelter for masses of middle-class refugees, who flaunted themselves in the company of White officers, who scarcely troubled to conceal their identity, who monopolized the side-walks, and filled the streets and the public gardens round the orchestras. Tsaritsyn was a center of open conspiracy.

But it suddenly ceased to be so. The local Revolutionary War Council, directed by Stalin, created a special Cheka charged with examining all these people closely. And at the moment when Civil War was re-doubling its fury on all sides, and on all sides the alien enemies of the Revolution were endeavoring to stifle it by every means they could devise, not a day passed without the most dangerous plots being discovered.

A certain Nossovitch –who, from being Chief of the Military Direction of operations, went over to Krasnoff's Army, gives a full account of this situation in a White newspaper entitled The Surge of the Don (in the issue for February 3rd, 1919). He is obliged to render justice to Stalin who, even though his mission of chief provisioner was gravely compromised by the succession of events in the neighborhood, "was not the sort of man to abandon anything he had begun," and he shows him taking the whole military and civil administration into his own hands at the same time, and thwarting one by one all the attempts and all the machinations of the avowed enemies of the Revolution.

Stalin took the responsibility, but he wanted the authority too, as all those who use it to good purpose want it. The renegade Nossovitch again bears witness to another interesting event: "When Trotsky, alarmed at the destruction of the existing military commands which had been so painstakingly created, sent a telegram saying that it was necessary for the Headquarters Staff and the Commissars to be reestablished in their offices and given an opportunity of doing their work, Stalin took the telegram and, with a firm hand, scrawled upon it the words: 'No attention to be paid to this.' Thus no attention was paid to the telegram and the whole of the Artillery command and a part of the Headquarters Staff remained where they had been put, on a ship at Tsaritsyn.

Moreover, in order to ensure that his orders were carried out, and to consolidate the Bolshevik regime, Stalin personally visited the whole front (a front which measured nearly 400 miles). This man, who had never served in the army, possessed such a comprehensive sense of organization that he was able to understand and to solve all the most intricate and

difficult technical problems (especially as the situation became more critical daily and rapidly complicated all these problems still further).

"I remember, as though it had happened today," said Kaganovich, "that at the beginning of 1918 Krasnoff's Cossack troops attacked Tsaritsyn, trying by an encircling movement to throw the Red troops back on the Volga. For several days these Red troops, which were under the orders of a Communist Division largely formed of Donetz workers, repelled the attack of the perfectly organized Cossacks with incredible vigor. Those were indeed terrible days. You should have seen Stalin at that time. Calm, as always, wrapped in his thoughts, literally never sleeping at all, he divided his tireless labors between the firing-line and Army Headquarters. The situation at the front was almost desperate. Krasnoff's Armies…were pressing our exhausted troops hard and causing us immense losses. The enemy front, horseshoe-shaped, with its flanks resting on the Volga, was daily closing in more and more. There was no way out for us. But Stalin did not trouble about this. He had one idea only: they must win. This indomitable will of Stalin's transmitted itself to his immediate assistants and, in spite of being in a situation from which there was practically no escape, no one for a moment had any doubts about victory.

"And we triumphed. The routed enemy army was thrown well to the other side of the Don."

The same gloomy situation and the same epic achievements took place on the eastern front at Perm.

At the end of 1918 this front found itself terribly threatened, and almost lost.

The Third Army had fallen back and had been compelled to surrender Perm. Harassed and pressed by the enemy, who were advancing in a half-circle, this Third Army was, by the end of November, completely demoralized. The story of the previous six months, filled with perpetual fighting, was a heart-breaking one; with no reserves, in utter ignorance of what was happening in the back areas, with abominable rations (the 29th Division went for five days without receiving a single mouthful of bread), 35 degrees of frost, the roads absolutely impassable with, an excessively long front–more than 250 miles of it–and a backboneless Staff, "the Third Army was in no condition to resist enemy attacks."

In addition to this, the officers, ex-servants of the Tsar, went in for wholesale betrayal and whole regiments, disgusted by a command of incompetent carousers, surrendered to the enemy.

A rout followed: a retreat of nearly 200 miles in 20 days, and a loss of 18,000 men, dozens of guns and hundreds of machine-guns. The enemy was drawing closer and was threatening Viatka and the whole of the eastern front.

Lenin telegraphed to the Revolutionary War Council of the Republic as follows: "We have received from the neighborhood of Perm a series of reports from the Party informing us of the drunkenness and catastrophic condition of the Third Army. I am thinking of sending Stalin there."

The Central Committee sent Stalin and Dzerzhinsky. Stalin temporarily shelved the main object of the mission, which was to "inquire into the loss of Perm," and substituted for it the question of the steps to be taken to restore the situation. This situation was much more serious than anyone had thought, as he explained to the President of the Council for National Defense (Lenin) in a telegram in which he asked, in order to meet the peril, for immediate reinforcements. A week later he enumerated the various causes for the surrender of Perm and, with Dzerzhinsky, proposed a series of measures for raising the fighting efficiency of the Third Army and for providing for the future. With his extraordinary rapidity of decision he applied these numerous measures of military and political organization–and in

the same month (January 1919), the enemy advance was checked, the eastern front took the offensive, and its right-wing seized Uralsk.

And a drama of the same sort occurred during the spring of 1919 in the Seventh Army, before Yudenich's White Army, to whom Kolchak had issued orders "to seize Petrograd," and to draw into his sector the Revolutionary troops of the eastern front.

Yudenich, backed by Estonian and Finnish White Guards and supported by the British Fleet, suddenly took up the offensive and actually seriously threatened Petrograd, as will be remembered.

The Central Committee sent Stalin off and in three weeks he reestablished the victorious revolutionary resistance. At the end of 20 days all signs of hesitation and confusion had disappeared from the Army and from the Staff. The workers and Communists in Petrograd were mobilized and the desertion to the enemy ceased. The enemies and traitors were seized and destroyed.

And Stalin even directed operations which were purely military. He telegraphed to Lenin: "Immediately after Krasnaya Gorka, Seraya Loshad had been dealt with…. All the forts and citadels are being rapidly restored to order. Naval specialists assure me that the capture of Krasnaya Gorka has upset the whole theory of naval science. I can only deplore what they call science. The swift capture of Gorka is explained by violent intervention on my part and by that of civilians in general in the operations–intervention going so far as canceling orders issued on land and at sea and insisting upon our own orders being carried out in their stead. I feel it my duty to inform you that in the future I shall continue to act thus, in spite of my respect for science."

And now the southern front.

"Everyone," writes Manuilsky, ""remembers autumn 1919. It was the deciding, critical moment of the whole Civil War."

Manuilsky traces the essential features of the situation, the main one of which was Denikin's penetration of the entire southern line. Provisioned by the Allies, supported and helped by the British and French General Staffs, Denikin's White Army advanced upon Orel. The whole vast southern front was falling back in slow waves. Behind the line the situation was no less disastrous. Difficulties of supply grew momentarily greater and greater, and presented almost insoluble problems. Industry, three-quarters of which was destroyed, lacked raw materials, fuel and manpower, and was coming to a standstill. Throughout the whole country and even at Moscow, the activities of the revolutionaries were increasing. Danger threatened Tula as much as Moscow.

What was to be done in this headlong rush towards disaster? The Central Committee sent Stalin to the southern front as a member of the Revolutionary War Council. "Today," writes Manuilsky, "there is no longer any need to conceal the fact that Stalin, before leaving, insisted on the Central Committee complying with three conditions. First, Trotsky was not to meddle with the southern front and was to remain where he was. Secondly, a number of Army leaders whom Stalin considered to be incapable of restoring the situation in the Army were to be recalled immediately. And thirdly, other leaders, chosen by Stalin and capable of carrying out this task, should immediately be sent to the southern front. These conditions were accepted in their entirety."

But the colossal war machine consisting of the southern front extended from the Volga as far west as the Polish-Ukrainian frontier, and massed hundreds of thousands of soldiers on the borders of the nation.

Stalin discovered nothing but confusion and deadlock at the front. An atmosphere of mingled storm and despair. The Red Army of the Republic was beaten along the main line of defense: Kursk-Orel-Tula. The eastern flank was uselessly marking time.
What was to be done? There was a plan of operations upon which the Superior War Committee had decided in the previous September. This plan consisted of launching the main attack by the left wing, from Tsaritsyn to Novorossisk across the Don steppes.
The first thing that struck Stalin was that this plan had remained unchanged since September. “The attack is to be launched by Korin’s group, and its task is to annihilate the enemy on the Don and the Kuban.”
Stalin examined this plan carefully and critically–and decided that it was no good. Or, rather, that it was no longer any good. It had been quite good two months before, but the circumstances had altered. Something else must be found. Stalin saw what was wanted and sent Lenin fresh suggestions. Let us read his letter, an historic document which throws a light on the situation in the vast southern sector and, at the same time, on the undaunted clear-sightedness of the man who wrote it:
“…What is there to compel the Higher Committee to keep to the old plan? It can obviously only be the spirit of obstinacy, so short-sighted and so dangerous for the Republic, which is fostered in the Higher Committee by the “Ace of Strategists.” [And allusion to Trotsky].
To sum up: the old plan, which, owing to recent events, is now out of date, must in no case be put into operation, as it would endanger the Republic and would certainly improve Denikin’s position. A new plan must be substituted for it. Not only are conditions and circumstances ripe for this, but they urgently call for such a change…. Otherwise, my work at the southern front becomes meaningless, criminal, and useless, which gives me the right, or, rather, compels me to go no matter where, even to the devil, but not to remain here.” Yours, Stalin.
The Central Committee did not hesitate to adopt Stalin’s plan. Lenin with his own hand wrote to the General Staff of the southern front giving them their change of orders. The main attack was launched towards Kharkov, in the Donetz-Rostov basin. One knows what happened. Denikin’s armies were pushed into the Black Sea. The Ukraine and Northern Caucasia were delivered from the White Guards, and the Revolution won the Civil War.
Stalin’s successes seem, because of their rapidity and completeness, to be little short of magical. What is rare, indeed quite exceptional, is to find such a perfect mixture of all the elements which go to make up successful achievement–both in theory and in practice–in the same man. To be really successful one must have the clear-sightedness to see and the courage to declare that the longest way round is often the shortest way home, and one must also have the power to direct the march of events accordingly.
Another result of Stalin’s transfer to the southern front was the creation of the Cavalry Army, which played so important a part in finally mopping up the Whites. By his pertinacity he succeeded in giving ideas adopted in this respect which were not shared by the whole of the Revolutionary Military Committee, starting with the southern front. To him also is due a certain modification in military tactics, namely the part played by shock troops. Once the main point of attack was decided upon, the best troops were immediately concentrated upon it, with a view to gaining a rapid initial success. At the same time as he was developing his strategy of direct action, Stalin did not lose sight of military organization and of the necessity of subordinating everything to the harmony of military organization as a whole. In 1919 he had written, in agreement with Dzerzhinsky: “An Army cannot act as an independent, self-sufficient and completely autonomous entity; in its actions it depends entirely upon the Armies on its flanks, and above all upon the Revolutionary Military Committee of the

Republic. The most aggressive Army, under no matter what conditions, may be defeated as a result of bad leadership from the center and by absence of contact with the neighboring Armies. On each front, a strict system of centralization of the activities of the various Armies must be established as regards carrying out definite and carefully considered strategic orders. Capriciousness or lack of proper care in the issuing of orders, without considering their effect carefully and from every angle, manifested by their being suddenly changed or by their vagueness (as is sometimes the case with the Revolutionary Council of the Republic) makes it impossible to command Armies successfully."

Meanwhile the Civil War flared up again owing to the activities of Wrangel, lavished with money, soldiers, and munitions by France and England, who insisted at all costs on fulfilling their mission of aiding and abetting the White Russians in their attempt to restore the regime of the knout and of slavery.

Wrangel announced far and wide that he was about to embark upon a Polish campaign, and he left the Crimea and seriously threatened the only recently freed Donetz basin and through it the whole of the South.

The first thought of the Central Committee was once more to have recourse to Stalin and on August 3rd, 1920, it passed the following resolution:

"In view of Wrangel's success and the alarm over the Kuban, the tremendous and altogether exceptional importance of the Wrangel front must be recognized and it must be considered as an independent front. Stalin must be charged with forming the Revolutionary Military Council; all available forces must be concentrated on that front; Egorov or Frunze must be put in command at the front, as arranged by the Higher Council in consultation with Stalin."

Stalin was told by Lenin: "The Political Bureau has divided up the various fronts so that you may be able to devote yourself exclusively to that of Wrangel."

Stalin organized the new front. He then had to leave the work temporarily owing to illness, but was back when the Polish campaign began, as a member of the Revolutionary Military Committee of the south-west front. The rout of the Polish Army, the liberation of Kiev and of the Ukraine, and the deep thrust into Galicia, were, in large measure, the result of his direction of affairs. It was he who conceived the idea of the famous raid of the First Cavalry Army.

Stalin was twice decorated with the Order of the Red Flag and elected a member of the War Council of the Republic (on which he sat from 1920 to 1923), following on the masterly way in which he had invariably managed to restore the situation in all the most keenly contested and stormy sections of the Civil War front.

We say "Civil War," but the term is inaccurate. The Russian Revolution was counter-attacked not only by the Whites, but also by the Great Powers. The Red Army had before it the rank-and-file and the Staffs of the Tsarist, French, and English Armies, and also those of the Japanese, American, Rumanian, Greek–and others.

The qualities which Stalin displayed in these moving circumstances were no revelation to those who knew him. He merely applied in a new sphere of activity his strength and personal resources, namely lightning-like promptness and sureness of action, thorough grasp of the outstanding points of any particular situation, a thorough understanding of the real causes and inevitable consequences of any particular set of circumstances and of the proper place occupied by such circumstances in the general scheme of things, a horror of disorder and confusion, and dogged perseverance in preparing, creating, and coordinating all the conditions necessary for the success of a project once it had been thoroughly examined and it had been decided to embark upon it. All this is true Marxism, transferred to the field of battle.

This leader, who had fathomed the secrets of success and had brought them to such a pitch of perfection, was very severe, even ruthless, towards incompetence, and inexorable in dealing with treachery or sabotage. But a whole series of cases may be quoted in which he warmly intervened in favor of men who seemed to him to have been accused without sufficient proof, for instance Parkhomenko, who was condemned to death and whom he set free.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 63-82

Towards the end of May 1918, reports reached Moscow about the desperate conditions, both civil and military, in Tsaritsyn. Stalin was sent there to organize grain deliveries. Accompanied by his young wife whom he had just married, he arrived on June 6, 1918, with two armored cars and an escort of 400 Red guards. On the following day he reported to Lenin that he had found a “bacchanalia of profiteering and speculation” and had taken prompt action. He sacked corrupt and inefficient officials, dismissed unneeded revolutionary committees, appointing Commissars to bring order into labor and transport organization and to ensure grain deliveries to Moscow.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 121

Tsaritsyn was coming under severe pressure. Food deliveries and the city itself were threatened. Stalin began taking a direct part in military operations. On July 7 he reported urgently to Lenin….
Three days later, not having received an immediate reply, Stalin sent an angry message. He objected to Trotsky’s highhanded action in ignoring the Tsaritsyn headquarters and dealing directly with the sectors under its command. In particular Trotsky was not to make postings without consulting the people on the spot. He went on to demand aircraft, armored cars, and six-inch guns “without which the Tsaritsyn front will not remain in being.” Finally he asserted his own authority, stating that “to get things done, I must have full military powers. I have already written about this, but have received no reply. Very well . In that event I myself, without formalities, will remove those army commanders and Commissars who are ruining things. I am obliged to do this in the common interest and, in any case, the lack of a chit from Trotsky will not stop me.” On the following day he sent another telegram, informing Lenin that he had already taken full military responsibility and had removed commanders and military specialists who were dilatory or incompetent.
Stalin’s messages to Lenin were couched in forthright and even rude terms. They were, however, communications to an equal, sent at a time of crisis. Although he had respect and affection for Lenin, he did not treat him with deference. Indeed, far from taking umbrage, Lenin acted promptly. On July 19, 1918, the Supreme War Council created a war council of the North Caucasus Military District, and Stalin was officially appointed chairman of the council.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 122

Since his return to Petrograd in April 1917, Lenin had had occasion to meet Stalin on many occasions, and by now he had evidently come to see him as a reliable executive. The taciturn Georgian rarely asked questions or raised doubts in public about Central Committee decisions, he would take on any job and generally seemed satisfied with the role that had been assigned to him. Just as calmly, he accepted his commission to Tsaritsyn.
…As a result of measures taken by the center and the military soviet, Tsaritsyn was quickly made ready for a siege. The White assault under General Denikin was not successful,

despite the support of the former tsarist officer Colonel Nosovich, who had acted as a military expert for the Soviet regime and had now turned traitor. Tsaritsyn, like other locations where Stalin served during the civil war, acquired not merely a legendary name, but virtually a mystical significance in Soviet history.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 39

The Southern Front, whatever the clumsiness of Stalin's 'strategic' letter, had performed handsomely in the final victory over Denikin's White Army. If Stalin had erred in Poland, so had Lenin–who had ignored advice from Radek and others that the Poles would fight him to the last. And Stalin had, when not intervening in military affairs, managed the vast territories in the fighting areas with the maximum firmness and effectiveness.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 88

That Stalin had not lost Lenin's confidence is shown by the further missions to the front on which he was employed during the remainder of the civil war. In January 1919 he was dispatched to the eastern front to report on the disastrous fall of Perm; in May he stiffened the defenses of Petrograd against the Whites and had 67 naval officers at Kronstadt executed for disloyalty; later in the year he was switched back to the southern front to block an advance on Moscow by the Whites after Denikin's capture of Orel.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 100

Stalin's objections to the order detaching some armies from his group were eminently reasonable: the Southwestern Front did indeed have to watch not only the Polish forces around Lvov, but Wrangel's hundreds of miles to the east, and it was true that they had to be on guard against a possible Rumanian intervention which would have come from behind Lvov.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 189

Alighting from this train, Stalin went immediately to Bolshevik party headquarters and ascertained that Tsaritsyn was infested with spies, counter-revolutionists and agents of the interventionist powers, plotting to deliver the city to the approaching White Cossack's….
Stalin's blunt dispatches to Lenin eased the Leader'S anxiety but infuriated War Commissar Trotsky. Stalin was truly cleaning out the stables, as he so aptly put it; army officers appointed by Trotsky were discharged or court-martialed; some were even shot for disloyalty to the State….
Each day convinced Stalin that victory in the civil war would be won only by cleaning out the rear dangers, which were paralyzing every Red Army in the field. Disruptive political plotting, starvation, inefficiency, corruption, and every other modern ailment of a smashed society were combining to dislocate the Red battle preparations, whereas the British, French, and German troops were coordinating with the White Russians under seasoned Czarist commanders….
One by one, Stalin removed local commanders while Trotsky fumed and raged….
When a Supreme Order from Trotsky reached the North Caucasus Command Headquarters at Tsaritsyn, Stalin boldly posted it with this inscription penned across it: "to be disregarded!"…
Conditions improved steadily after Stalin arrested the entire Ordnance Department and a section of the Headquarters Staff and put them on a barge in the river….

The battlefront then ran 600 km around Tsaritsyn. Stalin personally visited every important sector of the front, solving local problems, tightening up morale and improving the organization of supplies, in readiness for the impending blow.
Barrett, James. Stalin and God. New York: Booktab, Inc., 1943, p. 35-36

The revolution called. Stalin was one of the first to go to the front. He had never been a soldier. He brought to the battle-line, however, an organizing skill, a stubbornness, a resoluteness, and an authority which made him one of the most feared war commissars….
Early in June, 1918, Stalin was dispatched to the lower Volga, to Tsaritsyn,now Stalingrad,the outlet for the rich grain-producing districts of the northern Caucasus. His position there was one of controller of food supplies. Upon his arrival, he found that the Red forces were highly disorganized. The Cossacks were getting close to the city, and the Bolshevist rule was feeble in the region. Stalin immediately applied himself to the job of stamping out all disorganization introducing a state of martial law. He at once came into conflict with the army commanders who were under the orders of the revolutionary war council of which Trotsky was the chief. The first decisive conflict with Trotsky developed here.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 167

KILLING OTHERS FOR HUMANITY IS JUSTIFIED

Actually, and obviously, it is one's duty to strike down a fellow-creature to save a thousand, to save a hundred thousand, to save the future, and to build a better world in which man will no longer be the slave or the victim of man.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 83

COMPARED TO THE BLOOD SHED UNDER OPPRESSION THE BLOOD OF REVOLUTION IS MINIMAL

One says, complacently: "All revolutions are bloody, so I do not want any revolution, because I am too sensitive." Those preservers of the existing social order who express themselves thus are, unless they are merely playing a part, pitiably shortsighted. The countries which are not Soviet ones are actually in the very midst of a regime of blood. We hear, on all sides, of outrages and massacres. One has only to look around one to see them. But most people cannot see so far. They are incapable of noticing the sufferings of others. And, above all, they did not consider revolution from the point of view of what it brings to man, but from that of the discomforts and worries which it brings to themselves.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 84

Sardonic words! But the verdict of history will be that the Russian Revolution–vastly more fundamental than the great upheaval in France in 1789–was no saturnalia of revenge. It was to all intents a "bloodless revolution."
Take the most exaggerated estimates of the shootings in Petrograd, the three days' battle in Moscow, the street-fighting in Kiev and Irkutsk, and the peasants' outbreak in the provinces. Add up the casualties and divide it into Russia's population–not the 3 million involved in the American Revolution, nor the 23 million of the French Revolution, but the 160 million of the Russian Revolution. The figures will show that in the four months it took the Soviet to

establish and consolidate its power–from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the White Sea on the north to the Black Sea on the south–less than 1 in 3000 Russians were killed. Sanguinary enough to be sure!
But look at it in the perspective of history. Rightly or wrongly, when the fulfillment of the national destiny of America demanded that we cut out the cancer of slavery, vast property rights were confiscated, and in doing this we did not stop until we had killed one in every 300 people. Rightly or wrongly, the peasants and workers feel it essential to cut out of Russia the cancer of Czarism, landlordism, and capitalism. Such a deep-seated and malign disease called for a major surgical operation. Yet it was performed with comparatively little letting of blood. For, like children, the nature of a great folk is to forgive and forget–not to retaliate. And vindictiveness is alien to the spirit of working people. In those early days they strove hard to conduct a civil war in a civil manner.
In a large measure they succeeded. The death-toll of both Whites and Reds together was not equal to the casualties in a single big battle of the World War.
Williams, Albert. Through the Russian Revolution. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967, p. 160-161

BULLITT SAYS PEOPLE WILL BE JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH THEY DEFENDED THE SU

And in the midst of all this hatred and all this defeat, in the midst of all this malediction, it was strange to hear the voices of people who, like Bullitt, then an obscure journalist, say things like this: “There will come a day when all the man of our age will be judged by the extent to which they have understood and defended the magnificent effort of Red Russia.”
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 116

DESTRUCTION BY THE INTERVENTION WAS TERRIBLE

This, then, was the situation which the new government had to face all around it, surrounded as it was by the capitalist menagerie. Everything to be done? It was worse than that: everything had to be re-done. It was a double task.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 117

LENIN ADVOCATED THE USE OF TERROR

In January 1918 Lenin had said, “Until we use terror against speculators–shooting them on the spot–nothing will happen.”
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 11

[Letter from Lenin to communist leaders in Penza, August 11, 1918, on dealing with peasant revolts in the province]

Comrades! The revolt by the five kulak volost’s must be suppressed without mercy. The interest of the entire revolution demands this, because we have now before us our final decisive battle “with the kulaks.” We need to set an example. 1) You need to hang (hang without fail, so that the public sees) at least 100 notorious kulaks, the rich, and the blood

suckers. 2) Publish their names. 3) Take away all of their grain. 4) Execute the hostages–in accordance with yesterday's telegram. This needs to be accomplished in such a way that people for hundreds of miles around will see, tremble, know, and scream out: let's choke and strangle those blood-sucking kulaks. Telegraph us acknowledging receipt and execution of this. PS. Use your toughest people for this.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 12

POLITBURO TELLS THE ENGLISH THEY WILL EXECUTE PRISONERS IF THE ENGLISH DO

[According to the minutes of a Politburo meeting on Sept. 11, 1919, the following questions were decided within the Politburo.

… 7. The question of expulsion of Communists from Murmansk by the English and executions of some of them.

Proposed that the People's Commissariats of Foreign Affairs send a radio broadcast to protest the execution of prisoners and the aerial bombing of innocent civilians and declare that imprisoned English officers are to be sentenced to execution. The sentence will be carried out if the English engage in any further such actions.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 227

LENIN SAYS BOURGEOIS INTELLECTUALS ARE NOT THE BRAINS OF THE NATION BUT ITS SHIT

[Letter from Lenin to Gorky, Sept. 15, 1919, about the arrest of intellectuals belonging to the Constitutional Democratic Party]

… The intellectual forces of the workers and peasants are growing and getting stronger in their fight to overthrow the bourgeoisie and their accomplices, the intellectuals, lackeys of capital, who consider themselves the brains of the nation. In fact they are not its brains, but it's shit.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 229

LENIN TELLS STALIN WHO HE FEELS SHOULD BE DEPORTED

[Letter from Lenin to Stalin, July 17, 1922, on deporting Mensheviks, Popular Socialists, and Constitutional Democrats]

On the matter of deporting Mensheviks, Popular Socialists, Constitutional Democrats (Kadets), etc. from Russia, I would like to ask a few questions, since this operation, which was started before my leave, still has not been completed.

Has the decision been made to “eradicate “all the Popular Socialists? As far as I’m concerned, deport them all. They’re more harmful than any Socialist-Revolutionary because they’re more clever.

Also Potresov, Izgoev and all the Economist contributors. The Mensheviks Rozanov (a physician, cunning),… Radchenko and her young daughter (rumor has it they’re the vilest enemies of Bolshevism), Rozhkov (he has to be deported, incorrigible),… The commission supervised by Mantsev, Messing et al. should present lists and several hundred such ladies and gentlemen must be deported without mercy. Let’s purge Russia for a long while.

As for Lezhnev… lets think it over: shouldn’t we deport him? He will always be the wiliest sort as far as I can judge based on his articles I have read.

Ozerov as well as all the Economist contributors are the most ruthless enemies. All of them–out of Russia. This must be done at once. By the end of the Social Revolutionary’s trial, no later. Arrest a few hundred and without a declaration of motives–get out, ladies and gentlemen!

Deport all authors of Dom literatorov Mysl from Petrograd; ransack Kharkov, we do not know it, for us it is a “foreign country.” We must purge quickly, no later than the end of the Social Revolutionaries’ trial.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 232

Lenin’s lists [of subversives] were extensive, and bore such sub-headings as: Professors of 1st Moscow University; Professors of Petrovsko-Razumovsky Agricultural Academy; Professors of Institute of Railway Engineers; [those involved in] the case of the Free Economic Society; anti-Soviet professors of the Archeological Institute; anti-Soviet figures connected with Bereg publishing house; people involved in case No. 813 (Abrikosov group); anti-Soviet agronomists and cooperativists; physicians; anti-Soviet engineers; writers; Petrograd writers; and a special list of Petrograd anti-Soviet intellectuals.

The first contingent numbered 120 people. The document ordering their expulsion was first signed on 31 July 1922 by Kamenev, Kursky, and Unshlikht.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 359

In an extensive memorandum to Stalin in the autumn of 1922, Lenin targeted individuals who were either associated with anti-Bolshevik publications or whom he regarded as especially perceptive opponents of his regime. The memorandum conveys the tone of Lenin’s obsessive concern to rid himself of such people:

“On the question of expelling Mensheviks, Popular Socialists, Cadets, etc., I’d like to ask a few questions, as this matter, which was started before I went on leave, is still unfinished. Has it been decided to ‘uproot’ all Popular Socialists? Peshekhonov, Myakotin, Gornfeld? Petrishchev and the others? I think they should all be expelled. They’re more dangerous than any SR, because they’re more cunning. Also Potresov, Izgoev and all the people on [the journal] Ekonomist, (Ozerov and many many more). The Mensheviks Rozanov (a physician, cunning), Vigdorchik (Migulo, or some such), Radchenko and her young daughter

(allegedly the most malicious enemies of Bolshevism); Rozhkov (he has to be expelled; he's incorrigible); Frank (the author of Methodology), the Mantsev-Messing commission should compile lists and several hundred such gentlemen should be deported from the country without mercy. We'll cleanse Russia once and for all.

As for Lezhnev… we should think about it: shouldn't we expel him? He'll always be utterly crafty, as far as I can judge from his articles. Like all the people on Ekonomist, Ozerov is the most relentless enemy. All of them must be chucked out of Russia. It should be done all at once. By the time the SR trial is over, not later, and with no explanation of motives–leave, gentlemen!
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 362

LENIN ORDERS THE MOST REACTIONARY CLERGY TO BE SHOT AND THEIR PROPERTY TAKEN

[Memorandum from Lenin to Molotov and Politburo members, March 19, 1922, with instructions for responding to the resistance to the confiscation of Church valuables in Shuia]

… Now and only now, when people are being eaten in famine-stricken areas, and hundreds, if not thousands, of corpses lie on the roads, we can (and therefore must) pursue the removal of church valuables with the most frenzied and ruthless energy and not hesitate to put down the least opposition. Now and only now, the vast majority of peasants will either be on our side, or at least will not be in a position to support to any decisive degree this handful of Black Hundreds' clergy and reactionary urban petty bourgeoisie, who are willing and able to attempt to oppose the Soviet decree with the policy of force.

… One clever writer on statecraft correctly said that if it is necessary for the realization of a well-known political goal to perform a series of brutal actions, then it is necessary to do them in the most energetic manner and in the shortest time, because masses of people will not tolerate the protracted use of brutality.

… Therefore, I come to the indisputable conclusion that we must precisely now smash the Black Hundreds' clergy most decisively and ruthlessly and put down all resistance with such brutality that they will not forget it for several decades.

… Send to Shuia one of the most energetic, clear-headed, and capable members of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee…giving him verbal instructions through one of the members of the Politburo. The instructions must come down to this, that in Shuia he must arrest more, if possible, but not less, than several dozen representatives of the local clergy, the local petty bourgeoisie, and the local bourgeoisie on suspicion of direct or indirect participation in the forcible resistance to the decree of the party on the removal of valuables from churches. Immediately upon completion of this task, he must return to Moscow and personally deliver a report to the full session of the Politburo or to two specially authorized members of the Politburo. On the basis of this report, the Politburo will give a detailed directive to the judicial authorities, also verbal, that the trial of the insurrectionists from Shuia, for opposing aid to the starving, should be carried out in utmost haste and should end not other than with the shooting of a very large number of the most influential and dangerous of

the Black Hundreds in Shuia, and, if possible, not only in this city but even in Moscow and several other ecclesiastical centers.

… The greater the number of representatives of the reactionary clergy and the reactionary bourgeoisie that we succeed in shooting on this occasion, the better because this “audience” must precisely now be taught a lesson in such a way that they will not dare to think about any resistance whatsoever for several decades.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 441

GPU REPORTS ON THE CLERGY’S SUBVERSION OF THE PEASANTRY

[Summary report on the religious movement among the peasantry, July 2, 1924]

IVANOVO-VOZNESENSK Guberniya. The kulaks are employing an original type of religious agitation. They agree to give one or two sheep to a poor peasant if he agrees to pray to God and read the gospel. They also tell him that if he doesn’t meet their conditions they’ll take the sheep back (from a GPU report for July 12, 1924).
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 458

THE EXTERNAL ENEMIES CAUSE NEED FOR THE CHEKA NOT THE INTERNAL ENEMIES

I do not mean to say by this that the internal situation of the country is such as makes it necessary to have punitive organs of the revolution. From the point of view of the internal situation, the revolution is so firm and unshakable that we could do without the GPU. But the trouble is that the enemies at home are not isolated individuals. They are connected in a thousand ways with the capitalists of all countries who support them by every means and in every way. We are a country surrounded by capitalist states. The internal enemies of our revolution are the agents of the capitalists of all countries. The capitalist states are the background and basis for the internal enemies of our revolution.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 233

ENGLISH WERE THE PRIME OPPONENTS OF PEOPLE GAINING FREEDOM

… the English bourgeoisie has always been in the front rank of the annihilators of the movements for freedom of humanity….

This was also the case after the October Revolution in the Soviet Union, when the English bourgeoisie, after having attacked the Soviet Union, attempted to set up “an alliance of 14 states,” and, when, in spite of this, it was driven out of the Soviet Union.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 311-212

LENIN ADMITS HE WAS WRONG AND STALIN WAS RIGHT

… The main disagreement [between Stalin and Trotsky] was over the use of military specialists in the Red Army. It can be assumed that Lenin persuaded Stalin not to speak out against Trotsky, and in return Lenin refrained from criticizing Stalin, even approving the executions carried out in Tsaritsyn. “We have had disagreements and made mistakes,” said Lenin. “No one denies this. When Stalin had people shot in Tsaritsyn I thought it was a mistake, I thought that the shootings were incorrect, but the documents Voroshilov has quoted revealed our error. My error was revealed, but still I had telegraphed: Be careful. I made a mistake. We’re all human.”
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 59

TROTSKY WAS A MILITARY BUNGLER AND INCOMPETENT

For example, the old Bolshevik Trifonov, who was assigned to military duties, wrote the following to his friend Solts:

“In the South, the most shocking outrages have been and are being committed, as well as crimes, about which we should shout from the rooftops and cry out in the city squares at the top of our voice. Unfortunately, for the time being I can’t do that. Given the customs that have been established here, we will never end this war but will meet our own end very quickly–from exhaustion. The Southern Front is Trotsky’s “favored child,” and flesh of the flesh… of this extremely untalented organizer…. It was not Trotsky who built the army but we, the rank-and-file army workers. Wherever Trotsky has tried to work, the most tremendous confusion has immediately arisen. There is no place for a muddlehead in an organism that must operate precisely and efficiently, and the military machine is such an organism.”
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 104

Ordzhonikidze also wrote to Lenin from the Southern Front:

“Something unbelievable, something bordering on betrayal…. Where in the world is order, discipline, and Trotsky’s regular army? How in the world could he have let things fall apart so badly? It is absolutely incomprehensible.”
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 104

With us, the problem was to make a clean sweep of the remains of the old army, and in its place to build, under fire, a new army, whose plan was not to be discovered in any book. This explains sufficiently why I felt uncertain about my military work, and consented to take it over only because there was no one else to do it.

I did not think of myself as in any sense a strategist, and had little patience with the sort of strategist-dilettantism that flooded the Party as a result of the revolution.
Trotsky , Leon . My Life. Gloucester, Massachusetts: P. Smith, 1970, p. 349

WHITES WERE TREATED WELL WHEN TAKEN PRISONER

…In out-of-the-way places half savages, calling themselves Red Guards, committed heinous crimes. At the front General Dukhonin was dragged from his carriage and torn to pieces

despite the protesting commissars. Even in Petrograd some Yunkers were clubbed to death by the storming crowds; others were pitched headlong into the Neva.
The attitude of the revolutionary working classes toward human life, however, is not reflected in these mad, sporadic deeds of the hot-blooded and the irresponsible, but in one of the first laws the Soviet made as it entered into power.
As the ruling-class the workers were now in a position to take vengeance on their former exploiters and executioners. When I saw them rise up and take the government in their own hands, and at the same time take in their grasp those who had lashed them, jailed them, and betrayed them, I feared a savage outburst of revenge.
But there was no dreadful blood-bath. On the contrary, the idea of reprisals seemed to have no hold on the minds of the workers. On Nov. 10 the Soviet passed the decree declaring the Abolition of Capital Punishment. This was not merely a humanitarian gesture. The workers turned to their enemies not only to guarantee their lives but in many cases to grant them freedom.
Many sinister figures of the old regime had been incarcerated by Kerensky in the bastion of the Peter-Paul Fortress. There we met Biletzky, the chief of the Czar's Secret Service who in his day had railroaded countless victims into these dungeons. Now the old grizzled rat was getting a taste of his own medicine. Here also was the ex-War Minister Sukhomlinov, whose intrigue with the Germans had sent tens of thousands of Russian soldiers to death in the trenches. These two arch-villains received us with the most engaging manners, proclaiming their innocence and protesting against their "inhuman persecution."
"But the Bolsheviks are more human than Kerensky," they said. "They give us the newspapers."
We visited also the ministers of the fallen Provisional Government in their cells and found them taking their misfortunes with good grace. Tereschenko, handsome as ever, received us sitting cross-legged on his cot, smoking a cigarette.
"This is not the life deluxe," he said in faultless English. "But the commandant is not to blame. Suddenly he had to provide for hundreds of extra prisoners and no extra rations. So we are hungry. But we get the same as the Red Guards; though they scowl at us they share their bread with us."
Williams, Albert. Through the Russian Revolution. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967, p. 160

But up to 1936, preferential treatment of political prisoners could still be claimed even by imprisoned Trotskyites,…
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 310

SOME FORMER WHITES JOINED THE BOLSHEVIKS

…No privileged class voluntarily resigns any of its privileges. No class steeped in tradition discards the old and gladly embraces the new.
There are of course exceptions to this rule–in Russia some striking ones. The old Tsarist general, Nikolayev, declared himself a Bolshevik and took command in the Red Army. Later captured by the Whites at Yamburg he was called upon to deny his faith. He refused. He was tortured– a red star burned upon his breast. Still he refused to recant. He was led to the scaffold and a noose placed around his neck.
"I die a Bolshevik. Long live the Soviet," he cried as he was swung out into space.

Williams, Albert. Through the Russian Revolution. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967, p. 171

THE MASSES WERE MORE RESOLUTE AND IRON-WILLED THAN THEIR LEADERS

It is said that the rank-and-file were held in line by the iron will of their leaders, that their resolution was just the reflex of the resolution of the men above. The opposite is nearer the truth.
It was the leaders who were irresolute. Three Bolshevik Commissars left their posts at a critical moment. Five others (Zinoviev, Kamenev, Milyutin, Nogin, Rykov) tendered their resignation to the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party. Lunacharsky, believing all tales of Moscow's destruction, cried out, "My cup is full. I am unable to endure this horror. It is impossible to work under the pressure of thoughts that drive me mad. I can bear no more. I resign."
Williams, Albert. Through the Russian Revolution. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967, p. 172

LEFT SR'S ADMIT ASSASSINATING LEADERS

This was Jacques Blumkin who, if only he would give free rein to his natural eloquence could unfold one of the most romantic life-stories imaginable.
"By birth I am a Jew and a bourgeois. After passing through college I became a professional revolutionary, and was formerly a member of the Social Revolutionary Party of the Left. Acting on instructions from the Central Committee of my Party, I killed Count Mirbach, the German ambassador, in July 1918.
Barmine, Alexandre. Memoirs of a Soviet Diplomat. London: L. Dickson limited,1938, p. 142

Semenov, who had been involved in Fanny Kaplan's attempt on Lenin's life in August 1918, provided some interesting details on this event, but falsely implicated the SR leadership. [This is false] Later he would stand trial as both defendant and star witness for the prosecution.
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 405

CZAR KILLED BY LENIN AND SVERDLOV

…Yekaterinburg, where the murder of the Tsar had taken place, had appropriately been renamed Sverdlovsk; Sverdlov, with Lenin, had ordered the killing (as a Soviet analysis in 1989 makes clear).
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 130

FOREIGN AID SAVED THE WHITES DURING THE INTERVENTION

At the same time, without foreign intervention on the White side there would have been no Civil War (in the military sense of this word) because the immense superiority of the Bolsheviks in manpower and weaponry would have enabled them quickly to overcome all armed resistance.

Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 63

Once decided upon, British intervention took several forms: (1) the provisioning of the anti-Bolshevik forces with military material ranging from uniforms to airplanes and tanks, mostly drawn from surplus stores left over from World War I; (2) the maintenance on Russian soil and off the Russian coast of British military and naval contingents whose main mission was to perform guard duties and enforce the blockade, but which could, when threatened, defend themselves; (3) the training of White officers; (4) help with intelligence and communications; and (5), ultimately, evacuation of the remnant of the defeated White armies. The aid, although far below what Britain could have offered, was vital to the White cause.
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 71-72

Kolchak was in no position to bargain, since nearly all his war material came from abroad: every round of rifle ammunition fired by his troops was of British manufacture. Between October 1918 and October 1919, Britain sent to Omsk 97,000 tons of supplies, including 600,000 rifles, 6831 machine guns, and over 200,000 uniforms. (The French provided Kolchak only with a few hundred machine guns that had originally been destined for the Czechs.)
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 79

The White forces were backed to the hilt by the British and French. Kolchak, who proclaimed himself dictator of Russia, was officially recognized by the Allied Supreme Council in Paris. Denikin was assisted by the Allied navies which had sailed into the Black Sea. French troops occupied Odessa. The British navy helped Yudenich in the Bay of Finland. Churchill in Great Britain and Clemenceau in France were the most determined protagonists of intervention. But neither the White generals–each of whom wished to reserve the role of Russia's savior exclusively for himself– nor the Western powers were able to concert their actions; and so the Bolsheviks disposed of their enemies one by one.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 210

ARMENIANS WELCOMED THE RED ARMY TO PROTECT THEM FROM THE TURKS

The invasion [by the Red Army] was welcomed by the Armenian government and population alike as offering protection from the Turks. In December Armenia became a Soviet republic;…
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 162

WHITE TERROR IS ALWAYS MUCH WORSE THAN RED TERROR

The proportion of the population killed in these two 'Red Terrors,' the Jacobin and the Great Purge of the Bolsheviks, pales in comparison with the 'White Terrors' perpetrated by the property class either to prevent social revolutions or to take vengeance on those who tried and failed (for example, El Salvador, Guatemala, Indonesia, Germany, Argentina).
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 244

STALIN WAS ONE OF 7 REFUSING TO ACCEPT TROTSKY'S RESIGNATION AS MILITARY LEADER

In any event, on July 5, 1919, one month after privately urging Lenin to remove Trotsky, Stalin was one of the seven to affix his signature to the unanimous declaration which was transmitted to Trotsky, and in which his resignation was declined as "absolutely impossible" and of the "greatest detriment to the republic."
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 185

STALIN DID THE MILITARY LEADERSHIP BUT TROTSKY GOT THE CREDIT

Stalin's health was breaking down. His temper became irritable. He was being employed to stop dangerous gaps, but he never received proper credit for his work. He did the inside jobs. Trotsky garnered the glory.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 187

STALIN WAS MORE CORRECT THAN LENIN WHEN HE OPPOSED THE ATTACK ON POLAND

But the rapid march of the Reds across Ukraine changed Lenin's stance and he started to advocate an invasion of Poland….
Stalin was unenthusiastic. He had been warning all summer about the resurgence of White military capacity in the Crimea, and he questioned the wisdom of taking on the Poles while Wrangel remained a threat. Even Trotsky and Radek, who had opposed Lenin over Brest-Litovsk, were disconcerted by Lenin's position. Stalin's objections were not confined to his chronic skepticism about European socialist revolution and his concern about Wrangel. He doubted that the Red Army was adequately coordinated and organized. He worried about the length and strength of the lines of supply. From his base with Red forces in Ukraine he had reason to think he knew what he was writing about. The Soviet state was insecure from attack by the Whites. Plans for a military breakthrough to Poland and Germany were unrealistic. Stalin repeatedly mentioned the danger posed by Wrangel from the Crimea. He also reminded Lenin not to underestimate the strength of nationalism among the Polish working class. Stalin was surprised that Lenin, usually his ally on the national question, failed to sense the danger awaiting the Red Army in this respect. He wanted the care used at Brest-Litovsk in 1918 to be applied to the decision on war or peace with Poland.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 177

But he [Stalin] was soon accused of something more serious. It came to be said that an obsession with military glory had caused him to withhold forces from Tukhachevsky. He therefore appeared to be the culprit for the defeat of the Reds. This is too strong a verdict. In fact he did not block the transfer of troops:
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 181

Stalin had warned against the whole Polish campaign. He had sounded the alarm about Wrangel. He had been asked to deal with two military fronts as if they had been one and then been asked to cope with yet another front.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 183

TROTSKY SAYS HE DOES NOT TAKE ORDERS FROM LENIN AND ADMITS THEY CLASH OFTEN

There is a riot at every step as one goes through current historical publications: in Brest-Litovsk Trotsky did not carry out Lenin's instructions; at the Southern Front Trotsky went against Lenin's directives; on the Eastern Front Trotsky acted contrary to Lenin's orders; and so forth and so on. In the first place, it should be pointed out that Lenin could not give me personal directives. Relations in the party were not like that. We were both members of the Central Committee, which settled all differences of opinion. Whenever there was disagreement between Lenin and me, and such disagreements occurred more than once, the question was automatically referred to the Politburo of the Central Committee, which made the decision. Hence, strictly speaking, it was never in any way a question of my violating Lenin's directives. But this is only one aspect of the matter–the formal one. Getting down to essentials, one cannot help asking: was there any sound reason for carrying out the directives of the Lenin who had placed at the head of the War Department a person who committed nothing but errors and crimes; at the head of the national economy–Rytov, a "self-confessed" restorer of capitalism and future agent of Fascism; at the head of the Communist International–that future Fascist and traitor, Zinoviev; at the head of the Party's official newspaper and among the leaders of the Communist International–that future Fascist bandit, Bukharin?
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 269

STALIN WAS GIVEN MILITARY AUTHORITY TO STRAIGHTEN EVERYTHING OUT

Stalin's assumption of the functions of manager of all the military forces at the front had obtained the confirmation of Moscow. The telegram of the Revolutionary Council of War of the Republic, which bore the notation that it was sent by agreement with Lenin, expressly delegated Stalin "to establish order, unite all detachments into regular formations, establish proper command, after expelling all insubordinates." Thus the rights given to Stalin were signed, and as far as one is able to judge from the text, were even formulated by me.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 287

STALIN DEBUNKS TROTSKY'S ALLEGED GREAT MILITARY LEADERSHIP

Five years later, speaking of the Trotsky legends in relation to the conduct of the war, Stalin said:
"Among these widely circulated legends is the story that Comrade Trotsky is the 'only' or 'main organizer' of our victories in the civil war. I must declare in the interests of truth that the story does not at all conform to the facts. I am far from denying the important part played by

Comrade Trotsky in the civil war. But I must insist with all resoluteness that the high honor of bringing about our victories belongs not to individuals, but to the great collective of the advanced workers of our country–the Russian Communist Party." Stalin then recited Trotsky's failure to perceive the right strategy in the crucial campaigns against Kolchak and Denikin, and concluded with the challenge: 'Let them try to deny these facts!'"
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 184

LENIN WANTED PEACE AT ALL COSTS

Lenin agreed to this incredible holdup because the Russian people were dying by millions of starvation, pestilence, and war. "We will retreat to the Urals if need be," was Lenin's decision. Even on these terms the powers at Versailles refused to grant peace to the Bolsheviks, choosing rather to destroy them utterly.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 144

TROTSKY FOUGHT LENIN ON CONCLUDING PEACE

Lenin said in so far as Trotsky's tactics were directed towards playing for time, they were correct; they became wrong when the state of war was declared to be at an end and peace was not signed.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 120

Trotsky's attempt to impose the arbitrary dimensions of Europe as a prerequisite of victory within Russia had jeopardized the revolution and cost Soviet Russia a loss of considerable territory and people.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 121

Trotsky would not have been Trotsky without a special standpoint of his own. He was the leader of the Russian delegation for the peace negotiations at Brest-Litovsk. He did not comply with Lenin's desire for the immediate conclusion of peace.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 124

As was to be expected, the Germans took Trotsky's declaration as a breaking off of the negotiations. They denounced the armistice and advanced. The result was the occupation not only of the whole of the Ukraine, but of the Baltic provinces, the Caucasus, and southern Russia. Peace had to be signed under new and much worse conditions. Trotsky never admitted his error.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 124-126

Viewed from this angle, Trotsky's error of judgment [his negotiating delays allowed the Germans to seize ever more Russian territory] was to a great extent the cause of the Civil War and the Allied intervention which plunged a Russia into miseries never before endured by any nation.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 44

The position of the Soviet state was further weekend by Trotsky's attempt to deal with advancing troops by clever phrases. He refused to sign terms but protested in the formula:

“Neither war nor peace”–an appeal to the conscience of the German people. But general staffs are not expected to have a conscience, and no Germans acted to save the Russians. The invading army marched far into the Ukraine and took possession, giving in the end worse terms than those originally offered….
If Germany offered the Bolsheviks only a robber’s… peace, their former allies gave them no peace at all.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 139

“Never, it seems,” Comrade Stalin says in “On the Opposition,” “did the struggle in the Party among the Bolsheviks reach such a pitch of ferocity as during this period, the period of the Brest-Litovsk peace.”
Yaroslavsky, Emelian. Landmarks in the Life of Stalin. Moscow: FLPH, 1940, p. 100

Trotsky was cunning. During the vote on whether to except the Brest peace treaty, he said he would adhere to his own opinion, non-acceptance. But Lenin said he would resign from the Central Committee and go to the masses to struggle against the Central Committee if it should vote to reject signing the peace. Trotsky said that inasmuch as this would lead to a split in the party, he would abstain. Lenin then got a majority by one vote.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 142

…Trotsky’s attitude was equivocal. He propounded the formula “Neither peace nor war,” but did not explain what this meant in practical terms. His attitude served only to embitter the discussion, whose memory remained to become a nail in many a coffin.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 42

KRONSTADT AND RETREAT TO NEP

Although the government crushed the revolt at Kronstadt, it had to do more than just answer the protest with the gun. It had to retreat from “war communism” to what became known as the “new economic policy.”
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 142

LENIN CONSULTED WITH STALIN BEFORE SENDING TROTSKY BREST-LITOVSK ORDERS

It was Trotsky, who had rallied to Bolshevism and was an important member of the Government, who carried out the negotiations on the spot. Lenin directed them from the seat of government, with the help of Stalin. To a telegraphic demand for instructions which Trotsky sent him on a private wire, Lenin replied by the following telegram, dated February the 15th, 1918: “Reply to Trotsky, I must first consult Stalin before replying to his question.” A little later, on February the 18th, Lenin telegraphed to Trotsky: “Stalin has just arrived. We will examine the situation together and send you a joint reply as soon as possible. Lenin.”
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 59

Too little is known of the decisive part played by Stalin at the time of the Treaty of Brest. A large section of the Left of the Party–those who had been most energetic in seizing

power–were against the signature of the Treaty; Trotsky was also against it, with his formula of “neither peace nor war” because he believed that the war would not really end except with the world Revolution. Lenin and Stalin alone were for its immediate conclusion. Lenin hesitated to use his personal authority. Stalin decided him to do so. This little conversation of theirs must have weighed heavily on the destinies of the Revolution.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 60

Trotsky’s furious sallies made no impression on his German opponents. They knew the weakness of his position. Suddenly, on Jan. 18, they produced a map of eastern Europe, showing the new frontiers, which deprived Russia of extensive territories. The ultimatum enraged Trotsky. He swore he would break off negotiations. Then, having received a telegram, signed “Lenin-Stalin,” instructing him to return to Petrograd for discussions, he agreed to an adjournment until Jan. 29. There is further evidence, cited by Trotsky himself, showing how closely Stalin stood to Lenin at this critical time. A certain Dmitrievsky observed that “even Lenin at that period felt the need of Stalin to such an extent that, when communications came from Trotsky at Brest and an immediate decision had to be made, while Stalin was not in Moscow, Lenin would inform Trotsky: ‘I would like first to consult with Stalin before replying to your question.’ And only three days later Lenin would telegraph: ‘Stalin has just arrived. I will consider it with him, and we will at once gave you our joint answer.’ “
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 106

DEMANDS OF THE KRONSTADTERS AMOUNT TO SURRENDER TO THE CAPITALISTS

… In March 1921 the Kronstadt sailors’ mutiny issued a national call to overthrow the Bolshevik leadership of the Revolution. The mutiny’s main demands included: the release of all political prisoners; the abolition of the special leading position of the Communist party; the rights of the peasants to do with their land whatever they wanted; the immediate re-election of the Soviets by ‘free and secret ballot’; and the elimination of all restrictions on freedom of speech and of the press.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 209

FAMINE WAS CAUSED BY THE INTERVENTION NOT WAR COMMUNISM

The number who perished from famine and decease in the bitterly cold winters of 1921 and 1922 has been variously estimated between five end ten millions…. Yet there are persons stupid enough to declare that the “War Communism” of these years corresponds to the real aims of the Bolsheviks and to hold them responsible for the sufferings of the country.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 140

The middle-class machinery being violently cast aside, “War Communism” was instituted, that is to say the utilization of only a portion of all the economic elements which the state had appropriated to itself: “A clumsy, centralized machine, destined to extract from industry disorganized by war, by revolution, and by sabotage the minimum of produce necessary in order that the towns and the Red Army should not die of hunger.”

It was necessary, so far as wheat was concerned, to proceed with the “compulsory removal of the excess of peasant labor.” It was a system of State rationing, “a besieged fortress regime.”
So that, after the last violent upheaval, the remnants of middle-class power were really definitely eliminated and cast into the past, at the same time that the majority of the Whites and the foreigners were cast beyond the frontiers. The Revolution and peace remained alone on the historical and economic ruins. But public life was in its death-throes. Commerce and industry had gone still further downhill. Then Nature took a hand in the game: one of the most appalling famines of modern times, caused by an exceptional drought, descended on the most fertile Russian territories. The peasants who had, willingly or compulsorily, ensured as much as possible the supply of the gigantic two years’ battle, were everywhere frightened, distrustful, often hostile. At certain points they revolted (1921).
As for the immense reinforcement hoped for and for which the horizon was daily scanned–the World Revolution–there were certainly no signs of it. What was the international proletariat doing? It occasionally stirred a little, but without any real result, or else it was being defeated, like that of Hungary, thrust back, it is true, into the age-old regime by Allied bayonets; and like the one upon which most reliance was placed, the German proletariat, shot down by machine gunfire by Clemenceau.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 120

1921 FAMINE CAUSED BY DROUGHT NOT SOCIALISM

October 6, 1921–The Russian famine, which has brought upward of 15 million human beings to the verge of starvation today,…is perhaps the most important single factor in the internal and external life of Russia at present.
The famine was caused by drought, not communism,…
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 18

1921 FAMINE WAS BEATEN

June 12, 1922–We have conquered the Vogel famine, said Col. Haskell, head of the American Relief Administration in Russia. “The Soviets did their share,” he declared, “and I for one am willing to go on record as an optimist on Russia.”
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 31

[Footnote]: It is less apparent why Western scholars should have ignored it [the 1921 famine]. E. H. Carr, for example, in his three-volume History of the Russian Revolution, where he finds space for the most esoteric information, dismisses this calamity in a single paragraph on the specious grounds that “estimates of those who perished are unreliable.”… At the time of writing [1993], there exists not one scholarly monograph on the 1921 famine.
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 410

LENIN SAYS THE CHURCHES SHOULD GIVE UP MONEY TO HELP BEAT THE FAMINE

In 1921, at the beginning of the NEP, there was famine. People began saying that grain should be imported. We needed resources for this. Lenin said the churchmen must help. If

we confiscate church valuables, the priests well acquiesce. If they start to resist, this too would benefit us. Clinging to their wealth while the people are starving will undermine their authority.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 130

Time of NEP

TROTSKY TRIED TO SUCCEED LENIN AND FAILED BADLY

Immediately after Lenin's death, Trotsky made his open bid for power. At the Party Congress in May 1924 Trotsky demanded that he, and not Stalin, be recognized as Lenin's successor. Against the advice of his own allies, he forced the question to a vote. The 748 Bolshevik delegates at the Congress voted unanimously to maintain Stalin as general secretary, and in condemnation of Trotsky's struggle for personal power. So obvious was the popular repudiation of Trotsky that even Bucharin, Zinoviev, and Kamenev were compelled to side publicly with the majority and vote against him. Trotsky furiously assailed them for "betraying" him. But a few months later Trotsky and Zinoviev again joined forces and formed a "New Opposition."
An actual secret Trotskyite army was in process of formation on Soviet soil.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 199

Trotsky was in the Politburo, but in fact everyone had united around Stalin, including the right-wing–Bukharin and Rykov. We called ourselves "the majority" against Trotsky. He surely sensed, of course, this collusion against him. He had his supporters and we had ours. But he did not have many in the Politburo or in the Central Committee, only two or three. There was Shliapnikov from the Workers Opposition and Krestinsky from the Democratic Centralists.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 143

…The official history of the Communist Party suggests that Trotsky was emboldened by Lenin's illness to make a deliberate bid for power as Lenin's successor. This may be an exaggeration, although Trotsky must have known that Lenin was doomed, but it is significant that he mobilized a powerful group of critics to sign a document called the "Declaration of the Forty-six." The declaration was a blow to the Central Committee, but Trotsky was rash enough to pursue his advantage by a letter which not only carried the attack further but established himself as leader of what was described by the Central Committee as an Opposition bloc. The word "opposition" or "factionalism" produced a reaction. The Central Committee retorted fiercely that Trotsky was not a Bolshevik at heart and never had been, that he and his "Forty-six" were voicing Menshevik heresies as they had done before, and that most of them had already been castigated by Lenin for subversive or mistaken ideas.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 105

ZINOVIEV AND LENIN PROPOSE STALIN FOR GENERAL SEC.

He [Zinoviev] accordingly proposed Stalin for the post of General Secretary of the Central Committee of the party. Lenin agreed, and Stalin was appointed.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 91

Indeed, it had been Zinoviev who, after the Civil War, had proposed Stalin as General Secretary of the party.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 144

On Lenin's motion, the Plenum of the Central Committee, on April 3, 1922, elected Stalin, Lenin's faithful disciple and associate, General Secretary of the Central Committee, a post at which he has remained ever since.
Alexandrov, G. F. Joseph Stalin; a Short Biography. Moscow: FLPH, 1947, p. 74

But Lenin, after all, at the 10th Congress had prohibited factionalism.
And we voted with that note on Stalin in brackets. He became general secretary….
Lenin…made Stalin general secretary. Lenin was, of course, making preparations, for he sensed his ill health. Did he perhaps see in Stalin his successor? I think one can allow for that.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 105

CHUEV: At the office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, I was told that Lenin did not nominate Stalin to the post of general secretary. Rather, Kamenev did, and Lenin approved it….
MOLOTOV: Well, well. I know for sure that Lenin nominated him.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 166

In this connection it is interesting to note that the Congress ratified Lenin's appointment a few weeks earlier of Stalin as General Secretary of the Party. This was a key position of authority and influence, and it is most significant that Lenin awarded it to Stalin, leader of the "underground" laborers in Russia's vineyards during the pre-war period of repression, rather than to the more spectacular Trotsky or any of the Marxian purists among the "Western" exiles.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 70

When in 1923 I learned that Lenin could not long survive and began to wonder about his successor, I remembered a conversation in my office in Moscow two years before. A Russian friend had said to me, "Stalin has been appointed General Secretary of the Communist Party."
"What does that mean?" I replied.
"It means," said the Russian impressively, "that he now becomes next to Lenin, because Lenin has given into his hands the manipulation of the Communist Party, which is the most important thing in Russia."
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 165

On April 3, 1922, the plenum elected Stalin general secretary….
A Biographical Chronicle of Lenin's life and work, published in recent years, gives the following account of April 3, 1922, based on materials from Party archives.

"…The plenum makes the decision to establish the position of general secretary with two Central Committee secretaries. Stalin is assigned to be general secretary; Molotov and Kuibyshev are the secretaries."
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 67-68

[Footnote]: Trotsky and Medvedev attempt to absolve Lenin of responsibility for Stalin's appointment as General Secretary, but there is persuasive evidence that Lenin had entrusted Stalin with party affairs during Lenin's leave of absence and that he proposed him as General Secretary.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 344

STALIN DID NOT PACK PARTY WITH HIS SUPPORTERS

It has often been stated, especially by Stalin's opponents, that he busied himself at this time giving posts to his supporters throughout the party organization. This, of course, was not so. Stalin had spent most of the early years of the revolution at the fronts, and as yet had never come forward as a leader in any ideological current within Bolshevism: where could he have found all these personal supporters?….
Certainly no such army of supporters of Stalin had existed. On the other hand, he was the creator of the bureaucratic machinery of the party, and on the whole the members of the bureaucracy were loyal to its creator and controller. Only on the whole, for the later conflicts showed that very many of the party officials whose names he had put forward were opponents of his.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 95-96

…As General Secretary of the Party Central Committee, he [Stalin] held a strategically dominating position in matters of organization; and his opponents, especially the Trotskyists, charge that he used to the fullest extent the opportunities which this post afforded of packing the provincial and city Party committees with his own partisans. The Stalinites retort that these are slanderous accusations, put into circulation by disgruntled people who failed to capture control of the Party for their own ends. They point to the unanimous votes registered at Party Conferences and Congresses as proof that Stalin's policies command the approbation of the solid masses of the Party members.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 91

ZINOVIEV BACKED UP STALIN FOR GEN. SEC.

The most powerful man in the party was then Zinoviev, and he was in favor of Stalin; it was he who had proposed him for the party secretaryship. So Stalin remained secretary.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 109

Perhaps they signified their real thoughts when they unanimously confirmed the election to the important post of General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, of Joseph Stalin, friend and close confidant of the absent president.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 59

When, at the April 1922 Plenum of the Central Committee, Kamenev proposed acceptance of Zinoviev's idea of making Stalin general secretary of the Central Committee, Lenin–although he knew Stalin all too well–had no objection.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 27

MEMBERS VOTED FOR STALIN BECAUSE THEY WANT HIM, NOT OUT OF FEAR

RUDZUTAK: Comrades, can one utter a greater slander against the members of the Central Committee, against the Old Bolsheviks, the majority of whom served years at hard labor? These, the finest people of the party, did not fear many years in prison and in exile, and now these revolutionaries, who devoted themselves to the victory of the revolution, these old revolutionary warriors, according to Smirnov, are afraid to vote against Comrade Stalin. Can be that they vote for Stalin from a fear for authority while, behind his back, they prepare–if anything comes up–to change the leadership? You are slandering the members of the party, you're slandering the members of the Central Committee, and you are also slandering Comrade Stalin. We, as members of the Central Committee, vote for Stalin because he is ours…."
RUDZUTAK: "You won't find a single instance where Stalin was not in the front rank during periods of the most active, most fierce battle for socialism and against the class enemy. You won't find a single instance where Comrade Stalin has hesitated or retreated. That is why we are with him. Yes, he vigorously chops off that which is rotten, he chops off that which is slated for destruction. If he didn't do this, he would not be a Leninist. He would not be a Communist fighter. In this lies his chief and finest and fundamental merit and quality as a leader-fighter who leads our party."
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 93

PREOBRAZHENSKY WANTS STALIN DISMISSED AS GEN. SEC. BECAUSE HE HAS TOO MANY JOBS

Preobrazhensky was later among the opposition, a Trotskyist. He proposed that Stalin be dismissed from the position of general secretary on the grounds that he held too many offices. At the time Lenin strongly defended Stalin…."
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 113

At the Eighth Congress Stalin was re-elected to the Central Committee. Although the Central Committee was not very large then, a decision was made to establish a smaller direct body within it–a Political Bureau (Politburo), which would decide important political issues on a day-to-day basis. The first Politburo consisted of Lenin, Kamenev, Krestinsky, Stalin, and Trotsky. The candidate members were Bukharin, Kalinin, and Zinoviev. An Organizational Bureau (Orgburo) was also established for the first time to direct the ongoing organizational work of the party. It consisted of five members: Beloborodov, Krestinsky, Serebryakov, Stalin, and Stasova. A few days later a decree of the Central Executive Committee appointed Stalin peoples commissar of state control.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 59

At the 11th Party Congress Preobrazhensky proposed that Stalin's powers be somewhat curtailed. He said in his speech:
"Take Comrade Stalin, for example, a member of the Politburo who is, at the same time, peoples commissar of two commissariats. Is it conceivable that a person could be responsible for the work of two commissariats, and in addition work in the Politburo, the Orgburo, and a dozen Central Committee subcommissions?"
Lenin answered Preobrazhensky as follows:
"Preobrazhensky comes along and airily says that Stalin is involved in two different commissariats. Who among us has not sinned in this way? Which of us has not taken on several responsibilities at once? And how could we do otherwise? What can we do now to maintain the existing situation in the Commissariat of Nationalities, in order to sort out all the Turkestan, Caucasian, and other questions? After all, these are political questions! And these questions have to be answered. They are questions such as European states have occupied themselves with for hundreds of years, and only an insignificant portion of such problems have been solved in the democratic republics. We are working to resolve them and we need a man to whom representatives of any of our different nations can go and discuss their difficulties in full detail. Where are we to find such a person? I think that even Preobrazhensky would be unable to name another candidate besides Comrade Stalin.
The same thing applies to the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. This is a vast business; but to be able to handle investigations we must have someone in charge who has authority. Otherwise we'll get bogged down in petty intrigues."
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 66

At the end of March 1919 Yelena Stasova was elected as chief secretary for the Central Committee. She encountered difficulties, and in November of the same year a Central Committee plenum elected Krestinsky to be second secretary of the Central Committee. In April 1920 a Secretariat consisting of three people–Krestinsky, Preobrazhensky, and Serebryakov–was elected. The leading figure in the Secretariat became Krestinsky, who also belonged to the Orgburo & Politburo. However, during the "trade union discussion," all the Central Committee secretaries supported Trotsky's or Bukharin's platform and none of them were re-elected at the Central Committee plenum following the Tenth Party Congress. Instead Molotov, Yaroslavski, and Mikhailov were elected to the Secretariat. They were all members of the Orgburo as well.
Lenin, however, was displeased with the work of these party centers, accusing them of inadmissible red tape, delay, and bureaucratism. It was assumed, therefore, that the election of Stalin, whose organizational abilities and abrupt manner were well known in party circles, would bring order into the working bodies of the Central Committee.
The situation changed as Lenin's illness grew worse, removing him more and more often from the administration of the country and direction of the party. Stalin was not only general secretary; he belonged to the Orgburo, the Politburo, and the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee, as well as heading two commissariats. Stalin had become a key figure in the party apparatus.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 69

On May 8, 18-23, 1919 he [Stalin] attended the 8th Congress of the party was elected to the two new bodies–the Politburo (henceforth the central organ of power) and the Orgburo, which at this time was supposed to be a subcommittee of the Central Committee concerned with party organization. When it was suggested (at the 11th Party Congress in 1922) that no

one could carry out all Stalin's party responsibilities and at the same time administer two People's Commissariats, Lenin replied that no one could name another suitable candidate for the high political responsibilities of the Nationalities Commissariat 'other than Comrade Stalin' and, 'the same applied to the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate. A gigantic job…you have to have at the head of it a man with authority.' This shows how Lenin now judged Stalin, and the extent to which the latter's reputation had grown, regardless of particular errors and insubordinations.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 91

When at the Eleventh Party Congress Preobrazhensky listed all of Stalin's duties and questioned whether it was possible for one man to handle this vast amount of work on the Politburo, the Orgburo, two commissariats, and a dozen subcommittees of the Central Committee, Lenin immediately spoke up in Stalin's defense, calling him irreplaceable as commissar of nationalities and adding: "The same thing applies to the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate. This is a vast business; but to be able to handle investigations we must have at the head of it a man who enjoys high prestige."…
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 162

At the 11th Congress in 1922 one prominent Bolshevik, Preobrazhensky, would note with astonishment the vast authority which Lenin had concentrated in Koba's hands. "Take Stalin, for instance…. Is it conceivable that one man can take responsibility for the work of two commissariats, while simultaneously working in the Politburo, the Orgbureau, and a dozen commissions?" But Lenin would not surrender his favorite: "We need a man whom any representative of any national group can approach, a man to whom he can speak in detail. Where can we find such a man? I don't think Comrade Preobrazhensky could name any candidate other than Comrade Stalin….
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 163

The conventional image of Stalin's ascent to supreme power does not convince. He did not really spend most of his time in offices in the Civil War period and consolidate his position as the pre-eminent bureaucrat of the Soviet state. Certainly he held membership in the Party Central Committee; he was also People's Commissar for Nationalities' Affairs. In neither role were his responsibilities restricted to mere administration. As the complications of public affairs increased, he was given further high postings. He chaired the commission drafting the RSFSR Constitution. He became the leading political commissar on a succession of military fronts in 1918-19. He was regularly involved in decisions on relations with Britain, Germany, Turkey, and other powers; and he dealt with plans for the establishment of new Soviet republics in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. He conducted the inquiry into the Red Army's collapse at Perm. When the Party Central Committee set up its own inner subcommittees in 1919, he was chosen for both the Political Bureau (Politburo) and the Organizational Bureau (or Orgburo). He was asked to head the Workers' and Peasants' inspectorate at its creation in February 1920.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 173

LENIN WAS CLOSE TO STALIN AND MADE HIM HIGHER THAN BUKHARIN

Lenin's relations with Stalin were close, but they were mainly businesslike. He elevated Stalin far higher than Bukharin! And he didn't simply elevate him but made him his mainstay in the Central Committee. He trusted him.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 116

To this day I recall the first party congress in Petrograd in April, after the February Revolution, when Rykov expressed his rightist sentiments. Kamenev, too, showed this true colors. Zinoviev was still considered to be close to Lenin. Before the elections of members to the Central Committee, Lenin spoke for Stalin's candidacy. He said Stalin had to be in the Central Committee without fail. He spoke up for Stalin in particular, saying he was such a fine party member, such a commanding figure, and you could assign him any task. He was the most trustworthy in adhering to the party line. That's the sort of speech it was.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 137

STALIN MOST QUALIFIED SUCCESSOR TO LENIN

Stalin had reasons for thinking himself Lenin's most loyal disciple and natural heir, in spite of that "testament." He had been a Bolshevik 20 years, a member of Lenin's central committees for 10 years, and had served directly under Lenin for six stormy years of revolution. He could easily consider that last conflict as a misunderstanding due to Lenin's illness, which could have been cleared up if Lenin had recovered. All the other leaders had had worse clashes. Trotsky had opposed Lenin for years and only joined him at the moment of revolution. Zinoviev and Kamenev had been traitors in the very hour of the uprising, opposing it and giving its details in an opposition newspaper. Lenin had forgiven them all. Compared with their sins against Lenin, Stalin's may well have seemed to him trivial.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 18

Stalin, whose personality is without any Napoleonic trait, was nevertheless the man who closed the revolutionary epoch and directed the rebuilding of the country. His enemies accuse him of having betrayed the revolution, which is definitely unjust.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 49

…Stalin achieved colossal results [at the 14th Party Congress]. If not for him, the cadres would not have pulled together. The Bolshevik cadres would not simply obey orders at the wave of a wand. They had to be convinced. The same applied to the old Bolsheviks. Habitually they deferred to no authority or command. They regarded themselves as the equal of an ideological leader…. In 1924 discussion against Trotsky was proceeding full tilt.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 135

Stalin used to say that if Lenin were alive today, surely he would speak differently–there is no doubt about that. He would surely think up something that has not yet occurred to us. But the fact that Stalin was his successor was very fortunate. Very fortunate indeed.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 155

After Lenin, Stalin was the strongest politician. Lenin considered him the most reliable, the one whom you could count upon.

Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 156

You can't compare me with him [Stalin]. After Lenin, no one person, not me, or Kalinin, or Dzerzhinsky, or anyone else could manage to do even a tenth of what Stalin accomplished. That's a fact. I criticize Stalin on certain questions of a quite significant theoretical character, but as a political leader he fulfilled a role which no one else could undertake.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 181

Stalin! The more they assail him, the higher he rises. A struggle is going on. They fail to see the greatness in Stalin. After Lenin there was no more persevering, more talented, greater man than Stalin! After the death of Lenin, no one understood the situation better than Stalin…. Stalin fulfilled his role, an exceptionally important, very difficult role.
Let us assume he made mistakes. But name someone who made fewer mistakes. Of all the people involved in historic events, who held the most correct position? Given all the shortcomings of the leadership of that time, he alone coped with the task then confronting the country….
Despite Stalin's mistakes, I see in him a great, an indispensable man! In his time there was no equal!
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 183

However, if we wish to determine what Stalin really meant in the history of Communism, then he must for the present be regarded as being, next to Lenin, the most grandiose figure. He did not substantially develop the ideas of Communism, but he championed them and brought them to realization in a society and a state. He did not construct an ideal society…but he transformed backward Russia into an industrial power….
Viewed from the standpoint of success and political adroitness, Stalin is hardly surpassed by any statesman of his time.
Djilas, Milovan. Conversations with Stalin. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962, p. 190

Stalin–"rude,"–sometimes bureaucratic and limited as a Marxist theorist–had a realistic plan for the construction of socialism, and he approached the task with determination, courage, and skill. For all his faults he was the best of the Party leaders available. And this was the opinion of the majority of the Party. Stalin's report and reply to the discussion at the Thirteenth Congress in 1924 show that he had the Party's confidence.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 52

Certainly before 1921 he showed no pretension to the leadership, and was content to serve. He was proud, sensitive, but not personally ambitious. After removal of Lenin he, like many others, must have wondered about the future of the party. Of the most prominent members Trotsky, towards whom he felt strong antipathy, would endanger unity and the others were not remotely of his caliber. Thus it would seem that during 1922 or 1923 Stalin began to consider seriously that in the interests of the party and communist Russia he would have to take over the leadership, and once having reached this decision he pursued his goal quietly and implacably.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 194

He [Stalin] cast himself in the role of leader because none of the other party leaders was remotely capable of assuming it, and because he had developed a burning sense of his mission to lead Russia.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 222

At every stage of his career he had grown in stature, showing the confidence and ability to meet greater challenges. He possessed a natural authority, an inner strength and courage. He was not overwhelmed by the responsibilities that now lay upon him as sole ruler over a nation of 200 million people, and at a time when its survival was threatened. He did not play safe, evading dangers which might lead to destruction; on the contrary, although cautious by nature, he pursued his objectives with an implacable single-mindedness, undeterred by risk….
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 235

My father said that an attentive reading of Lenin's "Political Testament" shows that he saw nobody but Stalin as fit to succeed him.
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 136

Stalin did not rise to supreme power exclusively by means of the levers of bureaucratic manipulation. Certainly he had an advantage inasmuch as he could replace local party secretaries with persons of his choosing. It is also true that the regime in the party allowed him to control debates in the Central Committee and at Party Congresses. But such assets would have been useless to him if he had not been able to convince the Central Committee and the Party Congress that he was a suitable politician for them to follow. Not only as an administrator but also as a leader,in thought and action,he seemed to fit these requirements better than anyone else.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 246

STALIN WORKED HIS WAY TO THE TOP BY EARNING IT

CHUEV: And how did Stalin rise so high?
MOLOTOV: Thank God. It was the whole story of his life, the Revolution, the Civil War…. Of course, he deserved it….
How did he work his way up? Look, he wrote a very good book on the national question….
He edited the first issue of Pravda.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 165

Stalin will be rehabilitated, needless to say.
Stalin had an astounding capacity for work…. I know this for a fact.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 179

Stalin's usual routine is to work hard for about a week or longer, then go to the dacha for two or three days to rest. He has few relaxations, but he likes opera and ballet, and attends the Bolshoi Theatre often; sometimes a movie catches his fancy, and he saw Chapayev, a film of the civil wars, four times. He reads a great deal, and plays chess occasionally. He smokes incessantly, and always a pipe; the gossip in Moscow is that he likes Edgeworth tobacco, but

is a little hesitant to smoke publicly this non-Soviet product. At dinner he keeps his pipe lit next to his plate, puffs between courses….
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 532

STALIN WAS THE BEST MAN TO REPLACE LENIN

CHUEV: They say that Stalin replaced the Central Committee with a bureaucratic apparatus, and that after Lenin's death he won power with the help of this apparatus.
MOLOTOV: But who could have led better?
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 166

Whoever will read this book, will think that I am a die-hard Stalinist. I do not absolve Stalin of everything, but I know his character and I also know the circumstances and the bunch of opportunists that were surrounding him in the Politburo. History now has shown us the conditions under which Stalin had to work, think, and lead our country then, during the hectic events, enemies internally and externally doing everything possible to steer the country away from the socialist path…. Could Stalin have known everything that was going on inside the country?
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 107

LENIN CHOSE STALIN TO LEAD THE BATTLE AGAINST FACTIONS

…Under Lenin there were so many disagreements, so many opposition groups of every conceivable stripe. Lenin regarded this as very dangerous and demanded resolute struggle against it. But he could not take the lead in the struggle against the opposition or against disagreements. Someone had to remain untainted by all repression. So Stalin took the lead, assuming the burden of responsibility in surmounting the vast majority of these difficulties. In my opinion he generally coped with this responsibility correctly. All of us supported him in this. I was one of his chief supporters. I have no regrets over it.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 259

STALIN WAS NOT GRASPING FOR POWER BUT WAS GIVEN IT BY LENIN

Although it a usually assumed that Stalin was covertly grasping at positions of power and influence, the fact is that he was promoted mainly on the initiative of Lenin. Once appointed to his various offices he was prompt to exercise the authority necessary to carry out the work.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 162

It was at Lenin's suggestion that Stalin was named commissar of nationalities and commissar of state control, and later commissar of the Workers' and Peasants Inspection (or Rabkrin, to use the Soviet acronym).
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 63

Stalin, in truth, did not look to be a formidable competitor for power. He had no gift of speech as Trotsky had. He was not an imposing figure. He wore an old khaki tunic with a button missing. He never went to the cleaners. His black hair was uncouth; his thick mustache dropped. He did not have his own automobile as Trotsky had. He was still smart at raiding banks and confiscating money for the Party, but money did not find its way into his pocket. He never showed off in any way. His face was a mask; it looked stupid and narrow-minded but benevolent.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 42

After the conquest of power, Stalin began to feel more sure of himself, remaining, however, a figure of the second rank. I soon noticed that Lenin was “advancing” Stalin, valuing in him his firmness, grit, stubbornness, and to a certain extent his slyness, as attributes necessary in the struggle.
Trotsky , Leon , Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 243

LENIN PROPOSED THAT STALIN BE TRANSFERRED FROM GEN. SEC. NOT REMOVED

Lenin proposed in his letter that Stalin be removed from his post as general secretary but did not question the possibility and necessity of keeping Stalin in the leadership. That is why the word “transfer” was used, rather than “remove”. Lenin did not propose any specific person to replace Stalin as general secretary.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 82

TROTSKY REFUSES TO TAKE A LEADING ROLE WHILE LENIN IS INCAPACITATED

The 12th Party Congress was to be held at the end of April 1923. Lenin was recovering with difficulty from the effects of his third stroke, and it was obvious that he would not be able to take part in the work of the congress. The question arose as to who would give the report in the name of the Central Committee. The most authoritative figure in the Central Committee was still Trotsky. Therefore, it was completely natural that at a meeting of the Politburo Stalin proposed that Trotsky prepare the report. Stalin was supported by Kalinin, Rykov, and even Kamenev. But Trotsky again declined, falling into confused rationalizations to the effect that “the party will be ill at ease if any one of us should attempt, as it were personally, to take the place of the sick Lenin.” Trotsky proposed instead that the Congress proceed without a main political report. This was an absurd proposal, and was, of course, voted down. At one of the next meetings of the Politburo a decision was made– to assign Zinoviev, who had just returned from vacation, to prepare the political report….
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 113

If Trotsky was so sure that he was Lenin’s desired successor; if Trotsky saw that Lenin was not simply ill but paralyzed and unable to speak and write; if Trotsky also saw that Zinoviev and Stalin aspired to Lenin’s place in the party and considered this dangerous to the party; then it is quite impossible to consider his conduct in March and April 1923 correct for a political person.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 115

In the struggle within the Politburo in the spring of 1923 (a struggle imperceptible to the outside observer) Trotsky displayed complete passivity and in so doing condemned himself to defeat.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 116

And when the last crisis came, when Lenin fell sick and was compelled to withdrawal from the Government, he turned again to Trotsky and asked him to take his place as President of the Soviet of People's Commissars and of the Council of Labor and Defense. And, moreover, when Trotsky declined, Lenin did not turn to any other strong man; he passed over the heads of those who might conceivably imagine themselves to be rivals of Trotsky, and divided the position among three men who are obviously not leaders [Rykov, Tzuryupov, and Kamenev].
Eastman, Max. Since Lenin Died. Westport, Connecticut: Hyperion Press. 1973, p. 16

The next Party Congress,the 12th,was scheduled for April 1923. The Politburo aimed to show that the regime could function effectively in Lenin's absence. Trotsky was offered the honor of delivering the political report on behalf of the Central Committee, but refused.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 212

[Nevertheless Zinoviev was foolhardy enough to insist on taking Lenin's place at the Twelfth Congress and assumed the role of Lenin's successor by delivering the Political Report at its opening session. During the preparations for the Congress, with Lenin ill and unable to attend,] the most ticklish question was who should deliver this keynote address, which since the founding of the Party had always been Lenin's prerogative. When the subject was broached in the Politburo, Stalin was the first to say, "The Political Report will of course be made by Comrade Trotsky."

I did not want that, since it seemed to me equivalent to announcing my candidacy for the role of Lenin's successor at a time when Lenin was fighting a grave illness. I replied approximately as follows: "This is an interim. Let us hope that Lenin will soon get well. In the meantime the report should be made, in keeping with his office, by the General Secretary….

I continued to insist on Stalin making the report.

"Under no circumstances," he replied with demonstrative modesty. "The Party will not understand it. The report must be made by the most popular member of the Central Committee.
Trotsky , Leon , Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 366

STALIN EFFECTIVELY ROSE IN THE PARTY

In six years (from 1923 to 1929) Stalin outmaneuvered a series of opponents; first, in alliance with all the rest of his colleagues, he opposed and demoted Trotsky. Then, in alliance with the Bukharin-Rykov 'Right' he defeated the Zinoviev-Kamenev 'Left' bloc, and

then a new alliance between these and the Trotskyites. And finally he and his own following attacked their heretofore allies, the ‘Rightists’.

Bukharin was later to criticize Stalin as a master of ‘dosing’–of getting his way in gradual doses. That this was supposed to be a damaging point is a measure of Bukharin’s (and others’) comparative incompetence.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 131

TROTSKY REFUSES TO TAKE LEADING POSITIONS OFFERED BY LENIN AND STALIN

On Sept. 11, 1922, Lenin addressed to Stalin a note for the Politburo in which he suggested that in view of Rykov’s imminent departure for a vacation and Tsiurupa’s inability to handle the whole load by himself, two new deputy chairman be appointed, one to help oversee the Council of People’s Commissars, the other, the Council of Labor and Defense: both were to work under close supervision of the Politburo and himself. For the posts he suggested Trotsky and Kamenev. A great deal has been made by Trotsky’s friends and enemies alike of this bid: some of the former went so far as to claim that Lenin chose him as his successor. (Max Eastman, for example, wrote not long afterward that Lenin had asked Trotsky to “become the head of the Soviet government, and thus of the revolutionary movement of the world.”) The reality was more prosaic. According to Lenin’s sister, the offer was made for “diplomatic reasons,” that is, to smooth Trotsky’s ruffled feathers; in fact, it was because it was so insignificant that Trotsky would have none of it. When the Politburo voted on Lenin’s motion, Stalin and Rykov wrote down “Yes,” Kamenev and Tomsky abstained, Kalinin stated “No objections,” while Trotsky wrote “Categorically refuse.” Trotsky explained to Stalin why he could not accept the offer. He had previously criticized the institution of zamy on grounds of substance. Now he raised additional objections on grounds of procedure: the offer had not been discussed either at the Politburo or at the Plenum, and, in any event, he was about to leave on a four-week vacation. But his true reason very likely was the demeaning nature of the proposal: he was to be one of four deputies–one of them not even a Politburo member–without clearly defined responsibilities: a meaningless “deputy as such.” Acceptance would have humiliated him; refusal, however, handed his enemies deadly ammunition. For it was quite unprecedented for a high Soviet official “categorically” to refuse an assignment.
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 466

As reward for Trotsky’s collaboration, Stalin in January 1923 once again offered him the post of a zam in charge of either the VSNKh or the Gosplan. Trotsky again refused.
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 470

On his [Trotsky] new platform he acquired some support, especially from the so-called “Group of Forty-Six,” members who shared his views and sent a letter to this effect to the Central Committee. The directing organs of the party, however, had a ready answer: the letter constituted a “platform” that could lead to the creation of an illegal faction. In a lengthy rebuttal, it took Trotsky to task [by stating],
“Two or three years ago, when Comrade Trotsky began his “economic” pronouncements against the majority of the Central Committee, Lenin himself explained to him dozens of

times that economic questions belong to a category that precludes quick successes, that requires years and years of patient and persistent work to achieve serious results…. To secure correct leadership of the country's economic life from a single center and to introduce into it the maximum of planning, the Central Committee in the summer of 1923 reorganized the Council of Labor and Defense, introducing into it personally a number of the leading economic workers of the republic. In that number, the Central Committee elected also Comrade Trotsky. But Comrade Trotsky did not consider making an appearance at meetings of the Council of Labor and Defense, just as for many years he had failed to attend meetings of the Sovnarkom and rejected the proposal of Comrade Lenin to be one of the deputies of the Sovnarkom Chairman…. At the basis of Comrade Trotsky's discontent, of his whole irritation, of all his assaults over the years against the Central Committee, of his decision to rock the party, lies the circumstance that Comrade Trotsky wants the Central Committee to have him and Comrade Kolegaev take charge of our economic life. Comrade Lenin had long fought against such an appointment, and we believe he was entirely correct…. Comrade Trotsky is a member of the Sovnarkom and of the reorganized Council of Labor and Defense. He has been offered by Comrade Lenin the post of deputy of Sovnarkom chairman. Had he wanted, in all these positions Comrade Trotsky could have demonstrated to the entire party in fact, indeed, that he can be entrusted with that de facto unlimited authority in the field of economic and military affairs for which he strives. But Comrade Trotsky preferred a different method of action, one which, in our opinion, is incompatible with the duties of a party member. He has attended not a single meeting of the Sovnarkom either under Comrade Lenin or after Comrade Lenin's retirement from work. He has attended not a single meeting of the Council of Labor and Defense, whether old or reorganized. He has not moved once either in the Sovnarkom, or in the Council of Labor and Defense, or in the Gosplan any proposals concerning economic, financial, budgetary, and so forth, questions. He has categorically refused to be Comrade Lenin's deputy: this he apparently considers below his dignity. He acts according to the formula "All or Nothing." In fact, Comrade Trotsky has assumed toward the party the attitude that it either must grant him dictatorial powers in the economic and military spheres, or else he will, in effect, refuse to work in the economic realm, reserving himself only the right to engage in systematic disorganization of the Central Committee in its difficult day-to-day work."
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 484

After the seizure of power, I tried to stay out of the government, and offered to undertake the direction of the press.
…One thing coincided with the other, and this only added to my desire to retire behind the scenes for a while. Lenin would not hear of it, however. He insisted that I take over the commissariat of the interior, saying that the most important task at the moment was to fight off a counter-revolution. I objected, and brought up, among other arguments, the question of nationality. Was it worthwhile to put into our enemies hands such an additional weapon as my Jewish origin?
Lenin almost lost his temper. "We are having a great international revolution. Of what importance are such trifles?"
If, in 1917 and later, I occasionally pointed to my Jewish origin as an argument against some appointment, it was simply because of political considerations.
… I, likewise with reluctance, consented. And thus, at the instigation of Sverdlov, I came to head the Soviet diplomacy for a quarter of a year.
Trotsky, Leon. My Life. Gloucester, Massachusetts: P. Smith, 1970, p. 340-341

When I was declining the commissariat of home affairs on the second day after the revolution, I brought up, among other things, the question of race [Jewish].
Trotsky, Leon. My Life. Gloucester, Massachusetts: P. Smith, 1970, p. 360

Stalin suggested that Trotsky should present the main report at the 12th Congress but Trotsky sensibly refused, rightly believing that this would be taken as an assumption of Lenin's mantle.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 106

There was, however, no intrigue to get the post [General Secretary of the CPSU]. Trotsky did not want it.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 78

Later all on, judging from some accidental and quite erroneous indications, he [Lenin] concluded I was being too dilatory in the matter of an armed uprising, and this suspicion was reflected in several of his letters during October…. The next day, at the meeting of the Central Committee of the party, he proposed that I be elected chairman of the Soviet of People's Commissaries. I sprang to my feet, protesting–the proposal seemed to me so unexpected and inappropriate. "Why not?" Lenin insisted. "You were at the head of the Petrograd Soviet that seized the power." I moved to reject his proposal, without debating it. The motion was carried.
Trotsky, Leon. My Life. Gloucester, Massachusetts: P. Smith, 1970, p. 339

I felt the mechanics of power as an inescapable burden, rather than as a spiritual satisfaction.
Trotsky, Leon. My Life. Gloucester, Massachusetts: P. Smith, 1970, p. 582

[In the reply of the Politburo to Trotsky's letter of October 1923 to the Central Committee is the following:]
"Trotsky is a member of the Soviet of People's Commissars, a member of the Soviet of Labor and Defense; Lenin offered him the post of vice-president of the Soviet of People's Commissars. In all these positions Trotsky might, if he wished to, demonstrate in action, working before the eyes of the whole party, that the party might trust him with those practically unlimited powers in the sphere of industry and military affairs towards which he strives. But Trotsky preferred another method of action…. He never attended a meeting of the Soviet of People's Commissars, neither under Lenin, nor after his withdrawal. He never attended a meeting of the Soviet of Labor and Defense, neither before nor after its reorganization….
Trotsky categorically declined the position of substitute for Lenin. That evidently he considers beneath his dignity. He conducts himself according to the formula, 'All or nothing.'"
Eastman, Max. Since Lenin Died. Westport, connecticut: Hyperion Press. 1973, p. 144-145

Stalin was perfectly well aware that relations between Lenin and Trotsky had recently become increasingly close. He had not been much concerned about this during 1922, for the two leaders, while never in conflict on points of principle [That is false–Ed], had perpetually engaged in skirmishes on current questions. This did not prevent Lenin from suggesting to Trotsky that he should become his deputy, but Trotsky had refused, and on this occasion

Stalin had succeeded, not without a certain malicious satisfaction, in getting the Politburo to censure Trotsky for failure of duty.
Lewin, Moshe. Lenin's Last Struggle. New York: Pantheon Books. C1968, p. 71

When Trotsky heard that, despite the considerable administrative load he was already bearing, the Politburo wanted to put him in charge of the state treasury under the Finance Commissariat, he refused, sending a written explanation. Lenin reacted with a note to the Politburo: "Trotsky's letter is unclear. If he is refusing, a decision of the Politburo is required. I am for not accepting his resignation.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 257

Throughout the summer of 1922 the disagreements in the Politburo over domestic issues dragged on inconclusively. The dissension between Lenin and Trotsky persisted. On 11 September from his retreat in Gorky, outside Moscow, Lenin made contact with Stalin and asked him to place before the Politburo once again and with the utmost urgency a motion proposing Trotsky's appointment as deputy Premier. Stalin communicated the motion by telephone to those members and alternate members of the Politburo who were present in Moscow. He himself and Rykov voted for the appointment; Kalinin declared that he had no objections, while Tomsky and Kamenev abstained. No one voted against. Trotsky once again refused the post. Since Lenin had insisted that the appointment was urgent because Rykov was about to take leave, Trotsky replied that he, too, was on the point of taking his holiday and that his hands were, anyhow, full of work for the forthcoming congress of the International. These were irrelevant excuses, because Lenin had not intended the appointment to be only a stopgap for the holiday season. Without waiting for the Politburo's decision, Trotsky left Moscow. On 14 September the Politburo met and Stalin put before it a resolution which was highly damaging to Trotsky; it censured him in effect for dereliction of duty. The circumstances of the case indicate that Lenin must have prompted Stalin to frame this resolution or that Stalin at least had his consent for it.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 65

Now as before the economic administration bungled and muddled. Nothing had been done to make Gosplan the guiding center of the economy. The Politburo set up a number of committees to investigate symptoms of the crisis instead of going to its root. Trotsky himself had been invited to serve on a committee which was to inquire into prices; but he refused to do so. He had no wish, he declared, to participate in an activity designed to dodge issues and to postpone decisions.
…Other collisions developed when the triumvirs proposed changes in the Military Revolutionary Council over which Trotsky presided. Zinoviev was bent on introducing into that Council either Stalin himself or at least Voroshilov and Lashevich…. Trotsky, hurt and indignant, declared that he was resigning in protest from every office he held, the Commissariat of War, the Military Revolutionary Council, the Politburo, and the Central Committee. He asked to be sent abroad "as a soldier of the revolution" to help the German Communist party to prepare its revolution.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 111

In the summer of 1922, when he [Trotsky] refused to accept the office of Vice-Premiere under Lenin and, incurring the Politburo's censure, went on leave, he devoted the better part of his holiday to literary criticism.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 164

Still defeated the Left Opposition, not just because his policies proved to be more attractive for the broad masses of the population or for a considerable section of the Party cadres, but to a very large extent because of the plain fact that in the first, decisive stages of the struggle for power, Trotsky simply opted out.
Medvedev, Roy. On Stalin and Stalinism. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 46

Searching for an ally, Lenin turned to Trotsky. Twice in the course of 1922 he had urged Trotsky to accept the post of a deputy chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, and twice Trotsky had refused, failing to see the opportunity Lenin was offering him to establish his political position as first among his deputies.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 119

Trotsky was already War Minister, and Lenin and the Central Committee had tried several times to make him also a deputy chairman of the Council of Commissars. Trotsky always refused out of pride since there were already several deputy chairmen.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 226

The reply of the Political Bureau, led by Stalin, Kamenev, and Zinoviev, was that Trotsky could have had, as a member of the government, and in the capacity of vice-premier which Lenin had offered him, every opportunity "if you wished to, to demonstrate in action that the party might trust him with those practically unlimited powers in the sphere of industry and military affairs toward which he strives. But Trotsky preferred another method of action…. He never attended a meeting of the council of people's commissars, either under Lenin or after his withdrawal. He never attended a meeting of the council of labor and defense, either before or after its reorganization….
The Politburo said, "Trotsky categorically declined the position of substitute for Lenin. That evidently he considers beneath his dignity. He conducts himself according to the formula: 'All or nothing.'"
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 229

[At the 13th Conference of the Party in January 1924 Stalin stated] Let me recall two facts so that you may be able to judge for yourselves. First, the incident which occurred at the September plenum of the Central Committee when, in reply to the remark by Central Committee member Komarov that Central Committee members cannot refuse to carry out Central Committee decisions, Trotsky jumped up and left the meeting. You will recall that the Central Committee plenum sent a "delegation" to Trotsky with the request that he return to the meeting. You will recall that Trotsky refused to comply with this request of the plenum, thereby demonstrating that he had not the slightest respect for this Central Committee. There is also the other fact, that Trotsky definitely refuses to work in the central Soviet bodies, in the Council of Labor and Defense and the Council of People's Commissars, despite the twice-adopted Central Committee decision that he at last take up his duties in the

Soviet bodies. You know that Trotsky has not as much as moved a finger to carry out this Central Committee decision.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 6, p. 39

The same day that Lenin sent Stalin the demand for an apology, 5 March 1923, he also sent Trotsky a note asking him to take over the 'Georgian affair', providing him with the dictations of 30-1 December on the problem of minority nationalism. Trotsky declined this commission, thus missing a fine opportunity to deal Stalin a serious blow. His excuse was illness, and it is true that he intermittently ran a debilitating fever during most of the 1920s. But he was not too ill to report to the Congress of April 1923 on a different topic, and he at least could have read the dictations to the Congress, thus presenting himself as a close ally of Lenin. One explanation of Trotsky's self-defeating decision might be the excessive self-confidence that Lenin had noted in his dictation. Trotsky perhaps could not conceive that he would have to exert himself to be recognized as the principal successor to Lenin. Another explanation might be that Trotsky was not interested in belaboring Russian chauvinism and defending minority nationalism….
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 78

Trotsky's rejection of Lenin's request [to take over the Georgian affair] was at least as serious an example of disloyalty to the founder as Stalin's insults to Krupskaia, but the latest decline in Lenin's health closed that issue.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 78

[Footnote]: In his response to Lenin's repeated offer [of being a deputy chairman of sovnarkom] Trotsky said that he would accept the job if the Central Committee ordered him to, but that this would be 'profoundly irrational' and contrary to his administrative 'plans and intentions'. This brusqueness was far from the impression of friendly relations that he described in his book My Life. This memoir was even more inaccurate in stating that Lenin had not previously offered him the position.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 345

LENIN CHOSE STALIN AS GEN. SEC.

At this stage his power was already formidable. Still more was to accrue to him from his appointment, on April 3, 1922, to the post of General Secretary of the Central Committee. The 11th Congress of the party had just elected a new and enlarged Central Committee and again modified the statutes. The leading bodies of the party were now top-heavy; and a new office, that of the General Secretary, was created, which was to coordinate the work of their many growing and overlapping branches. It was on that occasion, Trotsky alleges, that Lenin aired, in the inner circle of his associates, his misgivings about Stalin's candidature: 'This cook can only serve peppery dishes.' But his doubts were, at any rate, not grave; and he himself in the end sponsored the candidature of the 'cook'. Molotov and Kuibyshev were appointed Stalin's assistants, the former having already been one of the secretaries of the party.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 232

Stalin did not make himself general secretary. Lenin did. Lenin had been his mentor, protector, and constant model.
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 162

In regard to Stalin three facts can hardly be controverted. First, in January, 1912, at the Prague Conference of the Communist Party, Lenin proposed the election of Stalin to the Central Committee of the Party and placed him at the head of the "Russian Bureau" in charge of all Communist activities on Russian soil. Second, when the Politburo was first formed by Lenin in May, 1917, Stalin was chosen by Lenin to be a member and has been reelected to it at every Party Congress since. Third, when Lenin felt death's hand upon his shoulder early in 1922, he named Stalin General Secretary of the Communist Party, which he knew and all the Communists knew was the key position in the Party, as Stalin later proved by using it to make himself Lenin's successor.
Duranty, Walter. Stalin & Co. New York: W. Sloane Associates, 1949, p. 66

A 'party school' had been held by Lenin in 1911 at Longjumeau outside Paris, and Dzhughashvili was one of the individuals he had wanted to have with him. 'People like him', he [Lenin] said to the Georgian Menshevik Uratadze, 'are exactly what I need.'
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 82

Lenin and his entourage therefore decided to reinforce the Secretariat in two ways–by establishing the office of General Secretary, with the other two members acting as his assistants rather than equal colleagues, and by selecting for the position of General Secretary the man most capable of strong-arm work, Joseph Stalin.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 351

STALIN & TROTSKY EACH TRY TO GET THE OTHER TO GIVE THE KEY SPEECH WHEN LENIN LEFT

At the session of the Politburo which discussed new arrangements for the Congress [the 12th Party Congress], the first Congress in the whole history of the party that was not to be guided by Lenin, Stalin proposed that, in place of Lenin, Trotsky should address the Congress on behalf of the Central Committee, as its chief rapporteur…. Trotsky refused to act in Lenin's customary role, lest people should think that he was advancing his claim to the leadership even before Lenin was dead. His apprehension was certainly genuine. But then he went on to propose that Stalin, as General Secretary, should ex officio act in place of Lenin. The latter, too, was cautious enough to refuse. In the end Zinoviev accepted the risky honor.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 253

It was the early weeks of 1923, and the 12th Congress was drawing near. There remained little hope that Lenin could take part in it. The question of who was to make the principal political report arose. At the meeting of the Politburo, Stalin said, "Trotsky, of course." He was instantly supported by Kalinin, Rykov, and, obviously against his will, by Kamenev. I objected.

Stalin knew that a storm was menacing him from Lenin's direction, and tried in every way to ingratiate himself with me. He kept repeating that the political report should be made by the most influential and popular member of the Central Committee after Lenin: i.e., Trotsky, and that the party expected it and would not understand anything else.
Trotsky, Leon. My Life. Gloucester, Massachusetts: P. Smith, 1970, p. 489

The 12th Party Congress was from 17 to 23 April 1923. A major problem arose: Who would present the congress with the Central Committee's political report, the most important political document of the year? This task had always been Lenin's. Whoever did it would be considered by the Party to be Lenin's successor.
At the Politburo meeting Stalin proposed that Trotsky present the report….
With astonishing naivete, Trotsky refused. He didn't want the Party to think he was usurping the place of a sick Lenin. In his turn, he proposed that Stalin give the report as general secretary of the Central Committee. I can just imagine Zinoviev's emotions at that moment. But Stalin also refused. He understood perfectly well that the Party would not understand and wouldn't accept him, for nobody then considered him as one of the top Party bosses. In the end, with Kamenev's help, Zinoviev was tasked with presenting the report. He was president of the Comintern, and if anyone should temporarily replace the ill Lenin, it was he. Zinoviev gave the political report to the congress in April.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 30

SOKOLNIKOV WAS THE ONLY 1926 SPEAKER TO URGE REMOVAL OF STALIN AS GEN. SEC.

I often went to visit Sokolnikov, who had been a lawyer…. After the 13th Party Congress in May 1924, he was named candidate member of the Politburo. At the 1926 congress he took the side of Zinoviev and Kamenev and was the only platform speaker to urge removal of Stalin from the general secretaryship. That cost him his job as peoples' commissar and his place on the Politburo.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 86

STALIN REFUSES TO ACCEPT TROTSKY'S RESIGNATION AS WAR COMMISSAR

The triumvirs could not let him go…. Zinoviev replied that he himself, the President of the Communist International, would go to Germany "as a soldier of the revolution" instead of Trotsky. Then Stalin intervened, and with a display of bonhomie and common sense said that the Politburo could not possibly dispense with the services of either of its two most eminent and well-beloved members. Nor could it except Trotsky's resignation from the Commissariat of War and the Central Committee, which would create a scandal of the first magnitude. As for himself, he, Stalin, would be content to remain excluded from the Military Revolutionary Committee if this could restore harmony. The Politburo accepted Stalin's "solution"; and Trotsky, feeling the grotesqueness of the situation, left the hall in the middle of the meeting "banging the door behind him."

Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 112

TROTSKY WAS FAR TOO UNPOPULAR WITH THE PEASANTS TO TAKE OVER AFTER LENIN

In his preface to the German edition of Serge's memoirs, Erich Wollenberg [a German revolutionary Communist who moved to the Soviet Union in the early 1920s after the final defeat of insurrection in Germany] rather persuasively disputes Serge's version of the facts. "… Within the Party itself there was unquestionably a majority supporting the troika: i.e. the ruling triumvirate composed of Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Stalin. They were regarded in precisely that order of importance, with Stalin in last place.
If there had been some way of changing the Soviet Constitution and carrying out an election, who among Lenin's followers would have received the most votes? Although the result would be impossible to predict, we can be sure about one thing: in view of the hostility of the peasantry and of the middle-class which in the early 1920s had come to regard Trotsky as an opponent of NEP, an overwhelming majority of those voting in the election would have been against Trotsky.
It is necessary to stress this point unequivocally, since to this day Trotskyists of all kinds, and even experts on Soviet affairs in the Federal Republic and other countries, express the view in conversation, in print, and on television that Trotsky actually had a "real chance" after Lenin's death.
Medvedev, Roy. On Stalin and Stalinism. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 53

STALIN WORKED VERY HARD IN THE EARLY YEARS TO BUILD THE PARTY

During the years of reaction he [Stalin] was not one of the tens of thousands who deserted the Party, but one of the very few hundreds who, despite everything, remained loyal to it.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 113

Toward the end of February 1917, Stalin, who had returned from abroad, made his home with the same deputies: "He played the leading role in the life of our [Duma] faction and of the newspaper Pravda," relates Samoilov, "and he attended not only all the conferences, which we arranged in our apartment, but not infrequently, with great risk to himself, visited also the sessions of the Social-Democratic faction, where, upholding our position in arguments against the Mensheviks and on various other questions, he rendered us great service."
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 159

EFFORTS TO PROVE STALIN WAS NOT LEGALLY THE GENERAL SECRETARY ARE BASELESS

One particular point concerning the reconstituted party regime has remained an enigma. Announcements of postcongress plenums in 1922 and after said not only that Stalin was elected a Central Committee secretary, but also that the new Central Committee confirmed him as general secretary. This time there was no reference to such confirmation. From the

omission a veteran observer of Soviet politics has inferred that the new Central Committee deprived Stalin of the position of general secretary and all the associated “additional rights” that set him apart from the other Central Committee secretaries. A large interpretation of the history of the Soviet regime in the ensuing years flowed from the hypothesized grave setback of Stalin’s fortunes.
The inference, however, was unfounded. First, general secretary was a special title accorded Stalin as the senior Central Committee secretary, not, technically speaking, an office. The office was that of secretary, as indicated by the fact that both before and after 1934 Stalin signed party decrees “Secretary of the Central Committee.” Secondly, Soviet official sources testify that Stalin did not cease to be general secretary in February 1934 even though the announcement concerning the postcongress plenum made no mention of his having been confirmed as such. Thirdly, the symbolic evidence cited above and the signs of Stalin’s heavy influence in the reshaping of the party regime contradict the notion that his power was reduced by the new Central Committee whose very composition testified to this power.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 263

TROTSKY TRIES TO MILITARIZE THE TRADE UNIONS

When Stalin requisitioned the grain of the south to feed the hungry population of the north, he had regard neither for the open market of capitalism nor for the principle of the future exchange of goods in communist society. He was doing what any State power would have had to do if it intended to survive, whether that State were a slave, feudal, capitalist, or socialist. The economics of War Communism were the economics of survival, and that they took on extreme forms of centralization of authority, applied measures of confiscation right and left, requisitioned without regard for the economic niceties of the market, is incidental.
At this period Stalin and Trotsky again found themselves in opposite camps. Flushed with enthusiasm for the growing discipline of the Red Army, Trotsky initiated the transformation of its regiments into military Labor Battalions. Again showing his characteristic lack of confidence in the workers, he proposed to militarize labor in industry and make the Trade Unions into governmental institutions which would effect the necessary discipline. He opposed the election of trade union officials and favored their appointment by the Government….
Lenin and Stalin together fought Trotsky’s proposal. They insisted that the Trade Unions be voluntary and democratic, elect their officials, adopt methods of comradely persuasion and eschew the dictatorial practices of the military-minded.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 140

This instance [causing a huge eventual loss by refusing to sign the Brest-Litovsk Treaty] is enough to show the Trotsky had no comprehension of political realities. This was made clear again on later occasions. To quote only one instance, after the end of the Civil War Trotsky hit upon the idea of assisting the needed economic reconstruction by not demobilizing the Red Army but converting it into a labor force. He wanted to organize forced labor under military discipline on an altogether unprecedented scale. And this in a country already full of revolutionary anarchy! In his articles he declared that it was a bourgeois prejudice that regarded forced labor as economically inferior to free labor. If Trotsky’s idea had been carried out, in all probability the Bolshevik regime would have been brought down….
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 125

Stalin's position on this question of labor armies is of importance in a study of his character because it destroys the popular conception of him as a ruthless Dictator and demonstrates that, provided such a course is not detrimental to the well-being of the Soviet state, he is always prepared to deal with a problem from a humanitarian standpoint.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 53

In 1920 a controversy on the trade union question arose in the party. It arose because Trotsky and his followers had proposed that the policy of the period of War Communism be continued in every sphere of economic and Party work, and that the "screw be put on tighter."
Yaroslavsky, Emelian. Landmarks in the Life of Stalin. Moscow: FLPH, 1940, p. 115

PARTY OUTLAWS FACTIONS AND DEMOTES TROTSKYISTS

At the Tenth Bolshevik Party Congress, in March 1921, the Central Committee headed by Lenin passed a resolution outlawing all "factions" in the party as a menace to the unity of the revolutionary leadership. From now on all party leaders would have to submit to the majority decisions and the majority rule, on penalty of expulsion from the party. The Central Committee specifically warned "Comrade Trotsky" against his "factional activities," and stated that "enemies of the state," taking advantage of the confusion caused by his disruptive activities were penetrating the party and calling themselves "Trotskyites." A number of important Trotskyites and other Left Oppositionists were demoted. Trotsky's chief military aide, Muralov, was removed as Commander of the strategic Moscow Military Garrison and replaced by the old Bolshevik, Voroshilov.
The following year, in March 1922, Joseph Stalin was elected general secretary of party….
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 196

There was also sharp divergence amongst the delegates to the Tenth Party Congress about the powers and functions of labor unions in the Soviet State. Feelings ran so high and differences of opinions were so violent on both these important questions (the NEP and labor unions) that Lenin was led to make an impassioned plea for Party Unity, which he described as the cardinal and all-essential factor for this and every subsequent Congress to remember and reserve.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 70

The Tenth Congress further authorized the Central Committee, as supreme permanent organism of the Party, to apply appropriate penalties to all Communists–including members of the Committee itself–guilty of violating party discipline, and especially of creating intra-party factions.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 70

This incident so alarmed Lenin that he caused the 10th Congress of the CPSU to pass a special resolution against the formation of separate blocks, groups, and factions within the Party. Lenin was of the view that party members were entitled to differ with each other and to resolve their differences by discussion. But once a decision had been arrived at after a thorough discussion, and criticism had been exhausted, unity of will and action of the Party

members were necessary, for without this unity a proletarian Party and proletarian discipline were inconceivable. This Trotsky could never understand. Whenever he found himself in a minority he rushed ahead to form a faction within the Party–thus jeopardizing the Party and the Soviet Republic.
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 103

When Trotsky asks about the rights of factions, it is not the right of Communist Party members to express their opinion within the Party that he is concerned with. That is not and never has been challenged. What Trotsky means by factions is not minority opinion on one or another issue within the Party, but the right of a group to establish its own leadership, its own connections, its own press within the Party–in short, its right to establish a party within the Party with a view to splitting the Party. That will never be tolerated.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 187

A Party conference, the first organized by him [Stalin], was held in January 1924. It was unsparing in its condemnation of Trotsky and the opposition, and it decided that the secret resolution [Lenin's resolution] "on expulsion from the Party for factional activity" should be made public for the first time.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 212

LENIN SHUT DOWN FACTIONALISM AND HAD MAJOR PURGE

The controversies engendered by the adoption of the NEP caused Congress X (March, 1921) to order the dissolution of all factional groups and the expulsion from membership, on the order of the Central Committee, of all deemed guilty of reviving factionalism, infringing the rules of discipline, or violating Congress decisions. During 1921 some 170,000 members, about 25% of the total, were expelled in a mass purge which continued throughout 1922. So drastic was this cleansing that Congress XII (April, 1923) was attended by only 408 delegates representing 386,000 members, as compared with 694 and 732,000 in March, 1921. The Congress rejected proposals by Krassin and Radek for large scale concessions to foreign capital, by Bukharin and Sokolnikov for abandoning the State monopoly of foreign trade, and by Trotsky for reversing Lenin's policy of conciliating the peasantry. In the autumn of 1923 Trotsky issued a "Declaration of the 46 Oppositionists," criticizing the NEP, predicting a grave economic crisis and demanding full freedom for dissenting groups and factions. Immediately after Congress XI (March, 1922) the Plenum of the Central Committee, on Lenin's motion, had chosen Stalin as General Secretary of the Committee.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 198

The 1921 Purge was so severe that the party membership was reduced from 732,000 (at the time of the Tenth Congress in March, 1921) to 532,000 at the Eleventh Congress in March, 1922.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 71

In March 1921 there was a serious mutiny of sailors of the Kronstadt naval base near Petrograd, previously noted for their ardent radicalism. This was not the doing of the Bolshevik dissenters, but at the party congress of March 1921 Lenin used it as an example

of what dissent could lead to thanks to the machinations of the Mensheviks, Socialist Revolutionaries, and imperialists. The Congress passed a resolution forbidding intra-party factions, with a secret article that permitted the Central Committee to discipline, even to expel from the party (that is, remove from political life), any factionalists, including Central Committee members. Those who wish to portray Lenin as a pluralist at heart have observed that this was an exceptional measure during a crisis at the end of a devastating civil war and that it was not intended to be a permanent feature of Bolshevism. But Lenin never suggested in the two years following this resolution that he thought it might be rescinded, even though the crisis had passed.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 83

LENIN OPPOSED WORKERS' OPPOSITION AND ANARCHO-SYNDICALISTS

The main fight, however, was not between Lenin and Trotsky. Both made common cause against the Workers' Opposition and the group of Democratic Centralists, for it was from that side that the authority of party and Government was most directly threatened. The seriousness of the threat was matched by the unusual bitterness of Lenin's attacks on the 'Anarcho-Syndicalists', as he labeled his opponents, describing even their views, let alone their deeds, as 'a direct political danger to the very existence of the proletarian dictatorship'. This was the motive for the ban on oppositional groups inside the party. What seemed so dangerous to Lenin in the Workers' Opposition was not so much its specific views on the trade unions, as the underlying desire to assign to the party a more modest role than it had come to play. Lenin made a half-hearted attempt to soften the rigor of the ban: members of party were to be enabled to air differences of opinion in a special Discussion Bulletin; and some of the chief spokesmen of the Opposition were re-elected to the Central Committee. But he himself undid the effect of his liberal gestures when he persuaded the Congress to state that 'the propaganda of [Anarcho-Syndicalist] ideas is incompatible with membership of the Russian Communist Party'. The congress empowered the Central Committee to expel from the party leaders elected by the Congress, thereby cracking a whip over the spokesmen of the Workers' Opposition who had just been re-elected. The three able, educated, and independent secretaries of the party, Krestinsky, Serebryakov, and Preobrazhensky, who showed a leaning or a leniency towards the Opposition, were removed from office and replaced by 'reliable' people like Molotov and Yaroslavski. The new secretaries were Stalin's close associates. Trotsky voted for the ban, without suspecting that one day the ban would become a death-trap for his own opposition.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 223

TROTSKY OPPOSED DIRECT WORKERS CONTROL OF FACTORIES

Contrary to a myth of vulgar Trotskyism, he [Trotsky] did not advocate any "direct workers' control over industry," that is management by factory committees or works' councils. This form of management had failed in Russia shortly after the revolution, and Trotsky had ever since been a most determined advocate of one-man management and central control, arguing that management by factory committees would become possible only if and when the mass of producers became well-educated and imbued with a strong sense of social responsibility. He had also been absolutely opposed to the "anarcho-syndicalist" schemes of

the Workers' Opposition for the transfer of industrial management to trade unions or "producers associations." He did not significantly alter these views when he found himself in Opposition and exile.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 101

WHAT IS NEP

This strategy governing the in NEP consisted of maintaining the "dictatorship of the proletariat" by the state retaining its hold on key positions such as the banks, Railway's, telegraphs, Postal Services, large industrial enterprises, and foreign trade, and re-establishing private ownership in small-scale industry, with free market conditions for the exchange of commodities, industrial and agricultural. The peasants were released from requisitioning raids, and were free to sell any surplus production over an above the tax in kind which they had to deliver to the state.
The NEP therefore consisted of a mixture of socialist and capitalist economy. It has been described as "the return to capitalism" and as "state capitalism." Neither description is wholly true.
But while the surging movement of Revolution indeed swept across Europe, nowhere, except for a short period in Hungary, had it reached its November 7.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 143

Stalin regarded the NEP as a "breathing space" in which the Revolution retreated to "prepared positions" in order to regroup the Bolshevik divisions before storming new heights.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 156

Lenin called for national unity to meet the "incredible difficulties" of reorganizing economic and social life. He announced the New Economic Policy abolishing the rigid so-called "War Communism" and restoring a measure of private trade and capitalism in Russia and opening the way for the beginning of reconstruction. "We take one step backward," said Lenin, "in order at a later date to take two steps forward!"
When Lenin announced the "temporary retreat" of the New Economic Policy, Trotsky exclaimed: "the cuckoo has cuckooed the end of the Soviet government!"
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 194

The rest of the New Economic Policy–restoration of money wages with different rates according to capacity and performance; extra pay for overtime, and, in some branches, the re-appearance of the piece work system; revival of payments for rent, railroad, and street car travel, and the replacement of the food requisitions by a graduated tax in kind–consisted of little more than normal measures of peace time reconstruction.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 8

October 22, 1921–"The real meaning of the New Economic Policy is that we have met a great defeat in our plans and that we're now making a strategic retreat," said Lenin in one of the frankest admissions of the failure of his policies ever made by leader of a great nation. "We were wrong, and so we have begun to retreat. Before we are utterly smashed, let us retrace our steps and begin to build on a new foundation."
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 82

Lenin thus admits that his change of economic front is due to recognition of the fact that communism is at present inadequate to supply the peasants on the one hand with manufactured goods and the urban workers on the other with food.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 83

To Lenin the New Economic Policy was a delicate adjustment between the forces of communism and individualism, adopted, perhaps like the Brest-Litovsk peace three years before, unwillingly, but as “the breathing space” he knew was necessary for existence.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 152

In regard to the peasants, socialism allows them to profit by their own individual effort as long as the preparation and sale of their products do not involve the hired labor, or, as Russians call it, the exploitation, of others.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 227

Lenin, ever clear-sighted, scorned to escape from an error by cloaking it with another greater one and bluntly told the Central Committee: “We have made the mistake of thinking we could pass straight to Socialism [Read Communism] without transition.” Looking round him, Stalin also insisted that the situation was so serious that no amount of surface adjustment could make any difference, something entirely new must be evolved, and soon.
The situation which forced the Bolsheviks to the NEP is easier to understand in its present perspective than it was to those earnest defenders of theory who so hotly opposed it in 1921.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 57

Though it was forced temporarily to descend to the elementary capitalism of the early 19th-century, Bolshevism survived and gained a much needed respite during which a start could be made to rehabilitate the shattered economic structure of Russia.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 56

The very visible and noisy revival of private trade which characterized the first years of the new economic policy and which caused some hasty and superficial observers to announce that Russia was returning to capitalism has proved hollow and illusory. Freedom of private trade still exists theoretically in Russia; but this freedom is of rather an academic character when the private trader can obtain neither an adequate supply of goods, which are practically all manufactured in state factories, nor store buildings, which are leased first of all to co-operatives, nor transportation facilities.
It is pretty obvious from these facts and figures that, far from returning to private capitalism, the Soviet Government is steadily and rapidly socializing the field where private capital apparently had gained something of a foothold after the introduction of the New Economic Policy.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 140-141

In a series of speeches he said we must either follow this course or perish…. We either pass to the NEP or perish. That is how he put the question.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 125

And so it went. Courageously and wonderfully! Or take the NEP, for example. After all, it was the Mensheviks who demanded freedom of trade, to allow opportunities to sell, and so forth. So in 1921 Lenin took this Menshevik program and started implementing it, but under control of the workers' state. It was a measure forced on us by circumstances, but a necessary one.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 150

Further. The Mensheviks were continually talking about the kinds of trading relations we ought to have. Lenin criticized them: "You are counter-revolutionaries, scum, enemies of the working class." But then he introduced the NEP in 1921. This time he had "stolen" from the Mensheviks.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 151

Had we not concluded the Brest peace at that point, the Soviet government would have collapsed…. But as regards NEP, according to Lenin, it was our strategic retreat from socialism…. the NEP saved us from ruin…. At the 11th Congress Lenin summed up the results of the new policy and said that if we had not abandoned our earlier policies and had not restored public confidence, Soviet power would not have survived. That was essentially his analysis of the NEP one year after it was launched.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 247

…State enterprises were placed upon a commercial footing. Salaries were graded according to qualifications and the kind of work done. And, as the State found that it had more enterprises on its hands than it could manage itself (since it had seized them all), it hired a certain number of them out to private individuals.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 122

Private capital began to make its appearance and developed in the home trade. It represented 30 percent of the whole amount in circulation in the home trade. Foreign trade, which remained a State monopoly, represented, in comparison with pre-war figures, 1/4 as regards imports and one-twentieth as regards exports.

American technicians, engineers, and administrators Lenin particularly held in high esteem. He wanted 5000 of them, he wanted them at once, and was ready to pay them the highest salaries. He was constantly assailed for having a peculiar leaning toward America. Indeed, his enemies cynically referred to him as "the agent of the Wall Street bankers," and in the heat of debate the extreme Left hurled this charge in his face.
As a matter of fact, American capitalism was to him not less evil than the capitalism of any other country. But America was so far away. It did not offer a direct threat to the life of Soviet Russia. And it did offer the goods and experts that Soviet Russia needed. "Why is it not then to the mutual interest of the two countries to make a special agreement?" asked Lenin.
But is it possible for a communistic state to deal with a capitalistic state? Can the two forms live side-by-side? These questions were put to Lenin by Naudeau.
"Why not?" said Lenin. "We want technicians, scientists and the various products of industry, and it is clear that we by ourselves are incapable of developing the immense resources of this country. Under the circumstances, though it may be unpleasant for us, we must admit that our principles, which hold in Russia, must, beyond our frontiers, give place to political agreements. We very sincerely propose to pay interest on our foreign loans, and in default of cash we will pay them in grain, oil, and all sorts of all materials in which we are rich.

“We have decided to grant concessions of forests and mines to citizens of the Entente powers, always on the condition that the essential principles of the Russian Soviets are to be respected. Furthermore, we will even consent–not cheerfully, it is true, but with resignation–to the cession of some territory of the old Empire of Russia to certain Entente powers. We know that the English, Japanese, and American capitalists very much desire such concessions.
“We have granted to an international association the construction of the Veliky Severny Put, The Great Northern Line. Have you heard of it? It is about 3000 versts of railroad, starting at Soroka, near the Gulf of Onega, and running by way of Kotlas across the Ural mountains to the Obi River. Immense virgin forests with 8 million hectares of land and all kinds of unexplored mines will fall within the domain of the constructing company.
“This state property is ceded for a certain time, probably 80 years, and with the right of redemption. We exact nothing drastic of the association. We ask only the observance of the laws passed by the Soviet, like the eight-hour day and the control of the workers organizations. It is true that this is far from Communism. It does not at all correspond to our ideal, and we must say that this question has raised some very lively controversies in Soviet journals. But we have decided to accept that which the epoch of transition renders necessary.”
Williams, Albert R. Through the Russian Revolution. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967, p. 48

The system of War Communism was scrapped and replaced by the so-called New Economic Policy. The NEP, as that policy came to be known, established a mixed economy. Large-scale industry and transport remained state-owned. Private enterprise was allowed in small and medium-sized industry and in trade. Foreign concerns were invited to restart business in Russia, even in large-scale industry. The requisitioning of food in the country-side was stopped; it was replaced by ordinary agricultural taxation, first in kind and then in money. Later on, the ruble was stabilized. The prime purpose of these sweeping reforms was to re-equip industry almost from scratch, to renew the exchange of manufactures for food and raw materials, in a word, to re-establish a functioning economy with the help of private capital. The state reserved for itself, apart from the ownership of large-scale industry, the over-all economic control.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 221

Of all the ironies and contradictions of this time (1921-28) the most striking was as follows. Under the Tsars, the peasants of Great Russia had lived for centuries under communal land tenure. At last, following the example of Western Europe, they had awakened to its many deficiencies–such as the division of the village holdings into innumerable separate strips–and following the lead given by the legislation of Stolypin they had been dividing up the holding into compact individual farms. Now they were doing this again in place after place of themselves, and all that they asked of the government was to confirm what they had done: the Communist Government was asked for a title deed. And in 1922 the Communist Government, in shaping its new land law, did indeed base it in the main on individual farming!
… More than this, as the peasants were listened to in this period, they had an actual opportunity of putting forward their own program, and it was in every way the reverse of Communism: a free market, no tax on thrift, restoration of the ballot, abolition of the practice of sending down from the Communist Party a list of the persons to be elected, and lastly the

equalization of the individual peasant's vote with that of the town worker: at present, in the government of the State, it only counted for 1/5.
Pares, Bernard. Russia. Washington, New York: Infantry Journal, Penguin books, 1944, p. 132

First Lenin introduced the "New Economic Policy" which legalized money again and allowed shops to open, invited foreign capital, made possible commercial concessions to foreign companies. Making war on Capitalism they invited the co-operation of capitalists.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 68

The New Economic Policy was a complete reversal of the course of the dictatorship…. The government retained its hold upon the basic resources and industries, the transport system, and monopoly of foreign trade. The socialist agricultural sector was restricted to the cooperative system and the moribund state and collective farms.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 363

NEP HAD TO GO

The nepmen, as they were called, showed amazing ingenuity in evading government control and taxation alike.
By 1925, however, NEP had served its purpose.
It had become apparent to the Bolshevik leaders that if they really intended to form a socialist state, something must be done to check capital accumulation by Nepmen, no less than the steady growth of a prosperous peasant class, the kulaks, or labor-employing farmers.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 9

Both sides [the two sides in the Party] were agreed that the kulaks required extermination as a class, and only quarreled about the right method and right moment.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 10

By the autumn of 1929 the real issue was clearly defined — collectivization must fail or the kulak must go — no middle measures were conceivable.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 11

CHUEV: Lenin had proposed the continuation of the NEP for a longer period of time. Did he not say that the NEP was to be pursued seriously and for a long time?
MOLOTOV: No. Lenin planned the NEP as a temporary retreat. Only one year later, in 1922 in a speech he said it was time to end the NEP. He said we have been retreating for a whole year. On the party's behalf we can now say, "That's enough…" The period of the NEP had ended, or was coming to an end.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 130

I have already mentioned that the exceptional measures against the kulaks in 1928 meant the de facto end of NEP in the countryside….
But by this time Stalin had no intention of continuing NEP….the Party had rejected the proposal of the Left Opposition (in 1926-1927) that private businessmen be taxed an

additional 200 million rubles. The Party had argued with good reason that such tax measures would amount to the expropriation of private capital and signify the abandonment of NEP. In the early 30s, however, Stalin himself began a policy of increased taxation of private businessmen, forcing them in fact to close down their businesses. It is true that Stalin did not call for the arrest and deportation of former Nepman and their families. Instead, an unannounced decision was made to confiscate a goodly part of their wealth.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 289

The NEP was producing tiresome results. The various State enterprises were being frequently hindered, spoiled, and cleverly exploited by private commercial concerns. As a general rule, the products of socialized industry were not reaching the consumer direct, but were falling into the hands of middle-men who passed them on at prices sometimes a hundred percent higher than those they paid. A large amount of commercial capital was becoming available as a result of speculation, and of undercutting of nationalized industries by private initiative, which was freer and cleverer than the State-controlled concerns, and less troubled by questions of public welfare. The importance of money in social life grew, and its effects were demoralizing. Gambling-houses and brothels made their appearance in the cities. Communists, dependent on very mediocre salaries, often found themselves at a disadvantage compared to the specialists, the tradesmen, and the “Capitalists” who were appearing as a new element in the common-weal. The unemployed were as badly off in Russia as they were in Berlin; the workers, unable to pay the comparatively high rents now demanded for the fine flats they had occupied during the Revolution, were, little by little, drifting back to the slums, and many a dwelling that had been handsome and clean a few years previously, was now poverty-stricken and dilapidated.
Barmine, Alexandre. Memoirs of a Soviet Diplomat. London: L. Dickson limited,1938, p. 218

It was this that brought this long period (1921-28) to an end. One can imagine the effect of all this compromise on such ardent doctrinaires. What a position for a government– to hold the power on condition that you let the greater part of the population do the opposite to what you wished! Meanwhile the compromise was having an enervating influence on the governing Party itself. Over and over again, there were purges to get rid of the lukewarm, and yet the rot gained ground: it was particularly felt where it was most dangerous, in the Komsomol. One is bound to feel the most respect for those who stood firmest for consistency. The Party itself, and therefore the Government, was soon split endwise. There were several groups; but the main distinction was between a right wing which said, give the country what it evidently wants and a left wing which said, practice what you preach.
Pares, Bernard. Russia. Washington, New York: Infantry Journal, Penguin books, 1944, p. 133

Later when he was thinking over his disagreements with Stalin, Bukharin would recall an “economic” discussion they had back in 1925. In the course of the discussion Stalin had said that if they gambled on NEP for long it would beget capitalism.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 231

BOLSHEVIKS KNOW PEASANTS ARE MORE BOURGEOIS THAN SOCIALIST

As the Bolsheviks well know, the peasants are individualists, not socialists; or, to put it differently, potential bourgeois rather than class-conscious proletariat.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 95

Lenin, who knew well how utterly the individualistic land-grabbing of the peasants and the un-disciplined desire of the soldiers differed from the Bolshevik aim of Marxist collectivism….
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 270

…But as soon as the October Revolution triumphed Lenin proclaimed the decree on land–the peasants mandate on land was to be implemented! Yes, the socialist revolutionary land program was to be implemented: take the land, immediately! He had utilized the peasants and explained: we're not in agreement in a number of respects, but as the peasants have drawn up the policy, let them become convinced by experience in implementing it that not everything is right with it, and they will begin to see things our way. But we must begin implementation of the decree; begin smashing the landlords to confiscate their land. In this struggle the peasants will find the right path.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 150

There is a certain article of mine, "Lenin in the years of the Revolution." I published it…after Lenin's death. In it I showed that Lenin had "stolen" the program of the Socialist-Revolutionaries….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 151

We are told that our peasantry, by its very position, is not socialistic, and, therefore, is incapable of socialist development. It is true, of course, that the peasantry, by its very position, is not socialistic. But this does not prove that the peasant farms cannot develop along socialist lines, if it can be shown that the country follows the town, and that socialist industry is predominant in the town. The peasants, by their position, were not socialistic at the time of the October Revolution and they did not by any means want the establishment of socialism in our country. Their main striving then was for the overthrow of the power of the landlords and the cessation of the war, the establishment of peace. Nevertheless, they followed the lead of the socialist proletariat. Why did they do this? Because there was no other way of ending the imperialist war, no other way of bringing peace to Russia than by overthrowing the bourgeoisie, and by establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat…. And so the peasants, at that time, in spite of their being non-socialistic, followed the lead of the socialist proletariat.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 166

Here was a country…where the working-class with its revolutionary traditions was a tiny island in the midst of a sea of illiterate peasantry.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 11

… Russia is suited to large-scale farming and the mass production of wheat.
The chief difficulty, if it could be overcome, solved both an economic and a political problem. That difficulty was the petty ownership of land. Nominally, the peasants were, for the most part, in possession of the land. They believed they were the owners of it. The peasants, in addition to their many religious and pagan superstitions, have also an economic one: it is that God made the land for the peasant. Their avidity for ownership in land is inborn. When

the first revolution took place it interested them chiefly as an opportunity to snatch all the land they could from the sequestered landowners. When the Whites marched North, all they asked for their support was legal title to the new lands [which the Whites refused–Ed.]. The Reds when they won the Civil War could not expropriate the peasants though private ownership of land was a contravention of their dogma. They were forced to accept the status quo and wait their opportunity for the socialization of property in agricultural land.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 112

The chief agrarian problem for the Bolsheviks can be briefly stated. In 1917 they were carried to power on the crest of the agrarian revolution. In this revolution the peasants seized the land and divided it up among themselves, thereby achieving their sole objective. This seizure and division of the land was the starting point for a new system of social differentiation. Feudalism had been definitely destroyed. But it had been destroyed by a revolution which laid the foundation for a capitalist class system. While the agrarian revolution had thus been the condition for the victory of the Bolsheviks its result represented a permanent menace to their very existence and all their aims. For them it was a question of life or death to overcome the “natural” capitalist tendencies of the peasantry. They did this by something like a “permanent revolution” in the countryside.
In addition, the Bolsheviks had to impose on the peasants special sacrifices in connection with the industrialization of the USSR. The peasants had to make a double sacrifice: they had not only to sacrifice immediate consumption in order to make possible the mechanization of agriculture, but they had also to give up their products with little or nothing in return in order to supply food to the town workers during the period of the building up of the capital goods industries. As a result, the Bolsheviks had constantly to coerce the peasants into growing and delivering up large quantities of grain, cattle, etc. at prices which they naturally regarded as inadequate.
Socialist Clarity Group. The U. S. S. R., Its Significance for the West. London: V. Gollancz, 1942, p. 34

WHEN CAPITALISM IS ALLOWED STATE RETAINS CONTROL

Lenin says, “where we have admitted capitalism we remain its master. There are mixed companies, half state and half foreign or native capitalists, but the state retains control of them and after using them to acquire commercial knowledge can dissolve them when it will. Thus there is no danger in this close association with the capitalist enemy.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 99

There has been considerable debate over whether the USSR today can correctly be called a socialist state, and its critics have pointed to such apparently unsocialist factors as high salaries and other privileges for a section of the professional class, the use of the profit motive to increase production, the use of economic incentives such as bonuses, and the large area of private farming still in existence. These factors must, however, be seen within an overall framework of state ownership of the means of production, distribution, communication, and finance, the dominance of collective and state farms, the existence of a mass-democratic system, which–bourgeois critics to the contrary–is much more extensive than capitalist “democracy” and ensures a primary working-class control over the

economy…. The answer to those who deny the USSR socialist status is that they do not recognize socialism when they see it.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 135

How is business to be done with Russia? Just as the Government either owns or controls everything else in Russia, so also it regulates all trade. The Government has a monopoly on its foreign trade. You can't sell directly to or buy from Mr. John Petrov or Mr. Peter Ivanov of Russia, but you must of necessity deal with the Government. They hand out this right or privilege and it is called a concession. There are two kinds, either a trading concession or a manufacturing concession. By the first you are granted the right to deal in certain goods, like the buying and selling of wheat or textiles. By the second you are granted the right to come into the country and operate a plant to produce certain things, like a mine to get out the coal in a certain region or a plant to make tractors.
We met with the Chief Concessions Committee in Moscow, which has the granting of these concessions. So I had an opportunity to find out how one would proceed. That there may be no mistake, I quote from my notes taken at this meeting. My question: "What procedure does a foreign firm follow to secure a concession or trading privilege? Answer by Comrade Kasandroff, First Assistant of said Committee: The concessionaire points out where and what he wants to receive and the scope of the undertaking. Then the Government decides: Does the country need that thing? If it is devised to serve the internal trade, may there not be an overproduction? If it is concerning raw material for export, they determine the minimum amount that should be produced for export. They take into consideration everything that is necessary to have the planned concession fit into the Gos Plan. And if everything looks advisable you get the concession.
Dykstra, Gerald. A Belated Rebuttal on Russia. Allegan, Mich.: The Allegan Press, 1928, p. 135

Once having secured the grant, the details are set out in a contract. The provisions vary with each individual case, but there are certain provisions that go in all trade agreements. They gave us copies of the usual form of concession contract and a few of the things therein stated I want to mention, to give you an idea as to how the whole thing operates. "Section 6–For the concession grant the Concessionaire pays to the Government a royalty fixed in the agreement. Section 8–The Government guarantees to the Concessionaire that all properties included in the concession enterprise will not be subject to confiscation or requisition; likewise, the concession agreement may not be changed or canceled by the Government alone. The Government guarantees to the Concessionaire the right to freely take out of the country net profits. Section 9–After the expiration of the term of the agreement, the buildings, structures, and equipment of the concession enterprise passes to the Government."
Dykstra, Gerald. A Belated Rebuttal on Russia. Allegan, Mich.: The Allegan Press, 1928, p. 139

And so they grant concessions to German and American firms to come into Russia and set up industries for them. By the concession program we go in and set up, for example, a typewriting plant. We pay them a royalty for the privilege and it is so arranged that after a period of years we turn over to the government our plant. Because they don't want private ownership of the agencies of production to exist any longer than is necessary to get the thing established, after that the Government is to take it over. In the meantime, we have been

selling our machines to the internal trade, and in accordance with the concessions contract are privileged to leave the country with our profits. And you remember also that the concession contract guarantees you against confiscation of your property during the time of operation.
Dykstra, Gerald. A Belated Rebuttal on Russia. Allegan, Mich.: The Allegan Press, 1928, p. 144

Now, you say, this is rather a wild scheme. Perhaps you think no one would take up with such a rainbow proposition. Well, they have and they aren't sorry either. Already there are in the United States four such trading organizations, the largest, the Amtorg Trading Corp. It exports to Russia agricultural implements, machinery of all kinds, hardware and tractors. It imports fur, veneer wood, caviar, skins, and flax.
Then there is the Harriman concession to run for 20 years, covering rich magnesium fields in the Georgian Soviet Republic. Under the contract Harriman & Co. gets the exclusive right for a term of 20 years to explore and exploit certain deposits of magnesium and export the same.
One of the most interesting concessions is the pencil concession of Hammer's. This man knew how to make pencils, and he went to Russia and built a plant. He uses their raw products and turns out pencils cheaper than they could because he has the system. This he is to do for the next ten years, paying them a royalty and planning to give them his plant when the time expires.
Dykstra, Gerald. A Belated Rebuttal on Russia. Allegan, Mich.: The Allegan Press, 1928, p. 147

SOVIET PEOPLE MUCH BETTER OFF BY 1923

September 7, 1923–The essential fact is that everyone is so infinitely better off than during the "black years" of 1920 and 1921 that present conditions seen paradise by comparison. This fact naturally influences the political situation. Taking five great sections of the Russian people — the peasants, industrial workers, state officials and employees, artists and professional men, and business people, large and small–there's none not feeling that Russia has emerged from night into day.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 106

STALIN UNDERSTANDS NEED TO LEAVE WAR COMMUNISM

Stalin shows all of Lenin's frankness in admitting party weaknesses. The communists must get away from the system of militant communism (that of the 1918–1921period), he tells them, and make the party more democratic by increasing the knowledge and activities of the inferior groups. Communists must not be content to let bureaucracy do their work for them, but must investigate things themselves and try to help the government machine. The workers' groups must keep up their connection with the peasants and vice versa; all must collaborate toward the common end.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 114

TROTSKY OPPOSED THE NEP

Trotsky, one may assume, never believed that the communist lion could lie down peacefully in Russia with the capitalist lamb. Lenin's opportunism decided that they must, and while he lived they did.
From the summer of 1924 to December 1925, Trotsky conducted a vigorous campaign for the suppression of the "kulak," that is, the capitalist influence in the villages–to correspond with a campaign begun before Lenin's death,in the winter of 1923, against "Nepman" elements in the towns.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 152

BUKHARIN WELCOMED NEP FROM THE START

Both Rykov and Bukharin had enthusiastically welcomed Lenin's policy of 1922 in favor of the peasants. It may be suspected that Bukharin would have been glad to see Russia slowly develop in this way into a bourgeois democracy. At the time of the New Economic Policy he had not only welcomed that policy in a series of articles, but written again and again of the 'strong and capable farmer' as the destined guarantor of Russia's economic progress. In one of his articles which later was brought up against him, he had advised the farmers, in those very words, to 'Enrich yourselves!'
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 180

The social struggle to come was reflected inside the Party. Bukharin, at the time Stalin's main ally in the leadership, stressed the importance of advancing socialism using market relations. In 1925, he called on peasants to `enrich themselves', and admitted that `we shall move forward at a snail's pace'. Stalin, in a June 2, 1925 letter to him, wrote: `the slogan enrich yourself is not ours, it is wrong …. Our slogan is socialist accumulation'.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 55 [p. 49 on the NET]

There was disagreement on which way to go. Bukharin and Rykov, based on their practical experiences, believed Lenin's NEP should be pursued. In April 1925, at a meeting of Moscow militants, Bukharin made his famous declaration according to which "collectivization is not the high road leading to socialism." He said that the economy of the peasants should be developed, even proposing that the peasants should be told to enrich themselves.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 119

There was therefore a peculiar realism and consistency in Bukharin's conclusion that the party must allow the wealthy farmer to grow wealthier. The purpose of NEP, he argued, was to use private enterprise in Russia's reconstruction; but private enterprise could not be expected to play its part unless it obtained its rewards. The overriding interest of socialism lay in increasing national wealth; and that interest would not be harmed if groups and individuals grew wealthier together with the nation–on the contrary, by filling their own coffers they would enrich society as a whole. This was the reasoning which induced Bukharin to address to the peasants his famous appeal: "Enrich yourselves!"
What Bukharin overlooked was that the wealthy peasant sought to enrich himself at the expense of other classes: he paid low wages to the laborers, squeezed the poor farmers, bought up the land, and tried to charge them and the urban workers higher prices for food.

He dodged taxation and sought to pass its burden on to the poor. He strove to accumulate capital at the expense of the state and thereby slowed down accumulation within the socialist sector of the economy.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 233

But Bukharin's slogan [Enrich Yourselves] was obviously a revelation of his deep-seated right-wing deviation, and he was not alone. A whole school around him was trying to substitute state capitalism for socialism, to perpetuate the NEP and worse.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 250

Lenin had branded Bukharin as a champion of the profiteers, Nepmen, and kulaks.
Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Ed. History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks): Short Course. Moscow: FLPH, 1939, p. 262

MOST RUSSIAN PEASANTS BY NATURE OPPOSE PRIVATE OWNERSHIP OF LAND

Owing to this historical development it has always been the deepest conviction of the Russian peasant that private ownership of land is a sin. 'The earth belongs to the dear God, and to take possession of it is a grave sin.'
…There were individual peasants who wanted to become independent. But in not a few cases they were murdered by their fellow-villagers; for the peasants regarded private ownership as a betrayal of their primeval community, based purely on custom, the mir.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 192

The hatred felt for the kulak was the factor in the rural community not only linking the middle layers of the village, but also the poorest layers and the day-laborers, the immediate victims of the kulak. The latter farmed the land of the poorest and took the day-laborers into his service. The anti-kulak feelings of the latter element weighed heavily in the issue of the struggle between kulaks and bureaucracy, especially in those regions where community life was little developed and where kulak capitalism had made great strides and as a result the resistance to the bureaucratic collectivization was particularly bitter (the Ukraine, the Northern Caucasus and Siberia).
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 101

NEP MEN ONLY WANT QUICK PROFITS

In the midst of this economic chaos, Stalin was quick to point out that the backbone of a strong industrial state was still lacking. Heavy industry, which had suffered most during the years of upheaval, was still in a parlous condition. Since it would be necessary to expend large sums over a period of years before profits began to be made, the Nepmen made no effort to improve the situation but concentrated on a system of "quick returns."
Cole, David. . Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 75

Nepmen made fortunes while manufacturing little.

Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 256

UNDERGROUND FINANCED BY NEP MEN

Underground organizations, liberally supplied with funds by their wealthy Nepmen sympathizers, endeavored to spread confusion by acts of sabotage and machine wrecking.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 78

STALIN ONLY OPPOSED NEPMEN AS A CLASS, NOT INDIVIDUALLY

In justice to Stalin it must be recognized that his appeal was directed against the kulaks, not as individuals but as “a class whose interests were inimical to those of the proletariat.” To break the political and economic power of the “agrarian capitalist” was all that was required. That a movement of much greater magnitude developed was not his fault.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 82

PEOPLE’S CONDITIONS IMPROVED GREATLY SINCE THE REVOLUTION

From Sobinka and Shachti and from the factories which I have visited in such cities as Moscow, Leningrad, Kharkov, and Nizhni Novgorod I gained two outstanding impressions: that the Russian workers, as a general rule, live under harder and more primitive conditions than those which prevail in America and Western Europe, and that there has been a distinct improvement in their lot, materially and morally, since the Revolution. This improvement finds expression in three fields: wages, hours, and conditions of labor.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 168

STRIKES DO OCCUR ESPECIALLY AGAINST PRIVATE EMPLOYERS

Such strikes as to take place are not organized, concerted movements, but flare-ups of indignation over some local grievance, usually involving a small number of workers and quickly settled through the mediation of the trade union. These observations apply to strikes in the state factories. The trade unions have no scruples about calling strikes against private employers, and such strikes usually turn out in favor of the workers.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 176

The right to strike exists in law, but it is considerably limited in practice by provisions for arbitration–binding on the employer only…. Strikes in private industry are, of course, more frequent and easier than in State industry.
…Criticism of the management of the union, of industry, and of government policies affecting unions is free and vigorous, though in times past it has sometimes met with expulsion or attentions from the GPU.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 167

STALIN SYMPATHIZED WITH THE PEASANTS AFTER LENIN’S DEATH

Besides this central issue there were a host of others scarcely less important. Stalin had long been concerned regarding the attitude of the peasants. He reported, “Our agents in the villages were killed and their houses set on fire by the peasants…in some places, especially in the border regions we had to fight the activities of organized bands; and we had to suppress a real peasant uprising in Georgia.” Stalin therefore urged, in 1925, an easier peasant policy, declaring that it was absolutely necessary to win the sympathies of the middle class of peasants.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 26

It is no less clear that it will be possible to solve the cardinal questions of the revolution only in alliance with the peasantry against the Tsarist power and the liberal bourgeoisie.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 35

MANY TURNED IN THEIR PARTY CARDS WHEN LENIN SET UP NEP

Many followed Lenin until the New Economic Policy, but when we made this transition a lot of people were displeased and could no longer be relied on. They used to say, “Communism is due tomorrow, but we have switched to capitalism and private enterprises!” They were disillusioned and were giving back their party cards; they turned to drink…. but Lenin was always an optimist.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 122

WHEN NEP FORMED LENIN’S 3 SECRETARIES WERE ALL TROTS WHO WERE LATER EXPELLED

…It was the beginning of the NEP. Lenin’s secretariat was formed–three secretaries, and all three were Trotskyists! Devil take it, all three–Krestinsky, Serebryakov, and Preobrazhensky. They formed a tight ring around Lenin. All of them were kicked out at the 11th congress.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 148

NEP COULD NOT BE AVOIDED

They had to do without everything and to realize that the Soviet State had to construct its economic system with its own resources.
And for that they had also in the immediate present, when War Communism was out of date, to consider a new transitory economic position, at the same time that the political and social struggle in the West, and in the rest of the world, was to take the equally transitory form of immediate war aims on a partial united front.
It was in these conditions that the Soviet state judged that it would be able to do quietly what it had not been willing to do at any price two years previously, and passed from the methods of War Communism to those of the market; and the New Economic Policy was created (the NEP).
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 121

The next year, 1922, was a good one for Russian peasants: the crops were abundant and the taxes reasonable.

Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 388

RELATIVE POWER OF PRIVATE OWNERS AND THE STATE UNDER NEP

In the struggle which was brewing, “the proletarian power had on its side the most highly developed productive forces of the country. In short, it appeared in the market as a landowner, as a purchaser and as a vendor with much more power than its competitors, because it had the additional advantage of possessing political power” (and particularly fiscal power, which assured it of a financial weapon and allowed it to make certain supplementary profits on private enterprise). “The middle classes had on their side past experience and relations with foreign capital.” (Report at the Fourth Congress, 1922.)
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 123

In 1936 Stalin stated, Our industry presented an unenviable picture at that time (1924), particularly heavy industry. True, it was being gradually restored, but it had not yet raised its output to anywhere near the pre-war level. It was based on the old, backward and poorly equipped technique. Of course, it was developing in the direction of socialism. The proportion of the socialist sector of our industry at that time represented about 80 per cent of the whole, but the capitalist sector still controlled no less than 20 percent of industry.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 211

THOSE OPPOSING NEP ARE THE OPPORTUNISTS

In 1921, those who deserved to be called opportunists, in the bad sense of the word, were, among the socialist ranks, not those who approved of the NEP, but those who opposed it. Because the latter would have sacrificed the future to the present, whereas the correct meaning of the word opportunism should be to sacrifice the present to the future. The opportunism of Lenin and of Stalin–and of all great strategists–is a step backward in order to take two steps forward. For stupid or frightened people, and also for wavering Socialists who, unconsciously are not, are seeking some sort of loophole, it is two paces back in order to take one pace forward.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 127

LENIN COMPROMISED IN AREAS OTHER THAN THE NEP

The fact remains that the same man [Lenin] who, from 1903 to 1912, had done everything with the forceful obstinacy, which “went beyond” so many of his companions, to divide the Revolutionary Party in two, even though it was being hunted and its ranks decimated by Tsarism–and who acted thus precisely because the party needed its whole strength–has admitted, when this Party was victorious, that he compromised on a great number of points with middle-class methods. If you think that this is contradictory, you are mistaken–for the man in command of the situation was just as right in one case as in the other.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 128

ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENTS IN THE 20’S

Nineteen twenty-seven is an important date because it marks a definite stage in development. It was at this date that the USSR reached the level of pre-war Tsarist economy. The figures of 1927 are in nearly every case higher than those of 1913, in only a few rare instances falling below them.
In general agricultural production the pre-war level was passed by one billion rubles, or about 8%. In industry it was passed by 200 million rubles, representing an increase of 12 percent.
The railways, the length of whose permanent ways, in 1913, on the territory now administered by the USSR, was about 36,500 miles, had increased to about 48,200 miles.
For the whole of the former territory of Russia the mean increase in the workers wages was 16.9% over pre-war figures. (Figures arrived at by taking purchasing-power into account)
Educational development had reached sensational proportions. Let us quote a few salient facts. In 1925 there were, in the primary Soviet schools, 2,250,000 more pupils than there had been in the Russian schools in 1913, and there were double as many as there had been in the technical schools. Twice as much money was being spent per head on education, and there were ten times as many scientific institutions.
The national revenue was 22,500,000,000 rubles. As for mechanical energy, the USSR ranked immediately after the United States of America, Canada, England, Germany, and France.
As regards socialization proper. In industrial production, 77 percent of the activity was collectivist, 14 percent private enterprise, and the remainder co-operative. In agricultural production, socialist 2.7%, private 93.3%. In commerce, socialist 81.9%, private 18.1%.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 155

Preparations for the 14th Party Congress (as distinct from the 14th Conference) took place against a background of the first successes in economic and cultural construction. In 1925, gross output of agricultural production was 112 percent of pre-war levels. This was remarkable. The NEP was beginning to bear fruit. Industrial production, which for five years had lain in total ruin, reached three-quarters of its pre-war level. The first new plants had made their appearance, most notably the power stations. And all this when the best foreign economists had predicted that pre-war levels would not be achieved for 15 to 20 years.
Substantial results had also been accomplished in the battle against illiteracy. A network of schools have been established, notably in the national republics. Major steps have been taken to create a system of higher education and a series of important measures were adopted to speed up cultural and educational work. The All-Russian Academy of Sciences was transformed into its All-Union equivalent. By this time works of world repute had been produced by the historians Pokrovsky and Vernadsky, the geneticist Vavilov, the agrobiologist Vilyams, the chemist Zelinsky, the geologists Fersman and Gubkin, the physicist Ioffe, and many other pioneers of Soviet science.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 111

Stalin gives the following remarkable figures of the growth of industry [in his Political Report to the 16th Party Congress]:
“In 1926-27, we had in the whole of industry, both large and small scale, reckoning also flour milling, a gross output of 8641 million pre-war rubles, i.e., 102.5 percent of the pre-war level. The following year we had 122 percent. In 1928-29 we had 142.5 percent and in the current year (1930) (estimated) not less than 180 percent of the pre-war level.”

During the same period the freight carried on the railroads increased by 66 percent. Railway construction increased considerably, likewise bridge construction. The whole commercial turnover doubled. Foreign trade, exports and imports, which in 1927-28 was only 47.9% of the pre-war total, increased to about 80%. The average yearly increase in the national income during the first three years of the Five-year Plan amounted to 15 percent.
These are all figures quoted by Stalin himself and there is no reason to think them materially inaccurate. Foreign observers of the immense activity might have been tempted to estimate the actual success in more rosy terms. Stalin is a stickler for facts, and window-dressing is not a feature of his political life.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 132

STALIN SAYS RESTORATION OF CAPITALISM IS POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF SMALL PRODUCTION

Do the conditions exist in our Soviet country that make the restoration of capitalism possible? Yes, they do exist. That may appear strange, but it is a fact. We have overthrown capitalism, we have established the dictatorship of the proletariat, we are intensely developing our socialist industry and are closely linking it up with peasant economy; but we have not yet torn out the roots of capitalism.

Where are these roots implanted? They are implanted in the system of commodity production, in small production in the towns, and particularly in the villages. As Lenin said, the strength of capitalism lies “in the strength of small production, for unfortunately, small production still survives in a very, very large degree, and small production gives birth to capitalism and to the bourgeoisie, constantly, daily, hourly, spontaneously and on a mass scale.” Hence, since small production is a mass phenomenon, and even a predominant feature of our country, and since it gives birth to capitalism and to a bourgeoisie constantly and on a mass scale, particularly under the conditions of NEP, it is obvious that the conditions do exist which make the restoration of capitalism possible.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 145

OPPOSITION EXAGGERATED THE POWER OF THE CAPITALISTS UNDER NEP

The opposition accused the majority of a “kulak deviation” and called for more pressure to be applied to the capitalist elements in city and country, in contradiction to the basic principles of NEP. With obviously demagogic ends in mind, the opposition greatly exaggerated the development of private capital in the USSR. Volsky, a former Menshevik and functionary of the Supreme Economic Council, who later emigrated from the Soviet Union, tells in his memoirs about the “opposition’s anti-NEP way of thinking.” This was expressed “with particular force in its constant outcries about the domination of private merchant capital. The opposition gave fantastic, inordinately exaggerated figures on the strength and accumulation of this type of private capital. It pointed to the fact that the overwhelming majority (70-80%) of all commercial operations were private but left unmentioned the fact that most of these businesses were tiny, operated by single merchant or tradesman, who did not own a store but hawked merchandise from a table or stand or simply carried it around with him. If these peddlers had not existed, there would have been nothing. A total absence of trade would

have prevailed, especially in the rural areas. The opposition kept insisting on the need to subordinate the economy to direction by a plan, “to gather all enterprises into a single system, subjecting them to a single powerful planning center.” [No source given] What this meant concretely they did not explain. The peasant and peasant agriculture were outside the range of vision of the opposition. In contrast, it spoke a great deal about the “dictatorship of industry” and called for rapid and powerful industrialization, although the country did not have the wherewithal to do that…. All of Lenin’s exhortations in his last articles, in particular his warnings against “rushing ahead too rashly and quickly,” his appeals for “better fewer, but better”… were completely disregarded by the opposition.”
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 130

In the heat of polemics the opposition leaders greatly exaggerated the shortcomings that really existed, thus causing party cadres to protest. Something that existed as a tendency or trend was portrayed as an already completed process.

Also untrue was the opposition’s assertion that the private sector was accumulating at a faster rate than the public sector. In general, the opposition, for obviously demagogic reasons, exaggerated the extent and danger of capitalist development in the Soviet Union….

It is true that the Soviet state was obtaining increased quantities of raw materials and exportable products from the rural areas, but that was beneficial not only to the well-to-do sections in the countryside but to the society as a whole.

Another untrue Opposition claim was that representatives of the bourgeois and non-Communist intelligentsia, who had been drawn into the work of Soviet economic management as specialists, controlled industry and finance to a greater degree than the Bolshevik Party.

…Needless to say, no such process was underway in 1926. The upper strata of Nepman bourgeoisie were not growing together with the top echelons of the party and government. The danger of a transfer of power to the bourgeoisie or kulaks was insignificant.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 164-166

LENIN SUPPORTS CAPITALIST INVESTMENT AND CONCESSIONS

Trade negotiations between the two countries [Russia and Germany] got underway in early 1921, following Lenin’s invitation to foreign firms to invest in Russia. In May, German industrial executives presented Krasin with a proposal calling for large-scale investments to help rebuild the Soviet economy in exchange for control over some of its key sectors.
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 424

Lenin believed that the reconstruction of the Soviet economy required massive engagement of Western capital and know-how, and these he could obtain most readily from Germany.
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 426

This aid was given in spite of the Soviet government’s policy, which put all sorts of obstacles in the way of the capitalist firms and ended the concessions as soon as Soviet specialists

had assimilated Western technology. The capitalist firms were always in a weak position; they had never before encountered a partner as powerful as a government, and they were thirsty for profits. Along with the Comintern and pro-Communist organizations, these firms played the role of organizers of public opinion in favor of the Soviet Union. When Standard Oil decided to build an oil refinery in Batum, a top public relations expert was sent to persuade public opinion that a socialist country was a state like any other. Without knowing a word of Russian, this representative of Rockefeller's knew everything after several days: The Russians (he always talked about the Russians, not the Soviets) are OK! That's why the United States ought to recognize the Soviet Union and extend credit to it.
… He [Armand Hammer] brought with him a freightcar full of drugs and medicines as a gift to the Soviet government. He met with Lenin, who was drawn to the enterprising young American. Lenin advised him to assume management of Alapaevsky Asbestos Mines on a concessionary basis, and he personally organized the immediate formation of this concession, which ordinarily would have taken months. Hammer did not limit himself to the first million he earned from the asbestos concession…. He took out a concession on the production of pencils and pens. In 1926 his factory produced 100 million pencils and made enormous profits, which he used to buy Russian works of art. Unlike all the other concessionaires, Hammer was able to convert his revenues to dollars. His example was infectious. He served as an intermediary in the conclusion of an agreement between the Soviet government and Henry Ford, an ardent enemy of the Communists. The American Consolidated Company (50% of the capital was Hammer's; the other 50% was the Soviet government's) conducted the affairs of "three dozen American firms" trading with the Soviet Union. The phenomenal successes of Armand Hammer, who made millions in the Soviet Union, could not fail to entice other capitalists.
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 214

And the regime was currently paying a lot in hard currency to entice foreign capitalists, managers, and engineers to come to Russia and work on industrial projects–some of them undoubtedly to replace Russian managers and engineers….
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 337

THREE KINDS OF PEASANTS

[Footnote]: The peasantry was divided into these three groups by the following rule of thumb method: 'Strong' farmers who hired labor were classed as kulaks. Those who had their small holdings but also hired themselves as laborers were regarded as poor peasants (byedniaks). The middle peasant (serednyak) was the self-supporting smallholder, who neither employed laborers nor hired his labor to others.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 301

The cleavages in the peasantry were less marked but no less real. The muzhiks had benefited from the agrarian upheavals and from NEP in unequal degrees. The middle layer of the peasantry was strengthened. There were many more small-holders now, more seredniaks, who lived on the yield of their land, without having to work on the land of wealthier farmers and without employing labor on their own farms. Of every 10 presents three or four belonged to this category. One or perhaps two were kulaks employing hired labor, enlarging their farms, and trading with the town. Five out of the 10 were poor

peasants, bednyaks, who had carved out for themselves a few acres from the landlords' estates but only rarely possessed a horse or farm tools. They hired the horse and the tools from the kulak, from whom they also bought seed or food and borrowed money. To pay the debt, the bednyak worked on the kulak's field or let out to him part of his own tiny plot.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 225

LENIN KNOWS HE NEEDS PEASANT SUPPORT BUT HE CAN ALSO TAKE BACK THE LAND

Lenin was calm because he alone knew that without the support of the peasantry he could not retain power, and that as long as he had power, he could easily take back what he had given and what he had promised.
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 44

Straight off, the government confirmed the wholesale confiscation of squires' land by the peasants and authorized their village committees to divide up the estates. The peasants' settlement was of their own making; they had never supported state ownership and a general redistribution: their traditional view, which had a good foundation in history, was that the squires, originally put over them as officials, should be driven out and that each estate should revert to the neighboring village community. This they had proceeded to carry out, sometimes setting fire to the manor to remove any inducement to the squire to return. This was the "Black Partition" of which they had always dreamed. Having taken the land, the peasants squatted on it, and this was sure to complicate any later government plan of universal distribution.
Pares, Bernard. Russia. Washington, New York: Infantry Journal, Penguin books, 1944, p. 109

The peasants form 85 percent of the Russian population and they had become the owners of the land. That was the greatest achievement of the Revolution. Through the increase in the population and for other reasons, agricultural produce increased from 10 to 25 millions within 10 years. But the export of grain, which was the leading feature of Russian international commerce before the war, now dwindled to relatively small proportions because the peasant decided to use the grain for himself and his family. He was now feeding much better than under the old regime, when the export was artificially increased by keeping the peasant on small rations. In the year 1927 it was necessary actually to import grain into Russia.
Ludwig, Emil. Leaders of Europe. London: I. Nicholson and Watson Ltd., 1934, p. 365

PEASANTS ARE THE BULK OF THE POPULATION

The main object of this all-out offensive [the industrialization during the First 5 Yr. Plan]–and its main victim–was the peasantry, that is, the overwhelming majority of the population.
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 232

Socialist revolution made its first, immense conquests not in the advanced West but in the backward East, in countries, where not the industrial workers but the peasants

predominated. Its immediate task was not to establish socialism but to initiate “primitive socialist accumulation.”
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 514

TROTSKY DENIES DISCOUNTING THE PEASANTRY’ KEY ROLE

Later, in 1923, a stupid legend was invented to the effect that I “underestimated” the peasantry. As a matter of fact, from 1918 to 1921, I had to deal with the problems of rural life more closely and directly than anyone else, because the army was being raised chiefly from among the peasants, and carried on its work in constant touch with peasant life.
Trotsky, Leon. My Life. Gloucester, Massachusetts: P. Smith, 1970, p. 436

BAZHANOV SAYS MARX ERRED IN DOWNPLAYING THE PEASANT ROLE IN REVOLUTION

Marx had absolutely not foreseen social revolution in Russia, where 85 percent of the population consisted of peasants and small landowners, and labor constituted just over 1%. (The official history of the Soviet Communist Party, volume four, page 8, 1970, gave the 1921 Russian population as 134,200,000, of which industrial workers were only 1,400,000.)
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 84

POPULATION OF THE SU INCREASED GREATLY BETWEEN 1918 AND 1922

[In 1940 we can say] the Soviets have survived 22 terrible years. Despite civil wars, despite two major famines, the population has increased by 23 million people since 1918, and is increasing now at the rate of almost 3 million per year. In a generation, in other words, the Soviet Union, in its present borders, will contain 200 million people.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 562

LENIN ATTACKED STALIN ON THE GEORGIAN NATIONALITIES ISSUE BUT STALIN WAS RIGHT

Another reason for Lenin’s dissatisfaction with Stalin was Stalin’s handling of a nationalist movement in his native Georgia led by an old Party member, Mdivani. Stalin felt that Mdivani’s group had bourgeois nationalist tendencies. He handled them, as one of them complained, “with the heavy club of the Center’s authority.” Lenin argued that in matters involving the national question one should always tread carefully, avoiding the “Russian frame of mind,” and: “In this case it is better to overdo rather than underdo the concessions and leniency towards the national minorities.” He sent a note to Mdivani and others: “I am following your case with all my heart. I am indignant over Ordjonikidze’s rudeness and the connivance of Stalin and Dzerzhinsky. I am preparing for you notes and a speech.” He asked Trotsky to intervene and take matters out of Stalin’s hands: “It is my earnest request that you should undertake the defense of the Georgian case in the Party [Central Committee]. This

case is now under ‘persecution’ by Stalin and Dzerzhinsky, and I cannot rely on their impartiality.”
In December 1926, under attack by Trotsky, Stalin admitted that Lenin had “rebuked me for conducting too severe an organizational policy towards the Georgian semi-nationalists, semi-Communists of the type of Mdivani.” But he [Stalin] stuck to his original position: “Subsequent events showed that the “deviationists” were a degenerating faction of the most arrant opportunism. Let Trotsky prove that this is not so. Lenin was not aware of these facts, and could not be aware of them, because he was ill in bed and had no opportunity to follow events.”
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 50

Looking back on events at the time and their subsequent history it appears that Stalin was right and Lenin wrong on these matters, including that of the Mdivani group. They were apparently a bourgeois nationalist faction in the Communist Party of Georgia; in 1928 Mdivani was expelled. Furthermore, even if Lenin had been right, his actions cannot be condoned. If he was in disagreement with Stalin, he should have taken the matter up officially with the Central Committee or Politburo and not attempted to undermine the position of the Party Secretary. He seems to have become convinced that Stalin’s method of work would harm the Party; but he was also disturbed by Trotsky’s “excessive self-assurance” and “non-Bolshevism,” both of which he noted in his testament.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 52

In February 1923, too, Lenin went still more deeply into the Georgian affair. The Politburo had meanwhile, without his knowledge, again condemned the Georgian Communists and acquitted Ordjonikidze and Stalin. Lenin’s secretary Fotieva let Lenin know of this debate and he asked for the papers. Stalin said he could not have them without the Politburo’s permission and this would be taxing Lenin with ‘day-to-day details’. Lenin was angry and insisted on having them. Stalin therefore asked without success to be relieved of the supervision of the invalid.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 102

TROTSKY REFUSES TO HELP LENIN CRITICIZE STALIN ON THE GEORGIAN QUESTION

I have discussed above the extremely harsh statements and letters in which Lenin condemned Stalin’s position on the national question in general and, more specifically, in regard to Georgia. Lenin wanted to raise these questions at the 12th Party Congress, but, fearing that he would not be able to take part in the congress, asked Trotsky in writing to take on this task. Lenin sent his request to Trotsky through Fotieva, one of his secretaries in Gorky.

Trotsky admits, and most historians agree with him, that had he fulfilled Lenin’s request and spoken at the congress on the national question, making public all of Lenin’s documents and letters, including those which Lenin had planned to give him through Fotieva, then any discussion on this question would have ended in Stalin’s political defeat, and Stalin’s election as general secretary would have become very difficult. Nevertheless, Trotsky refused to fulfill

Lenin's request, leaving the Georgian delegation without any support. Lenin's last written document concerned solidarity with this delegation.
Trotsky called Lenin's secretariat and refused to fulfill Lenin's request, pleading illness.

Trotsky voluntarily let pass an important and, as later became evident, the most realistic chance to weaken Stalin's position and that of the triumph over it as a whole. Of course, Kamenev, Zinoviev, and Stalin were satisfied.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 113-114

When on 5 March 1923 Lenin asked him [Trotsky] to "take on the defense of the Georgian affair at the Central Committee," since he could not rely on the impartiality of Stalin and Dzerzhinsky, Trotsky refused on the grounds of ill health. Perhaps he wanted to avoid worsening his relations with Stalin, or already regarded Lenin's wishes as whims. In either case, he would not carry out the last wish of his leader.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 256

STALIN INTERVENED TO PREVENT LENIN FROM GIVING GEORGIA TO THE TURKS

[Footnote on page 307]: "Take little Georgia," said my father. "In 1919 Lenin agreed to let Kemal Ataturk have Turkestan, with Georgia as a bonus. Just think! The Caucasians had fought for thousands of years to win their independence and now, with a stroke of the pen, history was to be altered. Heaven be praised, Stalin intervened to dissuade Lenin and that was a good deed."
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 14

TIKHON IS INNOCENT

April 9, 1923–the trial of the patriarch Tikhon. Regarding the first charge, it is true that he authorized the Archbishop of Tobolsk to administer the last sacrament to the czar; that is all. Regarding the second, he did, with the approval of the Soviet authorities, send a delegate to Karlovitz, but with no instructions to vote for the anti-Soviet resolutions. Indeed, he publicly disavowed them on learning that he had done so.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 64

On the other hand, some of his [Tikhon] proclamations, especially in the early years of the revolution, were more or less directly critical of the Bolshevik regime,….
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 65

TIKHON IS SUBVERSIVE

The All Russian Church Council defrocked patriarch Tikhon today.
The resolution reads: "inasmuch as the Soviet government is the only one in the whole world fighting capitalism, which is one of the seven deadly sins, therefore its struggle is a sacred struggle. The council condemns the counter revolutionary acts of Tikhon and his adherents, lifts the band of ex-communication he laid on the Soviet government, and brands him as a traitor to the church and to Russia.

Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 67

TIKHON AND CHURCH ACCEPTED SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

After the issue in 1922 of the famous manifesto of the Patriarch Tikhon there was a diminution of the struggle. In that manifesto the first post-revolution Patriarch recognized the regime, was reconciled with it, and ordered the priests of the Russian Orthodox Church to include the Government in their prayers, as they had included the Tsar and the royal family in the past. Needless to say, the clergy of all confessions were disfranchised. The law separating Church and State, and the exclusion of the Church from public life, remained in force; but on the whole the Church was left in peace from 1922 to 1928.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 168

Lenin's Testament

TROTSKY OPPOSED BOLSHEVIKS

Trotsky's experience in the Russian working-class movement prior to 1917 was essentially the experience of an emigre. From the outset of his acquaintance with Lenin he became an opponent of the Bolsheviks in general and of Lenin in particular. At first he was definitely on the side of the Mensheviks. Then he broke with them to take up a position between the two contending forces, calling for unity where unity was impossible, while reserving for Lenin and the Bolsheviks the most bitter of his polemics. On the wave of the revolution of 1917 he capitulated to Lenin as the master Revolutionary, in the hope that in due time the Master's mantle would fall upon him.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 67

Yet it had occurred to me that Trotsky, who was essentially an intellectual aristocrat, not to say an intellectual snob, was somewhat out of place in the Bolshevik milieu.
Duranty, Walter. I Write as I Please. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1935, p. 199

In point of fact, I was resisting art as I had resisted revolution earlier in life, and later, Marxism; as I had resisted, for several years, Lenin and his methods.
Trotsky, Leon. My Life. Gloucester, Massachusetts: P. Smith, 1970, p. 148

LENIN CHOSE STALIN TO SOLVE PROBLEMS

I well remember that in one of my conversations with Lenin in 1921 he referred to Stalin as "our Nutcracker" and explained that if the "political bureau were faced with a problem which needed a lot of sorting out Stalin was given the job."
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 72

…wherever the situation seemed most hopeless, wherever incompetence and disloyalty were weakening the cause, on no matter what front and under any conditions, there Stalin was sent, with the results we have seen outlined above.

Cole, David M. Josef Stalin, Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 50

…Taking advantage of the traditional hatred felt in the province for everything Russian, the social revolutionaries and their Mensheviks allies were agitating for secession from the USSR and the setting up of an independent state of Georgia.
As usual the task of cleaning up other peoples failures descended on Stalin. Taking Ordjonikidze with him, he hurried to Tiflis to settle the problem once and for all.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 59

Voroshilov states, “During 1918-1920, Comrade Stalin was probably the only person whom the Central Committee dispatched from one fighting front to another, choosing always those places most fraught with danger for the revolution. Where it was comparatively quiet, and everything going smoothly, where we had successes, Stalin was not to be found. But where for various reasons the Red Army was cracking up, where the counterrevolutionary forces through their successes were menacing the very existence of the Soviet Government, where confusion and panic might any moment develop into helplessness, catastrophe, there Stalin made his appearance. He took no sleep at night, he organized, he took the leadership into his own strong hands, he relentlessly broke through difficulties, and turned the corner, saved the situation.”
Life of Stalin, A Symposium. New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1930, p. 49

In 1919 Stalin, then Commissar of Nationalities, was also made Commissar of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Inspectorate, an organization created by Lenin to have teams of workers and peasants inspect government functioning in order to check corruption and bureaucracy. This method of mass democratic control embodied the essence of Lenin’s concept of how a proletarian state should function. The fact that he appointed Stalin as its director shows his faith in him–as he testified in 1922 when Stalin’s control of two commissariats was questioned.
“We are [Lenin wrote] solving these problems, and we must have a man to whom any representative of the nationalities may come and discuss matters at length. Where are we to find such a man? I think that even Preobrazhensky could not name anybody else but Comrade Stalin.
This is true of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Directorate. The work is gigantic. But to handle the work of investigation properly, we must have a man of authority in charge, otherwise we shall be submerged in petty intrigues.”
That the Inspectorate could ever have worked, given the state of the inherited bureaucratic apparatus, is doubtful, and the degree of Stalin’s responsibility for its failures is not clear. But Lenin’s open attack, regardless of his motive, could not but serve to undermine Stalin’s authority as General Secretary and hence disrupt the Party.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 49-50

Lenin made no bones about his support of Stalin in that ministry of the ministries, when, replying to the objections of oppositionists, he said:
“Now about the Workers’-Peasants’ Inspection. It’s a gigantic undertaking…. It is necessary to have at the head of it a man of authority, otherwise we shall sink in a morass, drown in petty intrigues. I think that even Preobrazhensky could not name any other candidature than that of Comrade Stalin.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 346

… But while Trotsky won fame by his speeches, Stalin was sent to one critical front after another as the representative of the Central Committee, and was determining policy by short and concise telegrams to Lenin.
Pritt, Denis Nowell. The Moscow Trial was Fair. London: ” Russia To-day,” 1937, p. 10

Stalin was directly involved in all of the major events of this time. He was already influential and indispensable to Lenin. He had signed the statement warning the right-wing members, who were agitating for coalition, and he had rejected the Menshevik proposal that Lenin and Trotsky should be excluded from a coalition government. He was to support Lenin strongly during the party crisis over the peace treaty with Germany. At the same time he was demonstrating his capacity for handling numerous responsibilities.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 102

“Lenin could not get along without Stalin even for a single day,” Pestkovsky wrote. “Probably for that reason our office in the Smolny was under the wing of Lenin. In the course of the day he would call Stalin out an endless number of times, or would appear in our office and lead him away. Most of the day Stalin spent with Lenin.”
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 105

The same Pestkovsky refers to close collaboration between Lenin and Stalin. “Lenin could not get along without Stalin even for a single day. Probably for that reason our office in the Smolny was ‘under the wing” of Lenin. In the course of the day, he would call Stalin out an endless number of times, or would appear in our office and lead him away. Most of the day Stalin spent with Lenin. What they did there, I don’t know, but on one occasion, upon entering Lenin’s office, I discovered an interesting picture. On the wall hung a large map of Russia. Before it stood two chairs. And on them stood Ilyich and Stalin, moving their fingers over the northern part, I think across Finland.
…At that period, Lenin had great need of Stalin. There can be no doubt about that. Zinoviev and Kamenev had been waging a struggle against Lenin;… He [Stalin], therefore, played the role of chief-of-staff or of a clerk on responsible missions under Lenin.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 247

Trotsky made speeches [in the spring and summer of 1919] which were so violent one could see he was frightened. Defeat, capture and death began to menace the Soviet leaders. Lenin however, kept calm. He did not indulge in the histrionics of Trotsky but instead called Stalin to the rescue, to put things right at the chief point of danger– Petrograd.
What he had accomplished at Tsaritsyn and Viatka he was asked to repeat at Kronstadt and Petrograd.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 59

Stalin was a first-rate administrator, the only one Lenin could rely on. His judgment had been proved by now [1917]…he was a useful man to have beside one in a tight corner. Of Lenin’s colleagues he had emerged as the only man, Trotsky excepted, fit for the highest places.
Snow, Charles Percy. Variety of Men. New York: Scribner, 1966, p. 249

While Lenin remained in Moscow to hold all the strings in his hand and Trotsky rose to new heights as commissar of war, the other Soviet leaders were sent on special missions to one

crisis spot after another as need arose. Lenin showed the same confidence in Stalin as a troubleshooter as he had in 1917, choosing him to deal with some of the most critical situations. Nor was his confidence misplaced. In the chaotic conditions that were general in 1918-19 Stalin did not lose his nerve but showed he could exercise leadership and get things done, however rough his methods, including summary execution without trial.
Stalin's first assignment was to the key position of Tsaritsyn, on the Volga (later renamed Stalingrad, and now Volgograd), with the responsibility of making sure that the food supplies to Moscow and Petrograd were not cut off. Twenty-four hours after his arrival on June 6, he reported that he had dealt with a "bacchanalia of profiteering" by fixing food prices and introducing rationing. On July 7, the day after the attempted Socialist Revolutionary coup he reassured Lenin:
"Everything will be done to prevent possible surprises here. Rest assured that our hand will not tremble. I'm chasing up and bawling out whoever requires it. We shall spare no one, neither ourselves nor others. But we'll send you the food."
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 98

STALIN PROPOSED TROTSKY BE ADMITTED TO THE PARTY

At the sixth Congress of the Bolshevik party, it was here on Stalin's proposal, obviously with the approval of Lenin, that Leon Trotsky was admitted to the party.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 101

When Stalin proposed that Trotsky and his colleagues be admitted to the party he was little concerned about the personal relations between Trotsky and himself.
Here was the issue which was to form the great divide in the Bolshevik ranks. Could Russia advance to socialism without a revolution in the West?
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 102

From 1898, when Trotsky was 19, to 1917, he had hardly been in Russia; and until, on Stalin's proposal, he and his group were accepted into the Bolshevik party in July, 1917, he had fought the Bolsheviks with voice and pen.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 124

And while Stalin was only the executor of the union [with the left wing–the Internationalists], it is one of the many ironies of the revolution that under his guidance Trotsky was admitted into the Bolshevist sanctum, and elected for the first time a member of the new Central Committee, where he stayed until Stalin, in a different role, expelled him.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 130

TROTSKY JOINED PARTY WITH ULTERIOR MOTIVES

When he joined the Bolshevik party he did not regard it as a collective body which would have any power over him. On the contrary Trotsky regarded his joining as a means of acquiring power over the party and becoming second in command to Lenin.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 101

Characteristically Trotsky made a spectacular entry into the Bolshevik Party. He brought with him into the Party his entire motley following of dissident leftists.
First as Foreign Commissar and then as War Commissar, Trotsky was the chief spokesman of the so-called Left Opposition within the Bolshevik Party.
Footnote: Following his removal from the post of Foreign Commissar, Trotsky publicly admitted the error of his opposition to Lenin at Brest-Litovsk and again offered unreserved co-operation with Lenin.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 191

In August 1917 Trotsky made a sensational political somersault. After 14 years of opposition to Lenin and the Bolsheviks, Trotsky applied for membership in the Bolshevik Party.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 190

I had been told, for instance, that Trotsky as a former Menshevik did in a sense represent a kind of minority section in the Bolshevik party, which he had joined only in 1917,…
Duranty, Walter. I Write as I Please. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1935, p. 213

TROTSKY'S HUGE EGO AND NOT A TEAM PLAYER

The disagreement [between Trotsky and the Bolsheviks] was fundamental and was never eliminated. It was now to appear again in quarrels with Stalin concerning the Red Army. The fact is, he [Trotsky] never really accepted the principal governing the relationship of Lenin's party with the masses because he was incapable of believing in the creative power of the proletariat. He was an egotist, with all the over-confidence of the egotist. He was of the stuff of which dictators are made, and his conception of leadership had as its premise the recognition of his abilities plus a proletariat which would do as he ordered. They had to be organized. He would organize them as part of a machine under the control of a staff drawn from the middle classes–the intelligentsia and the Army officers, with himself at the head. He was efficient. He admired efficiency. But he could never surrender himself to the idea of integrating himself with the proletariat, or believe that the qualities he saw in the middle-classes were latent in the proletariat also and that the revolutionary struggle would bring the working-classes into the ranks of leadership. They could be educated in the long run, he thought, but not in the short. His intellectual snobbery ruined him as a revolutionary.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 125

In his memoirs British agent Bruce Lockhart writes, "we had not handled Trotsky wisely. At the time of the first Revolution he was in exile in America. He was then neither a Menshevik nor a Bolshevik. He was what Lenin called a Trotskyist — that is to say, an individualist and an opportunist. A revolutionary with the temperament of an artist and physical courage, he had never been and never could be a good party man."
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 190

Before the Revolution the Bolshevik and Menshevik wings of the Russian social democracy were in perpetual conflict. The head of the former was Lenin, the highest authority among the latter was held by Plekhanov. Trotsky could recognize no other authority than his own. His temperament and his whole nature drove him to radicalism.

It is remarkable that everything in Trotsky's character and career that helped him forward also contributed to his fall. Why? Because everything promoted his radical defect, his vanity.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 119

It was entirely intelligible that the young Trotsky should join the revolutionaries…. Very soon, however, he lost the vivid concrete love and compassion for the individual human being. More and more he saw only the masses in whose name and for whose benefit he pursued his social and political ideas. The sense of being an intellectual revolutionary leader lifted Trotsky in his own estimation above the masses. He felt his superiority to all whom he met; he never felt close to the masses, whether Russian or Jewish, but enthroned himself, quite unconsciously, in Olympian aloofness above real life, above the masses. He remained essentially an aristocrat.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 121

Trotsky's habit of always taking up a standpoint of his own and his clearly paraded sense of his own superiority were bound, when Lenin died, to lead to trouble. His first personal conflict then came in the Politbureau, and it was with Zinoviev.
Kamenev was entirely loyal to Zinoviev, and in politics almost servile.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 129

Perusal of those articles which have survived from Stalin's writings in Turukhansk shows that their author's distaste for the methods and the personality of Trotsky was not dimmed since their last clash. In one of these he suggests with some truth that as a result of the years spent in pretending to stand above the Party squabbles, Trotsky had become congenitally incapable of sharing anyone else's position but must at all costs differentiate himself from all other groups. In view of the fact that Trotsky had adopted such a pointless stand on the war question, this suggestion is perhaps the most charitable of all.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 36

Two more completely contrasting personalities cannot be imagined. Trotsky, the revolutionary per excellence, brilliant as an orator and the ablest polemical writer of his time, but deficient in constructive ability and congenitally incapable of working in harmony with others.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 62

One further point in Stalin's favor was the personal relations existing between Trotsky and the other leading figures. For this Trotsky had only himself to blame. Arrogant, cynical, contemptuous of mediocrity, his whole career had been dotted with violent outbursts directed against innumerable lesser personages.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 63

Both temperamental and political factors were involved in Trotsky's fall. Throughout his long revolutionary career, up to 1917, Trotsky was a man of such strong individuality that he could never remain long within the ranks of an organized political party or group. He had to be leader or nothing. He came into frequent and bitter clashes with Lenin, whom, as late as 1913, he called "that professional exploiter of every backwardness in the Russian labor movement," adding: "the whole edifice of Leninism at the present time is based on lies and falsifications, and contains within itself the poisonous beginning of its own disintegration."

Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 94

In this process, the factor of purely individual interest plays a much less important role than we ourselves might be tempted to believe. Animosity between individuals, though it may often have resulted from Opposition, has never in any circumstances been the cause of it. And it is only in the case of Trotsky that we have to take into account a certain amount of strictly personal element, namely Trotsky's opinion of his own importance, which he possesses in a very high degree. His very self-willed nature, his intolerance of any form of criticism ("He never forgets an attack on his ambition," said Lenin) and his disappointment at not being put at the head of affairs without any associates, have a great deal to do with his hostility. Ideology is the arsenal in which this hostility naturally equips itself with a perfect armament.

Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 159

…he [Trotsky] finds the support and complicity of a motley collection of enemies of the Soviet regime, and even without referring to his present political activities, one cannot blind one's eyes to the dagger-thrusts which have been aimed by him and his followers at the USSR and at the Communist International. They really constituted an attempt to assassinate them, an effort to destroy them.

Need one repeat that the personal factor undoubtedly very largely influenced Trotsky's attitude? Even during Lenin's lifetime, his incompatibility with all the other leaders became apparent. "It is very difficult to work with this comrade," grumbled Zinoviev, who, however, was more than once to be found in his camp. Trotsky was much too much of a Trotskyist! Up to what point was it Trotsky's despotic character, his rancor at being supplanted, at being neglected among the others instead of shining alone, his "Bonapartism," that induced him to break with the Party and to construct for himself a sort of patchwork imitation Leninism, and to start a political war with the more or less implicitly expressed object of the formation of a new Party, namely a Fourth International? It is very difficult to say. One cannot, however, avoid remarking that Trotsky led an intensive Opposition against the Party in 1921 and again in 1923 and that, in the interval, in the year 1922, in a speech before the Fourth Congress, he defended all the points of view of the majority on the thorny question of the NEP in a very concise manner. This did not prevent the Trotskyist Opposition, brandishing the theory of permanent Revolution, from endeavoring to show, on the morrow of the Congress, that the Revolution had come to a standstill and that the NEP was a capitalist degeneration, a kind of Thermidor. These contradictory attitudes which followed one another at such a short interval of time seem to show the intervention of some artificial factor of an exclusively personal nature.

Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 165

Nor was Trotsky's personality an asset. He was widely disliked for arrogance and lack of tact: as he himself admitted, he had a reputation for "unsociability, individualism, aristocratism. Even his admiring biographer concedes he "could rarely withstand the temptation to remind others of their errors and to insist on his superiority and insight. Scorning the collegiate style of Lenin and the other Bolshevik leaders, he demanded, as commander of the country's armed forces, unquestioned obedience to himself, giving rise to talk of "Bonapartist" ambitions. Thus in November 1920 angered by reports of insubordination among Red Army troops facing Wrangel, he issued an order that contained the following passage: "I, your Red leader, appointed by the government and invested with

the confidence of the people, demand complete faith in myself." All attempts to question his orders were to be dealt with by summary execution. His high-handed administrative style attracted the attention of the Central Committee, which in July 1919 subjected him to severe criticism. His ill-considered attempt to militarize labor in 1920, not only cast doubts on his judgment, but reinforced suspicions of Bonapartism. In March 1922 he addressed a long statement to the Politburo, urging that the party withdraw from direct involvement in managing the economy. The Politburo rejected his proposals and Lenin, as was his wont with Trotsky's epistles, scribbled on it, "Into the Archive," but his opponents used it as evidence that Trotsky wanted to "liquidate the leading role of the Party."
Refusing to involve himself in the routine of day-to-day politics, frequently absent from cabinet meetings and other administrative deliberations, Trotsky assumed the post of a statesman above the fray. "For Trotsky, the main things were the slogan, the speaker's platform, the striking gesture, but not routine work. His administrative talents were, indeed, of a low order. The hoard of documents in the Trotsky archive at Harvard University, with numerous communications to Lenin, indicate a congenital incapacity for formulating succinct, practical solutions: as a rule, Lenin neither commented nor acted on them.
For all these reasons, when in 1922 Lenin made arrangements to distribute his responsibilities, he passed over Trotsky. He was much concerned that his successors govern in a collegial manner: Trotsky, never a "team player," simply did not fit. We have the testimony of Lenin's sister, Maria Ulianova who was with him during the last period of his life, that while Lenin valued Trotsky's talents and industry, and for their sake kept his feelings to himself, "he did not feel sympathy for Trotsky": Trotsky "had too many qualities that made it extraordinarily difficult to work collectively with him." Stalin suited Lenin's needs better. Hence, Lenin assigned to Stalin ever greater responsibilities, with the result that as he faded from the scene, Stalin assumed the role of his surrogate, and thus in fact, if not in name, became his heir.
[Footnote]: According to her [Lenin's sister] Trotsky, in contrast to Lenin, could not control his temper, and at one meeting of the Politburo called her brother a "hooligan." Lenin turned white as chalk but made no reply:…
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 459-460

"But how about Trotsky [Budu said]? He never was corrupt, was he? He always led an orderly private life with his wife, Natalie Sedov."
He [Stalin] looked me straight in the eyes and said, "With Trotsky it's different. He's not corrupt, that's true. But he carries within himself another danger that a popular revolution can't tolerate: He's an individualist to his fingertips, a hater of the masses, a revolutionary Narcissus. Read his books. He writes about us, about men, as 'those tailless, evil, cruel monkeys called men.' He hated us and he despised us because he thought himself the most intelligent and the most brilliant of us all for the sole reason that he knew how to wield his hand and his tongue cleverly. What was he doing in a revolutionary party? He represented only that dying civilization which we are charged with replacing by another, a more fruitful one."
If humanity ever reaches the stage of humanism, it will only get there through a civilization of the masses. Either that, or it will arrive nowhere! It will be destroyed en route!"
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 130-131

There was little of that subtlety in Trotsky, who could rarely withstand the temptation to remind others of their errors and to insist on his superiority and foresight.
His very foresight, no less real because of its ostentatiousness, was offensive…. He was the born troublemaker.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 34

Trotsky was full of his own personality…. My father [Beria] found him [Trotsky] extremely arrogant. In that respect the contrast with Stalin was striking. “In Trotsky’s company one felt like an insignificant worm. Stalin, on the contrary, knew how to listen to someone and make him feel he was important.” That was his strength.
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin’s Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 290

Yet Trotsky lacked Stalin’s day-to-day accessibility. He had the kind of hauteur which peeved dozens of potential supporters. He was also devoid of Stalin’s tactical cunning and pugnacity, and there was a suspicion among Trotsky’s followers that their idol’s illnesses at crucial junctures of factional struggle had a psychosomatic dimension.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 227

STALIN AND LENIN OPPOSE TROTSKY

In the final analysis the whole dispute, from the first clash at the formation of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party to the purge of the Red Army in 1938, resolve’s itself into a prolonged struggle between revolution and counter-revolution, although it is not thought of in those terms until the final stages. At the outset Lenin and Stalin stood together against Trotsky and his colleagues on the question of which class was to lead the Revolution. After the conquest of power Lenin and Stalin stood firmly for the signing of the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty: Trotsky vacillated between “No War and No Peace” and a revolutionary war, when the Soviet Government had no arms with which to fight. Stalin demanded that the Red Army be led by leaders who were Bolsheviks: Trotsky handed over the army staff positions to recruited officers of the Czarist Army. Trotsky proposed the militarization of Labor, with the Trade Unions as compulsory State institutions: Lenin and Stalin stood firmly for the Trade Unions as voluntary organizations and against Labor militarization. Lenin and Stalin declared that Socialism can be built-in one country: Trotsky insisted that the Russian Revolution must fail unless it was immediately supported by a pan-European revolution.
It is impossible to view these issues in sequence without observing that Trotsky’s practical proposals were disastrous and his opinions defeatist.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 156

Trotsky was always in opposition. He would demand this or the other measure at a time when the rest of the party leaders thought that it would be dangerous. The Trotskyist theory at time may, however, be defined fairly clearly. Trotsky’s fundamental contention was that there was an unbridgeable conflict of interest between the industrial workers and the peasantry. He regarded Communism as the representative of the interests only of the industrial workers. He wanted a dictatorship of the proletariat that was directed also against the peasantry. In this he was diametrically opposed to the views of Lenin, and therefore also of Stalin; for Lenin saw the basis of the regime of the dictatorship of the proletariat in a

political and social alliance between the working-class and the peasantry–under the lead, of course, of the workers.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 132

Stalin set the issue “Leninism vs. Trotskyism.”
Stalin wrote, “Lenin speaks of the alliance of the proletariat and the toiling strata of the peasantry as the foundation of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In Trotsky we find the “hostile collision” of the “proletarian Vanguard” with “the broad masses of the peasantry.” Lenin speaks of the leadership of the toiling and exploited masses by the proletariat. In Trotsky we find “contradictions in the situation of the workers’ government in a backward country with an overwhelming majority of peasants.”
According to Lenin, the Revolution draws its forces chiefly from among the workers and peasants of Russia itself. According to Trotsky, the necessary forces can be found only “on the arena of the world proletarian Revolution.”
But what is to happen if the world Revolution is fated to arrive with some delay? Is there any ray of hope for our Revolution? Trotsky does not admit any ray of hope, for “the contradictions in the situation of the workers’ government…can be solved only…on the arena of the world Revolution.” According to this there is but one prospect for our Revolution: to vegetate in its own contradictions and decay to its roots while waiting for the world Revolution.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 157

From the welter of words, two main divisions crystallized; on one side Lenin and Plekhanov, on the other Martov, Axelrod, and the 24 year old Trotsky.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 19

The Jews, I think, are the most active people. You see, Lenin assembled the Politburo: he was a Russian himself, Stalin was a Georgian, and there were three Jews–Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev. Furthermore, Trotsky was a continual opponent of Lenin on all major issues both before and after the Revolution. Still, Lenin included him in the Politburo.
Already in 1921 it had become impossible to work with Trotsky.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 126

Trotsky was a crook, a 100 percent crook,…
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 377

There was never, at any time, any difference of opinion between Lenin and Stalin.
On the other hand, they both had bitter opponents in the Party itself, especially Trotsky, an obstinate and verbose Menshevik, who considered that the inflexibility of the Bolsheviks afflicted the Party with sterility.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 30

Lenin added: “Trotsky and his like are worst than all the liquidators who express their thoughts openly–for Trotsky & Co. deceive the workers, conceal the malady, and make its discovery and cure impossible. All those who support the Trotsky group are supporting the policy of lies and deception towards the workers, the policy which consists in masking the policy of liquidation.”
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 45

Lenin wanted to be certain of having a majority. He saw Trotsky as the only possible threat to his preponderance. At the end of 1920, during the debate on the trade unions, he endeavored to enfeeble Trotsky and reduce his influence. He went so far as to place Trotsky in a ridiculous position on the transportation problem. It was urgently necessary to put the ruined railroads back into working order. Lenin knew perfectly well that Trotsky had no aptitude for this task and had no appropriate talent to accomplish it. Nevertheless Trotsky was appointed people's commissar for transport. He brought to the task his enthusiasm, his zeal, his eloquence, and his leadership methods, but the only result was confusion. Trotsky, conscious of his failure, resigned from the job.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 26

STALIN'S STYLE OF LEADING DIFFERS FROM LENIN'S

His [Stalin] method of working is somewhat different from Lenin's. Lenin usually presented his "theses" for discussion by the Political Bureau, committee, or commission. He would supplement his written document with a speech amplifying the ideas contained in it, after which every member would be invited to make his critical observations, to amend or provide an alternative. Lenin would consult specialists on particular aspects of a problem, and no one ever went to such lengths to talk matters over with the workers individually and collectively.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 172

Stalin on the other hand rarely presents theses and resolutions first. He will introduce a "problem" or a "subject" requiring a decision in terms of policy. The members of the Political Bureau, the Central Committee, or the commission of which he may be the chairman, are invited to say what they think about the problem and its solution. People known to be specially informed on the topic are invited to contribute to discussion, whether they are members of the committee are not. Out of the fruits of such collective discussion, either he himself will formulate the decision or resolution, or someone specially fitted will prepare the draft.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 172

Stalin holds the view that decisions made by one person are nearly always one-sided. He does not believe in "intuition's." He regards the Bolshevik Central Committee as the collective wisdom of the Party, containing the best managers of industry, military leaders, agitators, propagandists, organizers, the men and women best acquainted with the factories, mills, mines, farms, and different nationalities comprising the life of the Soviet Union. And the Political Bureau of this Central committee he regards as its best and most competent part. If its members are otherwise they will not hold their positions for long. Hence he believes in everyone having freedom to correct the mistakes of individuals, and in there being less chance of a collective decision proving lop-sided than an individual one. But once a decision is arrived at he likes to see it carried out with military precision and loyalty. Throughout his career his victories have been triumphs of team-work and of his native capacity to lead the team by securing a common understanding of the task in hand.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 172

Suppose today Stalin outlines a policy which he thinks should be adopted. Others criticize it, not to weaken it, but to fill in possible holes. Stalin answers. Some amendments are accepted; the majority fail. The final decision is reached only when everyone is convinced that no improvement is possible. Such is the real government of Soviet Russia.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 103

Stalin was less sure of himself than Lenin. Instead of saying, “I am right unless you can prove me wrong,” he would ask the advice of others and gradually form a composite opinion and decision. Once that opinion was formed, however, he was much more rigid than Lenin about subsequent misgivings or opposition.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 164

He [Stalin] loved to hear the other members of the leadership expounding their views, while he would wait until the end before giving his own, which would usually clinch the matter.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 220

Bazhanov goes on to describe Stalin’s behavior at meetings of the Politburo and the Central Committee. Stalin never presided at these:
“He smoked his pipe and spoke very little. Every now and then he would start walking up and down the conference room regardless of the fact that we were in session. Sometimes he would stop right in front of a speaker, watching his expression and listing to his argument while still puffing away at his pipe….
He had the good sense never to say anything before everyone else had his argument fully developed. He would sit there, watching the way the discussion was going. Whenever everyone had spoken, he would say: “Well, comrades, I think the solution to this problem is such and such”–and he would then repeat the conclusions toward which the majority had been drifting.”
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 180

That’s how it is with Stalin, in terms of actual power, but according to all accounts he is far from domineering in dealing with his colleagues. Lenin, we are told, took a different attitude. He used to say: “Here is what I think our policy should be. If anyone has suggestions to offer or can make any improvements, I am willing to listen. Otherwise, let us consider my plan adopted.”
Stalin is more inclined to begin, if the subject matter discussion concerns foreign affairs: “I should like to hear from Molotov.” Then, he might continue, “Now, what does Voroshilov think on the military aspects of the subject,” and later he would ask Kaganovich about the matter in relation to industry and transportation.
Gradually he would get a compromise opinion from the Politburo, probably “leading” the discussion along the lines he desires, but not appearing to lay down the law, until the final conclusion is reached. Thus, superficially at least, he seems to act as a chairman of a board, or arbiter, rather than as the boss.
Duranty, Walter. Stalin & Co. New York: W. Sloane Associates, 1949, p. 90

As a rule, he was businesslike and calm; everybody was permitted to state his opinion. He addressed everyone in the same stern and formal manner. He had the knack of listening to people attentively, but only if they spoke to the point, if they knew what they were saying.

Taciturn himself, he did not like talkative people and often interrupted those who spoke volubly with a curt “make it snappy” or “speak more clearly.” He opened conferences without introductory words. He spoke quietly, freely, never departing from the substance of the matter. He was laconic and formulated his thoughts clearly.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 364

According to Bazhanov, who served for several years as a junior secretary in the Political Bureau, Stalin at the meetings of this high tribunal maintains his usual reserve. He seldom generalizes. He sees only concrete problems and seeks practical solutions. He attacks few questions and rarely makes mistakes.
“At the meetings of the Political Bureau,” he writes in his revelations, “I always had the impression that Stalin was much more inclined to follow events than to direct them. During discussions he would keep silent and listen attentively. He never would give his opinion until the debate was over and then would propose in a few words, as if it were his own idea, the solution on which the majority of his assistants had already agreed. For that reason his opinion was ordinarily adopted.
Stalin is not imaginative, but he is steadfast. He is not brilliant, but he knows his limitations. He is not universal; he is single-tracked. These properties may be defects, but in Stalin’s position they are sources of strength. He is a “big business man,” a type new in Russian political life. He is the carrier of that modern “ism” which has invaded the Old World–Americanism.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 337-338

TROTSKY HAD A HUGE EGO

Here is how war commissar Trotsky, addressing one of his spectacular mass rallies in Moscow, was described by the famous American foreign correspondent, Isaac Marcosson:
“Trotsky made his appearance in what actors call a good entrance…after a delay, and at the right psychological moment, he emerged from the wings and walked with quick steps to the little pulpit….
He inundated his hearers with a Niagara of speech, the like of which I have never heard. Vanity and arrogance stood out pre-eminently.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 186

Trotsky left nothing to chance. He was fond of quoting the words of the French Anarchist, Proudhon: “Destiny — I laugh at; and as for men, they are too ignorant, too enslaved for me to feel annoyed at them.”
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 212

Trotsky lacked much of the quality of the true statesman and leader. His brilliant gifts were marred, as his works continually show, by an extraordinary vanity. He was almost pathologically egocentric. He always played the strong, self-confident man; yet many of his actions showed that he was tortured by inhibitions, often, behind the mask of superiority, anything but sure of himself, and, in fact, that he was far from being the strong personality he tried to appear in public.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 118

The combination, so often found, of great gifts and unbounded vanity gave Trotsky from the outset a revolutionary career whose tragic end might be foreseen. For Trotsky was never ready to learn, wanted always to teach, could never endure the second-place but must always have the first.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 119

Thus there was much in Trotsky's existence that flattered his almost morbid vanity and gave support to his self-insurance.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 123

When people say that Trotsky had an attractive personality, they are speaking mainly of his public persona, his appearance before great meetings, his writings, his dignity. But even so, he repelled many who felt him to be full of vanity, on the one hand, and irresponsible, on the other, in the sense that he tended to make a bright or "brilliant" formulation and press it to the end regardless of the danger.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 413

Trotsky was above politics, but he was imperious, flushed with an exaggerated sense of his importance, and flaunted his ego in a manner that made people think of Napoleon's in embryo.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 164

TROTSKY ATTACKED LENIN

In a pamphlet entitled Our Political Tasks, published in 1904, Trotsky accused Lenin of trying to impose a "barracks-room regime" on the Russian radicals. In language startlingly similar to that which he was later to use in his attacks on Stalin, the young Trotsky denounced Lenin as "the leader of the reactionary wing of our party."
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 188

Abroad again, after the defeat of the 1905 Revolution, Trotsky set up his own political headquarters in Vienna, attacking Lenin as "a candidate for the post of dictator," launched a propaganda campaign to build his own movement….
"The whole construction of Leninism," wrote Trotsky in a confidential letter to the Russian Menshevik leader Tscheidze, on February 23, 1913, "is at present built up on lies and contains the poisonous germ of its own disintegration." Trotsky went on to tell his Menshevik associate that, in his opinion Lenin was nothing more than "a professional exploiter of every backwardness in the Russian workers movement."
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 189

He [Trotsky] had passed the earlier 13 or 14 years in factional struggle against Lenin, assailing him with ferocious personal insults, as "slovenly attorney," as "hideous caricature of Robespierre, malicious and morally repulsive," as "exploiter of Russian backwardness," "demoralizer of the Russian working-class," etc., insults compared with which Lenin's rejoinders were restrained, almost mild.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 249

Stalin had some cause to regard Trotsky's elevation as a grievance, especially considering that this man had for a decade been one of Lenin's most vociferous factional opponents.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 36

LENIN PREACHED DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM

Loose talk, endless debate, public discussion, and voting on goals and tactics, perpetual compromise in the Democratic tradition among factions within and with critics outside, constant efforts to win more converts by opportunistic popular appeals — all these things, held Lenin, would be fatal to the enterprise…. What was needed was a centralized, regimented conspiracy of those who would give all their time to the crusade and would be supported and financed by party funds…. Elected delegates of local groups would then meet in Congress and decide by discussion what the party line should be. But even then, once a decision should be voted, all members must carry it out at any cost and regardless of their personal views. This principle of organization came to be known later as "Democratic centralism."
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 36

… but, according to party rules, largely formulated by Lenin, and supported previously by Trotsky as well as Stalin, once the majority has ruled everyone in the Party is obligated loyally to support the decision. This is called "democratic centralism." Not to do so is considered treason. Yet Trotsky and his supporters refused to abide by their own rules. They built up a secret organization with a secret printing press.
… Stalin explained his position on democratic centralism when I talked to him in 1926. I asked him "In Russia, according to the Communist Party Constitution, when the party has decided a question by what we call a Party caucus the minority is not permitted to agitate against the majority. We all know that majorities are sometimes wrong and that minorities are sometimes morally right. How can a wrong majority decision ever be righted?"
"We are a war party of several million people," Stalin answered. "A fighting party must execute its decisions, not degenerate into a discussion club. At the time of a conference and before an election to a conference there is complete freedom of opinion. But once a decision has been reached it is no longer a question of a majority or minority but rather of getting everyone to work to execute the decision, not begin anew the debate.
"Russians love to discuss things, and private discussions go on continuously on every issue, but after a decision is made no one is allowed by any act to oppose it.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 26

The achievement and maintenance of the dictatorship of the proletariat are impossible without a Party strong and its cohesion and iron discipline. But iron discipline in the Party is impossible without unity of will and without absolute and complete unity of action on the part of all members of the Party. This does not mean of course that the possibility of a conflict of opinion within the Party is thus excluded. On the contrary, iron discipline does not preclude but presupposes criticism and conflicts of opinion within the Party. Least of all does it mean that the discipline must be "blind" discipline. On the contrary, iron discipline does not preclude but presupposes conscious and voluntary submission, for only conscious discipline

can be truly iron discipline. But after a discussion has been closed, after criticism has run its course and a decision has been made, unity of will and unity of action of all Party members become indispensable conditions without which Party unity and iron discipline in the Party are inconceivable. [Lenin called this democratic centralism]
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 247

Lenin's authoritarian bent underlies his distrust of spontaneity and lays stress on a rigid centralization which he called democratic but which, having arrived at its conclusions, would then broke no discussion.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 62

TROTSKY'S EGO CAUSED HIM TO OPPOSE DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM

Trotsky apparently opposed "centralism" then, as he was to do a quarter of a century later, less out of attachment to Democratic methods than out of opposition to dictation by anyone but itself. For the next fourteen years he fought Lenin. But also quarreled intermittently with the Menshevik leaders. He was detested by Plekhanov, although at times they made common cause against Lenin.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 48

By comparison with what he had said about Stalin, his [Lenin] characterization of Trotsky was more critical, in spite of the tribute to his greater talents. Lenin recalled a recent instance of Trotsky's 'struggle against the Central Committee', in which Trotsky displayed 'too far-reaching a self-confidence and a disposition to be too much attracted by the purely administrative side of affairs'. If the party were to choose between the 'two most able men' on the basis of these remarks only, the odds might have been slightly in Stalin's favor. Not only were Trotsky's shortcomings stressed with the greater emphasis; Lenin also hinted at Trotsky's inclination to oppose himself to the Central Committee, a grave fault in the leader of a party which was bred in discipline, team-work, and was suspicious of 'individualism'.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 248

TROTSKY DENOUNCED LENIN FOR BEING A REACTIONARY DICTATOR

Trotsky in turn denounced Lenin as the "head of the reactionary wing of our party" and a "dull caricature of the tragic intransigence of Jacobinism." He further observed that Lenin's conception of centralism would lead to a situation in which "the organization of the party takes the place of the party itself, the Central Committee takes the place of the organization, and finally the dictator takes a place of the Central Committee." The Bolsheviks under "Maximilien Lenin," he contended, were aiming at "a dictatorship over the proletariat."
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 49

Trotsky condemned Lenin for "sectarian spirit, individualism of the intellectual, and ideological fetishism."
Trotsky in turn wrote to Chkheidze that Lenin was a master at "petty squabbling" and that Leninism "flourishes on the dung-heap of sectarianism" and is "founded on lies and

falsifications and carries within itself the poison germ of it's own decomposition." (Souvarine pp. 131 — 32)
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 51

[In a speech on the Trotskyist Opposition delivered at a joint plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission of the CPSU on October 23, 1927 Stalin quoted Trotsky's letter to Chkheidze in 1913 denouncing Lenin and said] Is it surprising, then, that Trotsky, who wrote in such an ill-mannered way about the great Lenin, whose shoelaces he was not worthy of tying should now hurl abuse at one of Lenin's numerous pupils–Comrade Stalin?
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 10, p. 178

STALIN FOLLOWED LENIN LOYALLY

I know — and this isn't guess or historical reconstruction — I know that Stalin's mainspring was and is devotion to Lenin. He thought, and doubtless correctly, that Lenin was one of the great ones, the inspired teachers of humanity… Who come once in a 1000 years…..
He knew deep down in his heart that Lenin was always Lenin and what Lenin did was right. I don't care what Trotsky has said or Trotsky's friends, like Max Eastman and meanor folk who don't write so well as Max Eastman and haven't half his brains. I say that Stalin today, and always since Lenin died, has never made a decision nor even approached a decision without first asking himself, "what would Lenin have done in this case?"
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, Inc., 1941, p. 34

That death should take Lenin at such a time is doubly tragic. He was prevented from reaping the fruits of his life's work, and out of the many party leaders he had so carefully trained, only one remained unshakably a Leninist.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 61

Stalin was always a consistent Bolshevik and was one of Lenin's most trusted lieutenants in guiding the party work inside Russia….
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 90

Stalin…accepted Lenin's views as soon is he read them and supported Lenin staunchly thereafter.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 15

Stalin's enemies have vainly tried to create the story of a clash between Lenin and Stalin. In actual fact, Stalin happened to be a blind follower of Lenin and has remained such….
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 54

What is the most prominent of Lenin's traits that you can recall?
His purposefulness and his ability to fight for his cause. You see, almost everyone in the Politburo was against him–Trotsky, Kamenev, Zinoviev, Bukharin. In the Politburo, Lenin was supported only by Stalin and me.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 130

Unlike most of the Bolshevik leaders, Stalin never raised his voice in opposition to Lenin on any point at any time. It was impossible, therefore, for him to forgive Trotsky's continuous criticism, which was further damned by his natural exasperation against this laborer who had been hired at the 11th hour…. Raymond Robbins once told me that he knew Stalin in the first winter of 1917-1918. "He sat outside the door of Lenin's office like a sentry," said Robbins, "watching everyone who went in and out, no less faithful than a sentry and, as far as we then knew, not much more important." In March 1922 Stalin received the reward of his faithful watching. He was made General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party….
Duranty, Walter. I Write as I Please. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1935, p. 181

…But remember that even Dzerzhinsky voted for Trotsky.
Gorky also made mistakes. He came out against the October Revolution. In the last analysis no one understood Leninism better than Stalin.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 132

Then take Trotsky. At first Lenin was favorably disposed toward him. Take Zinoviev, Bukharin, Kamenev–they were closest to Lenin. Temporarily, at a certain stage, they supported him, but they lacked consistency, so to speak, sufficient revolutionary character. With Marx, only Engels remained faithful.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 137

Of all the members of the Politburo who worked under Lenin, Stalin alone remained. All the others went into opposition at one time or another: Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov Tomsky, Bukharin…. Of course, for Stalin it was an unbearable situation–how to suffer criticism from all quarters, not to mention dissatisfaction, grumbling, and distrust. He needed nerves of steel to withstand it. Stalin too valued Bukharin highly. Yes he did! Bukharin was highly educated and cultured. But what can you do?!
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 262

…Among Lenin's closest friends, in the end not one of those around him remained sufficiently loyal to Lenin and the party except Stalin. And Lenin had criticized Stalin.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 310

During the critical period just before and after the Revolution, Stalin sat outside the door of Lenin's office like a faithful watchdog. He always followed Lenin's lead without cavil or disagreement, but Trotsky was often quick to criticize or challenge.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 105

It was in 1929 that I first interviewed Stalin. I was required to submit to him a copy of the dispatch I was going to send to the New York Times. In it I had used the conventional phrase that Stalin was the "inheritor of Lenin's mantle." He scratched out those words and replaced them with "Lenin's most faithful disciple and the prolonger of his work." He also told me later that in any critical moment he tried to think what Lenin would've done in the circumstances, and to guide his own actions thereby. Stalin is a great man now as the world reckons greatness, but Lenin was different–Stalin knows it–one of the very rare and greatest men.

Stalin always regarded his leader with deep, almost dog-like devotion, and never on any occasion challenged Lenin's views or failed to support him wholly.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 171

Lenin was away–on orders of the Central Committee–from July to October. In the meantime, the Party was run by the Central Committee and other top committees, whose minutes show that Stalin was one of the five or six top leaders. Lenin was, of course, in touch by mail with the committee. But the minutes also show that he was not regarded as a "boss" or an oracle but as "Comrade Lenin" (Ilyich), the most respected member of a collective whose affairs were conducted democratically, usually with considerable debate. In these debates Stalin again seems to have been generally on Lenin's side. For instance, when Lenin in September and October was urging the necessity of insurrection and some members, notably Zinoviev and Kamenev, disagreed, Stalin moved that Lenin's letters be distributed to the leading Party organizations. And when Lenin returned, Stalin supported his position.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 31

Lenin returned from Switzerland via Germany. France had refused to let him through by another route. (One knows the story of the "sealed wagon" and all the rest of that lying legend.). He arrived at Petrograd on April 3rd, 1917.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 49

Indeed, at that time, "Lenin never let a day pass without seeing Stalin," writes Piestoffski. "That is no doubt why our office at Smolny was next door to Lenin's office. All day long Lenin would either speak to Stalin on the telephone or would come into our office and take him away with him. In this way Stalin spent the greater part of the day with Lenin. I witnessed a very interesting scene one day when I went to see Lenin. A large-scale map of Russia was hanging on the wall. Before it were two chairs on which Lenin and Stalin stood and followed a line to the north with their fingers."
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 60

From the very first moment that the Soviets came into power, Stalin had been Lenin's understudy, and he continued to understudy him when he was no longer there.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 147

Stalin too, placed himself beneath the banner of Leninism, in the campaign which followed, to defend passionately the unity of the Party which was imperiled by the rebellion of the minority. To safeguard the unity of the Party became his great concern, as it had been Lenin's, as it had been Lenin's and Stalin's together, for, as we have already seen, these two never disagreed with one another on questions of either doctrine or tactics.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 164

… Finally Lenin's demands were approved. Bukharin voted against them. Trotsky, unable to accept that his negotiations had failed or to realize the gravity of the situation, abstained. Stalin supported Lenin, and it is unlikely that he ever forgot the vulnerability of the party and of the nation or the conflict within the Central Committee during these fateful days.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 108

As a member of the Bolshevik Central Committee Stalin took part in all the meetings of that body at which the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty and Russia's withdrawal from the imperialist war were discussed. The minutes of the Central Committee meetings show clearly that Stalin almost always supported Lenin's position, although in the early stages of the discussion Lenin was in the minority….
In all the voting on this question in the Central Committee Stalin supported Lenin's motions. The intensity of the dispute is seen in the fact that the motion for immediate conclusion of a peace with Germany was adopted on Feb. 18, 1918, by a majority of only one vote. Those voting for were Lenin, Smilga, Stalin, Sverdlov, Sokolnikov, Trotsky, and Zinoviev. Opposed were Uritsky, Joffe, Lomov, Bukharin, Krestinsky, and Dzerzhinsky.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 51

Stalin apparently did not keep a diary and he was careful about what he wrote down. Many documents were destroyed on his orders, as on occasion were reports that his instructions to the NKVD had been carried out. On the other hand, many documents remained in Stalin's private archive. For instance, there is a copy of a paper, dated 1923 and headed 'Biographical Details on Stalin', located in the Commissariat of Nationalities. Its author and purpose are not indicated, but it seems likely that it was prepared under Stalin's guidance. The file gives a detailed account of Stalin's 'revolutionary services' before October:
"During the October days, Stalin was one of a team of 5 (a collective) whose task was to give political leadership in the uprising…. Like his pre-revolutionary work, Stalin's present revolutionary work is of enormous importance. Distinguished by his tireless energy, his exceptional and outstanding mind and his implacable will, Comrade Stalin is one of the main, unseen, truly steel springs of the revolution, which with invincible force are turning the Russian revolution into a worldwide October. An old follower of Lenin's, better than anyone else he has absorbed Lenin's methods and ideas on practical activity.
Thanks to this, he is at present brilliantly deputizing for Lenin in the sphere not only of party activity, but also of state construction."
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 512

…Stalin's promotion was due to the dissidence of so many members of the Center Committee. True, this time the dissidents did not leave the party, were not expelled, and even regained, later, their influence in the inner councils of Bolshevism. But they remained in reserve for the time being. This is not to say that Stalin was completely immune from the doubts and vacillations of the more moderate leaders; he had had his moment of hesitation on the eve of the October rising. But he was essentially Lenin's satellite. He moved invariably within Lenin's orbit. Every now and then his own judgment and political instinct tempted him to stray; and on a few important occasions his judgment was sounder than Lenin's. But at least in the first years after the Revolution, the master's pull on him was strong enough to keep him steadily within the prescribed orbit.
It was by Lenin's side that Stalin spent the night from Oct. 27 to 28 at Petersburg military headquarters, watching the measures taken to repel General Krasnov's march on the capital. He was by Lenin's side a few days later, when Lenin told the Commander-in-Chief, General Dukhonin, to offer an armistice to the German Command and to order the cease-fire, and when, after General Dukhonin's refusal, Lenin dismissed him and appointed Krylenko Commander-in-Chief. This was the beginning of Stalin's military activity which was to grow in scope and importance with the progress of the civil war.

Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 180-181

“We are going to have not half a revolution but a whole revolution.” Lenin’s policy was not without danger to those who espoused it. The odium of a German invasion of the country might fall upon them. It seems safer to seem to uphold Kerensky. Kamenev, Zinoviev, Tomsky, Dzerzhinsky were all at first opposed to Lenin’s policy. Almost his sole supporter of any note was Stalin.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 34

[Duranty says that Stalin made him change a phrase in their interview, “inheritor of the mantle of Lenin,” to “faithful servant of Lenin.” A dictator Stalin certainly is, but not a flaming egotist.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 530

Stalin was the only one of the exiles to agree with his leader [Lenin}.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 70

He [Lenin] was, therefore, obliged to seek allies. Zinoviev and Kamenev followed him, but Sverdlov, the man who knew most about the Party organizations, was dead, and the insignificant Kalinin was inclined to support Trotsky. The only useful ally to whom Lenin could turn was Stalin, with his numerous connections with all levels of the Party.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 117

The two of them conversed endlessly. Stalin fitted Lenin’s bill as a quintessential Bolshevik. He was tough and uncomplaining…. He appeared to conform to a working-class stereotype. He was also a committed revolutionary and a Bolshevik factional loyalist. Stalin was obviously bright and Lenin, who was engaged in controversy with Zhordania and other Mensheviks on the national question, encouraged Stalin to take time out from his duties to write up a lengthy piece on the subject.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 89

Stalin bequeathed a consolidated system of rule to his successors. Personally he had remained devoted to Lenin and his rule had conserved and reinforced the Leninist regime.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 599

LENIN NOT AN ABSOLUTE DICTATOR

Lenin is not an absolute dictator, because he must get the agreement of the Communist Party to his policy. Generally he does get it, but the limitation still remains.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 42

January 16, 1923–Lenin has often been called the “red dictator.” This designation is wrong; Lenin never had the right to dictate, although in practice his opinion generally carried the day.

Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 101

Lenin was far from being a dictator in his Party. Besides, a revolutionary party would not brook any dictatorship over itself!
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 137

LENIN IS ALWAYS RIGHT ABOUT RUSSIA

Lenin is always right about Russia, because he knows and others only think.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 92

November 16, 1923–…Lenin, who possesses to the supreme degree the twofold quality of seeing clear to a heart of a problem and finding the formula that will reconcile its solution with the Marxist principles.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 112

Bolitho possessed to a remarkable degree the same quality which proved the key to Lenin's success, namely, the gift of making a quick and accurate summary of facts and drawing therefrom the right, logical, and inevitable conclusions.
Duranty, Walter. I Write as I Please. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1935, p. 95

The fact that his [Lenin] plan had achieved success in Russia, where capitalism was only in a rudimentary stage of development, is somewhat against the Marxian law and was due to an extraordinary convergence of circumstances, the most important of which was that there had been a leader capable of understanding the situation and utilizing it.
Ludwig, Emil. Leaders of Europe. London: I. Nicholson and Watson Ltd., 1934, p. 363

LENIN LEADS BY BRAIN AND WILL

November 15, 1922–The power of brain and will. By that power Lenin rules. By it alone. For he lacks Trotsky's eloquence and magnetism, Radek's persuasiveness, and Zinoviev's grim enthusiasm. And, unlike western demagogues, he never seeks to flatter an audience or appeal to their preferences and emotions. His authority is based on the more solid foundation of greater brain power–better judgment, deeper reasoning, truer analysis of facts.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 97

The secret of Lenin's authority, which did in fact amount to dictatorship, was that long experience had proved him right far oftener than his colleagues. It is said that once, at the beginning of the Revolution, Lenin, faced by general opposition, wrapped his head in his cloak, saying: "All right! Argue it out for yourselves; but when you're reached the conclusion that my plan is the only possible one wake me up and say so. I'm going to sleep." An hour or two later they woke him up and said: "we don't like your plan much more than we did, but we agree that it's the only way. You're right." As the event proved, Lenin was right in this case, and scores of others like it gave him such ascendancy that by 1919 or 1920 his opinions were hardly questioned.
But it was supremacy of brain, not of position….
Trotsky is a great executive, but his brain cannot compare with Lenin's in analytical power.

Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 102

Now Lenin is portrayed as a monster, evil, and so forth. This is because he was like a rock, armed with knowledge, science, and a colossal mind…. He had a vision. Perhaps he didn't see everything, but he saw the main thing.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 137

Of the men who have lived on earth, Lenin was one of the greatest.
It is a strange and paradoxical thing that the Bolsheviks, who had one of the greatest individual leaders of all time, profess to decry the importance of individual leadership.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 19

LENIN GOT PEOPLE TO WORK BY PERSUASION, NOT FORCE

Peter the Great made them work, too, but by brute force and Lenin by the force of personality. "That force," said Osinsky, "came from two qualities–first, the capacity to understand the real meaning of events; second, the ability to explain things to others."
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 145

The Bolsheviks can organize much, but is not their propaganda which draws these hundreds of thousands to Lenin's feet.
Duranty, Walter. I Write as I Please. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1935, p. 223

To use an un-Bolshevik metaphor, Lenin had realized, and taught to his followers, that the Russian masses were a bank upon which any check could be drawn, provided that they were told what the money was for and that it was being spent for their benefit. As Lenin said and repeated, the masses would do anything, suffer anything, and shrink from nothing, if they were rightly appealed to.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 139

LENIN LIVED SIMPLY

Semashko gives his explanation of this power. He writes: "Lenin is really one with the people at heart. He has always lived in extreme simplicity–one small room, an iron bed, and a work table. This simplicity is innate in him, not a demagogic trick or bourgeois hypocrisy. Later, as master of Russia, he was always annoyed by pomp and ceremony."
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 146

This simplicity and modesty of Lenin's, which struck me the moment I met him, his desire to pass unnoticed, or any rate not to emphasize his superiority, was one of his strongest points as the new chief of the new masses, the great, simple, and profound masses of humanity…."
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 35

STALIN CALLS HIMSELF LENIN'S DISCIPLE

"Lenin," Stalin told me, "differed from the rest of us by his clear Marxist brain and his unfaltering will. Lenin from the outset favored a hard boiled policy and even then was picking

men who could stick it out and endure." To the Stalin of today Lenin is so far above him that, when I wrote he was Lenin's "successor," he made me change it to Lenin's "disciple." It was not modestly but a statement of fact. Stalin is a great man now as the world reckons greatness, but Lenin was different–he knows it–one of the very rare and greatest men.
So Stalin set himself to follow Lenin's star, from which he never waived in the worst uglyness of defeat or in the darker days when Lenin had a bare handful of followers in Switzerland….
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 169

Stalin forced the transformation of Russia in exactly the same way as Peter the Great had done. When I therefore asked him whether he did not feel himself to be the successor of the latter, he denied it peremptorily:
"These historic parallels are always dangerous. But, if you insist on it, I can only say the following: Peter–he purposely omitted "the Great'–only brought one stone to the temple; Lenin built it. But I am only Lenin's disciple, and my only desire is to be known as his worthy successor."
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 123

Stalin has written a great number of important books. Several of them have a classic value in Marxist literature. But if one asks him what he is, he replies: "I am only a disciple of Lenin, and my whole ambition is to be a faithful disciple." It is curious to observe how, in many of the accounts of work accomplished under his direction, Stalin systematically gives credit for all the progress made to Lenin, whereas the credit has been in very large measure his own,…
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 280

When the Kerensky revolution took place, in March 1917, Stalin was liberated. Though most of the other political prisoners were welcomed with public demonstrations on their return home, Stalin came back to Petrograd alone and practically unnoticed. He immediately became an editorial writer on the Pravda. The first articles which he published were moderate and conciliatory. But two months later, when Lenin came to Petrograd and immediately put an end to liberalist and moderate socialist tendencies in the ranks of the Bolshevik Party, Stalin took Lenin's side and was a passionate follower of his to the end. I once asked him if he did not look upon himself as a sort of follower of Peter the Great. He brusquely pooh-poohed the suggestion and answered: "I am a disciple of Lenin. And my only wish is to be a worthy follower of his. Historical parallels such as that you have mentioned are always somewhat risky, but if you insist upon suggesting this parallel with Peter the Great, then I should say that Peter brought only a brick to the building of the temple but Lenin constructed the edifice himself. I am only his disciple."
Ludwig, Emil. Leaders of Europe. London: I. Nicholson and Watson Ltd., 1934, p. 357

That Stalin has the disciple of Lenin rather than of Marx we can tell by his writings. It is even possible that he loved Lenin. In any case today, when his power far exceeds any that Lenin ever had, Stalin feels that he is the second of a line. When I spoke to him of the succession of Peter the Great, he answered simply: "I am a disciple of Lenin. My only wish is to become a worthy one. If a comparison must be found, the only man to compare with Lenin is Peter the Great. But I, for my part, am merely Lenin's disciple."

Since I have no doubt of the truth of this confession, I can only explain this unusual modesty in a dictator, this voluntary retreat to the second place, by a personal veneration which seems otherwise alien to Stalin's nature and is unique in his life.
Ludwig, Emil. Three portraits: Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin. New York Toronto: Longmans, Green and Company, c1940, p. 97

[In a May 13, 1933 talk with Colonel Robins the following dialogue occurred]
ROBINS: I consider it a great honour to have an opportunity of paying you a visit.
STALIN: There is nothing particular in that. You are exaggerating.
ROBINS: What is most interesting to me is that throughout Russia I have found the names Lenin-Stalin, Lenin-Stalin, Lenin-Stalin, linked together.
STALIN: That, too, is an exaggeration. How can I be compared to Lenin?
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 13, p. 267

LENIN AND STALIN WERE SHOW NO MERCY REALISTS

Stalin is no less of a Marxist than Lenin who never allowed his Marxism to blind him to the needs of expediency. When Lenin brought in NEP, he jettisoned Marxist principles more thoroughly than Stalin ever did, and when Lenin began a fight, whether the weapons were words or bullets, he showed no mercy to his opponents.
Duranty, Walter. I Write as I Please. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1935, p. 274

STALIN MEETS LENIN AND TROTSKY FOR FIRST TIME

Thus, in Tammerfors Stalin first spoke to Lenin personally. He also saw there for the first time his later mortal enemy, Trotsky.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 27

STALIN CONSIDERED LENIN TO BE THE GREATEST AND USED THE WORD LENINISM

The term 'Leninism' was invented by the enemies of the Bolsheviks, the Mensheviks, the real Russian Social Democrats, who regarded themselves as the true inheritors of Marx's ideology; by their use of the term 'Leninism' they wished to place on record that Lenin was not a follower of Marx at all, but a heretic who had elaborated a doctrine of his own that was a deviation from Karl Marx….
For Stalin, Lenin towered above everyone else. He regarded him as the greatest figure not only of his own time but of all time. In the attitude of the others to Lenin, Stalin saw nothing but almost unendurable presumption. He was quite certain that none of them could take over Lenin's heritage, 'Lenin's cause', or even think of doing so. He certainly regarded the people around Lenin as unworthy of that great man. He himself stood on the fringe of that circle, with a firm belief that he alone had fully realized "Lenin's personality and his overwhelming historical importance….
But on April 3, 1920, Stalin published in Pravda an article on Lenin's birthday. The very title of the article was a program: 'LENIN– the organizer and leader of the All-Russian Communist Party.' In this short article Stalin described Lenin's theoretical controversy with the Mensheviks, and gave a clear account of the difference between the two tendencies in

Russian socialism. But the main feature of the article is that it represented Lenin as the sole creator of the Bolshevik doctrine, and the organizer of the party, to whom alone belonged the absolute leadership of the party. Clearly ‘Leninism’ existed already for Stalin.
Immediately after Lenin’s death, Stalin went to work to create the Lenin legend, and the word ‘Leninism’ reappeared; this time, however, as an official party term. It was followed before long by the publication of Stalin’s book the Foundations of Leninism. This book is of such great historical importance that it calls for consideration. According to Stalin, Leninism is the direct and only true continuation of Marxism, the theory, strategy, and tactic, created by Lenin, of socialism in the age of imperialism. For the age of imperialism is that of the dying capitalist society, and will be ended by the social revolution. While Marxism held good for the labor movement in the pre-revolutionary, that is to say in the time of the development of the labor movement and the ripening and coming to fruition of the social revolution, Leninism is the doctrine of the theory and tactic of the proletarian revolution itself. According to Lenin, therefore–as interpreted by Stalin–we are living in the age of the world-wide social revolution.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 111-113

STALIN INTERPRETS LENIN ON DESTROYING THE STATE

Lenin adds, according to Stalin: “The proletarian Revolution is impossible without the destruction by force of the machinery of the bourgeois state and its replacement by new machinery.”
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 114

ONLY STALIN WROTE THEORETICAL WRITINGS CONTINUING LENIN

The question arises, why was it that Stalin, and he alone, published what at that time was the only book on the theory of Leninism? At that time all party members, especially the leaders, were free to write, and within the party there was complete freedom of expression of opinion. At that time Stalin was not accounted a theorist; after Lenin’s death Bucharin was regarded as the best theorist in the Politburo. The explanation is that probably none of the leading Bolsheviks would so have demeaned himself as to write a whole book simply as a commentator on Lenin. Each of them regarded himself as an authority on theory and as part of the body of intellectuals who had created the Bolshevik Party and laid the intellectual foundations of the revolution. They regarded themselves as original thinkers, quite competent to formulate their own theories, proceeding straight from Marxism, and not as mere loud-speakers for Lenin….
…He [Stalin] was much closer to the mass of the people than his opponents were….
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 116

TROTSKY WON’T ADMIT MISTAKES

His lack of self-criticism prevented Trotsky from ever remedying his defects. Typical of this was the following little-known incident. A conference took place in 1921 in the Kremlin Palace between the foremost leaders of the Communist International. At that time this ‘Third International’ was not merely the instrument of Russian policy. The subject under discussion was whether a rising should be started in Germany. The majority of those present were in

favor of the idea. Lenin came to the meeting, and in a lengthy speech opposed the suggested rising. A rising was actually started in central Germany, ending in a disastrous defeat for Communism. Subsequently another discussion took place in that hall. Trotsky had not been present at the first discussion, but had set down his opinion in writing. Some Russian leaders who had voted in favor of the rising admitted their mistake. This time Trotsky was present, and he made a speech attacking those who had been in favor of the rising. In astonishment his hearers pointed out that he himself had supported the proposal. He denied this, and was reminded that he had actually set down his opinion in writing. His letter was produced. Meanwhile the discussion continued. Trotsky read the letter, said not a word, and went away, with the document in his pocket.
Such was the man who set out to fight his historic duel with Stalin.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 126

COMMUNISTS LED A VERY RIGOROUS, SPARTAN LIFE

…another division faded within the official class, the division between party members and the so-called nonparty, which until lately and been sharply defined; it had existed since the revolution. The Communists had been morally and in power and prestige far above their nonparty colleagues; but they had also been subject to a far more rigid discipline. The party had interfered extensively even in their private life. They had been materially at a disadvantage as compared with the others. A Communist had had to take a sort of vow of poverty, and there was a ‘party maximum’. An engineer, for instance, who did not belong to the party could keep the whole of his income and spend it as he liked. Not so the Communist. Not only had he a party tax to pay, but his income was limited. He was paid his salary in full, like the nonparty man, but he had to hand over to the party whatever he earned above the party maximum. Even what he had left he could not spend as he liked; he must not live in ‘bourgeois’ style, but was restricted to a Spartan existence.
Periodical ‘purges’ took place, and every Communist had to face them. The whole of the workers, whether party members are not, could take part, and everyone was free to criticize. Then it would be found that one of the Communists had too many suits, another had a carpet in his dwelling, a third fed too well, and the wife of the fourth wore some simple article of jewelry. All these things were ‘unproletarian’, and might bring a Communist into serious trouble.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 213

STALIN AGREES WITH LENIN THAT THE STATE MUST USE FORCE

Stalin has never denied his belief in the ruthless use of force. He openly agreed not only with Lenin’s view that the State exists always in order to enable one class to dominate another, but also with Lenin’s opinion that dictatorship is a use of force unrestricted by any law.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 235

Without their resolve to take extreme measures, neither Lenin nor Stalin can be understood. No, without their resolve we might not be alive today, much less trying to understand.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 278

STALIN BELIEVED IN A CENTRALIZED STATE

Stalin made an end of all that [local soviets setting up their own administrative organization without consulting the centre]. He declared his belief in the centralized State, and on one occasion actually said: ‘Only a centralized State can get anything done.’
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 276

Though the charges of Russian nationalism have since been laid against Stalin more than once, he was not, either then or even in later days, prompted by any of the ordinary emotions and prejudices that go with nationalism. What he represented was merely the principal of centralization, common to all modern revolutions.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 240

STALIN CONTENDS NATIONS CAN PASS CAPITALISM AND GO STRAIGHT TO SOCIALISM

In 1926, however, Stalin put forward his own theories about Asia. He held that there was no need for all countries still in the pre-capitalist era to pass through the capitalist stage. Since the dictatorship of the proletariat ruled in the Soviet Union, those peoples could evade that stage with Russian help and proceed directly to socialism.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 282

STALIN AND LENIN SHARE SAME KEY BELIEFS

Stalin shares Lenin’s conviction that the world will not permit the Soviet Union to develop in peace, because the mere example of that development would be bound to bring capitalism to its end….
He also shares Lenin’s belief in the irreconcilable differences in the imperialist world, ‘which guarantee the safety of the Soviet and the victory of the world revolution’….
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 320

It is the general fashion among Stalin’s official biographers to give him little credit for original thinking, probably because their subject himself invariably insists: “I am only the interpreter of Leninism.” “I followed the directives laid down first by Comrade Lenin.” On the rare occasions when we can test the reactions of the two men to the same set of circumstances before they have had time to compare conclusions, it invariably turns out that Stalin was not behind his leader in thinking out a line for himself; his policy subsequently proved on every occasion to be confirmed by the decision of Lenin.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 36

STALIN PERMANENTLY FOLLOWED LENIN FROM THEIR FIRST MEETING

While serving this particular sentence, Stalin took one of the most important steps of his life. Eagerly devouring the smuggled copies of the party organ Iskra (The Spark), which arrived by devious means, Stalin found himself increasingly impressed by those articles which carried the initials of Lenin. Hesitating no longer he wrote a letter to Lenin in London. In December 1903 after a lapse of almost six months, he received a reply which, in his own

words, “contained an amazingly clear explanation of the tactics of our Party and a brilliant analysis of our future tasks.” From that day he became Lenin’s man and never for an instant deviated from his allegiance.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 19

Stalin made it clear to me that at his first meeting with the Master–at Tammerfors, Finland, in 1905–he decided to hitch is wagon to Lenin’s star. “Lenin,” he told me, “differed from the rest of us by his clear Marxist brain and his unfaltering will. From the outset he favored a strong policy and even then was picking men who could stick it out and endure.”
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 171

Kaganovich says, “The most remarkable and most characteristic feature of all Stalin’s political activities is that he never drifted apart from Lenin and never swerved to the Right or to the Left.”
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 46

Between 1901 and 1917, right from the beginning of the Bolshevik Party until the October Revolution, Stalin was a major supporter of Lenin’s line. No other Bolshevik leader could claim as constant or diverse activity as Stalin. He had followed Lenin right from the beginning, at the time when Lenin only had a small number of adherents among the socialist intellectuals. Unlike most of the other Bolshevik leaders, Stalin was constantly in contact with Russian reality and with activists within Russia. He knew these militants, having met them in open and clandestine struggles, in prisons and in Siberia. Stalin was very competent, having led armed struggle in the Caucasus as well as clandestine struggles; he had led union struggles and edited legal and illegal newspapers; he had led the legal and parliamentary struggle and knew the national minorities as well as the Russian people.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 25 [pp. 15-16 on the NET]

LENIN HONORS STALIN WITH PROMOTIONS BEFORE WWI

1912 opened in a more hopeful key, each month producing further proof that the long period of ebb was drawing to a close. For Stalin personally, 1912 also brought a most welcome decision. In February of that year Lenin proposed to the Bolshevik leaders in session abroad, that they recognize the devotion and achievements of Stalin by co-opting him onto the Central Committee. The news of his election reached Stalin a month later and stimulated him to even greater effort….
Further honors were conferred upon Stalin here in Cracow; Lenin agreed that events were moving so rapidly that the emigre Central Committee might find itself acting as a break upon the initiative of the Party if it retained in its own hands the entire direction of policy. To avoid this possibility it was decided to delegate the immediate tactical direction of the struggle within Russia to an “executive bureau,” of which the principal figures were Stalin and his countryman, Sergo Ordjonikidze. Except for major strategical decisions, Lenin voluntarily handed over control of the Party’s work within Russia to the “wonderful Georgian.” With what impressive results was soon to be made clear.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 33

LENIN MADE NO EFFORT TO KEEP GROUPS FROM SPLITTING OFF

Again and again groups which could not agree split off of the others. Lenin made no effort to detain them; he distinguished sharply between those allies with whom cooperation was possible for a longer or shorter period, and the smaller group which would stick through everything.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 25

LENIN AND STALIN DID NOT RELY ON STIRRING ORATORY FOR SUPPORT

A communist who allowed himself to become as ignorant of world affairs as is the average American politician would be “cleaned out” of the party,….
The emotional vagueness which is a feature of all capitalist political platforms, and which is indeed desired in order to win wide support without being too definite, is the exact opposite of communist statements….
This [Marxism] is no dogma to be learned once for all; it is a developing body of thought, constantly applied to and affected by new conditions. By the very theory of dialectics, these forces are changing. The speeches of Lenin and Stalin and other party leaders never deal in stirring oratory or spell-binding generalities but in close and careful analysis. Stalin would no more attempt to sway a communist Congress by “force of personality” expressed in brilliant oratory and colorful phrasing, than Edison would have expected to convince a group of American engineers of the reliability of some new formula by emotional words. One such attempt would ruin either an Edison or Stalin.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 29-30

Lenin did not at all conform to the accepted idea of an orator. He was just a man speaking. Except at certain periods (notably the days of October) when it was important that the direct and immediate impulses of the people should be aroused, and when it was necessary at all costs to make an impression on the mighty surging tide of humanity, Lenin made hardly any gestures at all when he spoke. At congresses, people commented on his quietness and even on the “dryness” of his delivery. He merely endeavored to persuade his listeners, to convey his convictions from within, not from without, by the weight of their contents, as it were, and not by the gesticulations of the container. The oratorical gestures which are sometimes seen in representations of him are not quite correct, and he may be said never to have moved so much as in his statues.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 38

The simple and efficient method of delivery which Lenin employed was also that which Stalin had instinctively adopted and which he was destined never to abandon (he has even accentuated it).
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 39

STALIN HELD LENIN IN THE HIGHEST REGARD

When I compared him with the other leaders of our party, it always seemed to me that he was head and shoulders above his colleagues–Plekhanov, Martov, Axelrod and the others; that, compared with them, Lenin was not just one of the leaders, but a leader of the highest rank, a mountain eagle, who knew no fear in the struggle,…. This simple and bold letter strengthened my opinion that Lenin was the mountain eagle of our Party. I cannot forgive myself for having, from the habit of an old underground worker, consigned this letter of Lenin's, like many other letters, to the flames.
Yaroslavsky, Emelian. Landmarks in the Life of Stalin. Moscow: FLPH, 1940, p. 30

LENIN COMPLIMENTS AND CARES FOR STALIN

In a letter to Gorky, Lenin referred affectionately to Stalin and to this work: "A wonderful Georgian here," he said….
Yaroslavsky, Emelian. Landmarks in the Life of Stalin. Moscow: FLPH, 1940, p. 75

First, it should not be forgotten that even before the Revolution Lenin praised Stalin for his work on the national question and called him "the wonderful Georgian."
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 198

After completing his work on the national question, Comrade Stalin returned to St. Petersburg. Not having heard anything from him for some time, Lenin, in a letter dated March 8, 1913, inquired: "That is there no news of Vasily (Stalin–E.Y.)? What is wrong with him? We are worried." Two days later, he again writes: "Take good care of him" (Stalin), "he is very sick."
Yaroslavsky, Emelian. Landmarks in the Life of Stalin. Moscow: FLPH, 1940, p. 76

LENIN WAS MORE SEVERE AND LESS LENIENT THAN STALIN

CHUEV: Who was more severe, Lenin or Stalin?
MOLOTOV: Lenin, of course. He was severe. In some cases he was harsher than Stalin. Read his messages to Dzerzhinsky. He often resorted to extreme measures when necessary. He ordered the suppression of the Tambov uprising, that everything be burned to the ground. I was present at the discussion. He would not have tolerated any opposition, even had it appeared. I recall how he reproached Stalin for his softness and liberalism. "What kind of a dictatorship do we have? We have a milk-and-honey power, and not a dictatorship!"

CHUEV: Where is it written that he reproached Stalin?
MOLOTOV: It was in a small circle among us.
Here is a telegram from Lenin to a provincial food commissar in his native Simbirsk in 1919: "The starving workers of Petrograd and Moscow are complaining about your inefficient management…. I demand from you maximum energy, a no-holds-barred attitude to the job, and thorough assistance to the starving workers. If you fail, I will be forced to arrest the entire staff of your institutions and to bring them to trial…. You must immediately load and send off two trains of 30 cars each. Send a telegram when this is complete. If it is confirmed that, by four clock, you did not send the grain and made the peasants wait until morning, you will be shot. Sovnarkom Chairman, Lenin."

I remember another case. Lenin had received a letter from a poor peasant of Rostov province saying that things were bad with them, that no one paid any attention to them, the poor peasants, that there was no help for them and that, on the contrary, they were oppressed. Lenin proposed the formation of a group of "Sverdlovers [adults from Sverdlov University]…." Lenin directed this group to go to the place in question and, if the report was confirmed, to shoot guilty parties right then and there and to rectify the situation.
What could be more concrete? Shoot on the spot and that's that! Such things happened. It was outside the law, but we had to do it…. Lenin was a strong character. If necessary, he seized people by the scruff of their necks.

CHUEV: They say that Lenin had nothing to do with the execution of the tsar's family in 1918, that it was a decision of the local authorities following Kolchak's attack…. But some people say it was revenge for Lenin's brother.
MOLOTOV: They make Lenin out to be a crank. They are small-fry philistines who think this. Don't be naive.
I think that, without Lenin, no one would have dared to make such a decision. Lenin was implacable when the Revolution, Soviet power, and communism were at stake. Indeed, had we implemented democratic solutions to all problems, this would surely have damaged the state and the party. Issues would have dragged on for too long and nothing good would have come of this sort of formal democracy. Lenin often resolved critical problems by himself, on his own authority.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 107-109

I understand the feelings of those who wrote about rural life. They took pity on the muzhik. But what could you do? Sacrifices were unavoidable. Some argue that Lenin would have never pursued that kind of policy. But in matters like that Lenin was more severe than Stalin. Many suggest that Lenin would have reexamined his stand on the proletarian dictatorship, that he wasn't a dogmatist, and so on. But this is said by people who very much would have liked him to revise his views!
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 251

Of course Lenin displayed more flexibility in certain cases. Stalin was less tolerant. But, on the other hand, Lenin demanded that Zinoviev and Kamenev be expelled from the party in the days of the October Revolution, and Stalin defended them. It could go either way depending on the case. But it cannot be said that Lenin was soft. He didn't spend his time wiping children's snotty noses. Lenin should not be portrayed like that.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 270

Lenin started the concentration camps, established the Cheka. Stalin just continued them.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 411

… Moreover, it was he [Lenin] who fostered the terror, forced labor camps, suppression of all opposition, monolithic organization of party and state, and other aspects of the Soviet system, which are anathema to Western liberal opinion and which are popularly attributed to Stalin.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. xii

A friend of mine met Molotov before his death and he told Molotov, “You know, it’s a pity that Lenin died so early. If he had lived longer, everything would have been normal.” But Molotov said, “Why do you say that?” My friend said, “Because Stalin was a bloodsucker and Lenin was a noble person.” Molotov smiled, and then he said, “Compared to Lenin, Stalin was a mere lamb.”
Remnick, David. Lenin’s Tomb. New York: Random House, c1993, p. 45

…there has grown up in the United States a curious and inaccurate distinction between Lenin and Stalin. Lenin has been presented as a kind-hearted idealist–almost a democrat in our sense–whereas Stalin has been pictured as a ruthless Asiatic dictator…. But Lenin’s actions and speeches against the opposition of the kulaks, the clergy, the bourgeois, landlords, and generals were just as harsh as anything we know of Stalin. Both men were agreed in showing no mercy to their enemies, but Lenin’s enemies, for the most part, were outsiders, the foes of the Revolution. Against them he showed no mercy. By the time Stalin came to power non-Party opposition in the USSR had been thoroughly defeated.
…That, in short, was the difference–a difference of time and a personality. In Lenin’s day the prime struggle was against the anti-Bolshevik elements in Russia and outside Russia, the counterrevolution of Denikin, Kolchak, and Yudenich, supported by the invasion, or intervention, of French, British, Czechs, Japanese, and Americans. In addition, Lenin’s personal authority was so great that he had no real or prolonged difficulty with opponents inside the Communist Party. Stalin’s situation was otherwise. Since, by 1924, when Lenin died, internal and external non-communist enemies had been defeated, Stalin’s conflict was within the Party.
Duranty, Walter. Stalin & Co. New York: W. Sloane Associates, 1949, p. 20

[In a speech delivered to the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Presidium of the Central Control Commission of the CPSU in early 1929 Stalin stated] It is said that Lenin would certainly have acted more mildly than the Central Committee is now acting towards Tomsky and Bukharin. That is absolutely untrue. The situation now is that two members of the Political Bureau systematically violate Central Committee decisions, stubbornly refuse to remain in posts assigned to them by the Party, yet, instead of punishing them, the Central Committee of the Party has for two months already been trying to persuade them to remain in their posts. And–just recall–how did Lenin act in such cases? You surely remember that just for one small error committed by Tomsky, Comrade Lenin packed him off to Turkestan.
TOMSKY: With Zinoviev’s benevolent assistance, and partly yours.
STALIN: If what you mean to say is that Lenin could be persuaded to do anything of which he was not himself convinced, that can only arouse laughter…. Recall another fact, for example, the case of Shlyapnikov, whose expulsion from the Central Committee Lenin recommended because he had criticized some draft decision of the Supreme Council of National Economy in the Party unit of that body.
Who can deny that Bukharin’s and Tomsky’s present crimes in grossly violating Central Committee decisions and openly creating a new opportunist platform against the Party are far graver than were the offenses of Tomsky and Shlyapnikov in the cases mentioned? Yet, not only is the Central Committee not demanding that either of them should be excluded from the Central Committee or be assigned to somewhere in Turkestan, but it is confining itself to attempts to persuade them to remain in their posts, while at the same time, of course, exposing their non-Party, and at times downright anti-Party, line. What greater mildness do you want?

Would it not be truer to say that we, the Central Committee majority, are treating the Bukharinites too liberally and tolerably, and that we are thereby, perhaps, involuntarily encouraging their factional anti-party “work”?
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 11, p. 338-340

MOLOTOV SAYS KOLLONTAI IS NOT A REAL REVOLUTIONARY

What did you think of the film about Kollontai –“The Ambassador of the Soviet Union”? Kollontai won the war? That’s naive…. I knew her well. We had rather good relations, but she was not a true revolutionary. She came from the margin. But an honest person. A beautiful woman…. Lenin really took her down a peg. Read his speech at the 10th Party Congress, where he speaks against the workers’ opposition. An opposition of Shliapnikov and Kollontai, as Lenin derided it, embraced “class-welded followers.”
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 111

LENIN SUPERIOR TO STALIN BUT NOT IN PRACTICAL POLITICS

Of course, Lenin was superior to Stalin. I always thought so. He was superior in the theoretical sense, superior in his personal qualities. But no one could surpass Stalin as a practical worker.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 112

Sometimes Stalin would insist that the unity of the party was the supreme good and that for its sake even principles had to be sacrificed. At other times he would argue that if necessary to uphold principals a split should not be avoided. He would resort now to this, now to that argument, depending on which happened to suit him at a given moment. In disputes his was always the voice of reason, striving to reconcile lofty standards with expediency, a model of moderation and a threat to no one. He had no enemies, except possibly Trotsky, and even him he sought to befriend until rebuffed:…
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 466

And Koba after all is a realist. One must give him credit for that….
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 34

The outstanding talent of Stalin is his ability to tell the executive, the experts, the groups what is next to be done and how to set about it. He has been stronger than Lenin but he has added nothing to Leninism except tactics; add of course will, vigilance, and judgment of character. He is a general of the economic and political revolution.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 140

Historians have long been aware of the disagreement between Lenin and Stalin over the first constitution of the USSR, but the dispute needs to be freshly examined because recent events have made it possible for us to assess the details more objectively. Most previous accounts of this conflict have questioned Stalin’s skepticism about the durability of a “union” based on the “solidarity of the workers” (i.e. Party discipline), and various authors have argued that his insistence on the need for tough central power to hold the entire structure together was wrong. Today, a decade after the surprisingly rapid collapse ofthe Soviet Union,

it can be argued that Lenin was the one who was politically shortsighted when he proposed a less restrictive first constitution for the Soviet Union.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 263

Analyzing the events of the pre-war period today, it does seem clear that the strictly centralized economy, which played such a crucial role in the rapid industrialization of the country, would never have been possible if Lenin's model for the Union had been adopted. Lenin even went so far as to oppose a centrally directed general transport system. And if instead of the USSR with its "autonomous" and "Union" republics (the latter distinguished by a formal right to secede), an extended Russian Federation had been established as originally envisaged by Stalin, this certainly would have led to an even more rapid economic, political, and ethnic integration of the country. Along with an accelerated process of Russification, there could have been the genuine birth of a "Soviet people" that paid much less heed to ethnicity, rather like the experience of the United States.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 268

LENIN WANTED SILENCE DURING MEETINGS AND NO SMOKING

…Lenin disliked conversations during meetings…. But Lenin very much disliked it when people whispered during the sessions. He could not stand smoking at all. He himself didn't smoke. He was annoyed by whispering, all kinds of talking….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 124

LEADERS CAN'T BE RUDE OR ABUSE SUBORDINATES

…Rudeness cannot be justified. It cannot be turned into a special issue, but it also cannot be justified. If you get to the top, you must behave properly. You must be patient. Otherwise, what kind of a leader are you? That's an elementary obligation. As for a subordinate, if you abuse him, it's no life: its prison. It's already hard enough for him without that….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 124

This attention to us [some generals] touched us deeply. I have already mentioned how Stalin could be very irascible and abrasive; but even more striking was this concern for his subordinates at such a grave time.
Vasilevskii, Aleksandr M. A Lifelong Cause. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1981, p. 118

Throughout my entire work with Stalin, especially during the Great Patriotic War, I had invariably felt his attention. I would even say excessive concern, that I seemingly did not merit .
Vasilevskii, Aleksandr M. A Lifelong Cause. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1981, p. 285

MOLOTOV SAYS TROTSKY ADMITS HE WAS NO BOLSHEVIK & PREDICTED THE PARTY'S DEFEAT

Trotsky put it more slyly, more cautiously. His purport was: our time is up. I have always opposed you Bolsheviks but joined you, changed to the Bolshevik party before the Revolution. But nothing came of it. The international proletariat did not support us. This means you have failed, you have no future!
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 127

BOLSHEVIKS HAD NO THEORETICIANS AFTER LENIN

Generally speaking, we had few theoreticians. Genuine Bolshevik theoreticians were not easy to find.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 228

LENIN ERRED ON THE PAY STRUCTURE OF SOCIALIST SOCIETY

…under socialism, Lenin said, no official will be paid a higher wage than the average worker's. None of the officials, including the general secretary of the party and the chairman of the council of ministers, should receive compensation higher than that of the average worker. This principle was practiced by the Paris Commune.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 380

Lenin declared in 1918 that we could pay the top bourgeois specialists more than others. …but we could tolerate it as a temporary expedient.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 399

THE TRANQUIL LIFE IS NOT FOR REAL REVOLUTIONARIES

"Go your own way!"–if that's the policy we are going to follow regarding Poland, then we are in for trouble at home.
We are all interconnected….
In fact, an ever more ferocious and perilous struggle is unfolding…. I am against the tranquil life! If I craved a tranquil life, it would mean I have been "philistinized." [11-9-81]
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 402

We need to strengthen the party line to prevent philistines from getting the upper hand. Yes, more than a few who desire a restful life will be found out there.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 412

It was Stalin, they declare, who built the Soviet Union into a superpower. It was Stalin who industrialized a peasant country, took it from wooden ploughs to atomic weapons, thrust it into the 20th-century, and made the West tremble at the might of Russia. Above all, it was Stalin who won the war, destroyed Hitler, beat the Germans. As they talk of Stalin, his admirers romanticize the exploits of their own youth, when, with Stalin at the helm, they were building a Brave New World. And now, amid the disarray of Gorbachev's perestroika, they long nostalgically for the order and discipline imposed by the strong boss in the Kremlin. Those were times, they assert, when factories worked–and so did workers–unlike today!
Smith, Hedrick. The New Russians (Pt. 1). New York: Random House, 1990. p. 132

TROTSKY AND BUKHARIN HAD MULTIPLE WIVES

She [Granny] had marvelous stories to tell about the Kremlin in those days, about Trotsky's "wives" and Bukharin's "wives" and about Clara Zetkin,… She was a walking chronicle of her age.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 228

BOLSHEVIKS REGARDED THE PARTY AS THE GUARDIAN OF THE PROLETARIAN STATE

The fact of the matter was that Lenin and his associates regarded the Communist Party as the tutor or guardian of the infant proletarian state which was not yet adult or experienced enough to govern itself and order its own ways.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 93

LENIN WOULD HAVE ACTED AS STALIN DID

In such policies, Stalin was trying to strike a balance between mass participation and firm leadership, which would provide guidance and structure for such participation…. Lenin, confronting the problems that the Party faced in these years, could hardly have acted differently than Stalin did.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 78

STALIN DESCRIBES HIS FIRST ENCOUNTERS WITH LENIN

The meeting between Lenin and Stalin, in Stalin's own words:
"I first made Lenin's acquaintance in 1903. I did not meet him then, but we corresponded. I have retained an unforgettable memory of that first epistolary meeting. I was an exile in Siberia at the time. In studying Lenin's Revolutionary activities from the end of the last century, and particularly after the appearance of Iskra (The Spark), in 1901, I arrived at the conviction that in Lenin we possessed no ordinary man. To my mind he was not just a mere Party leader, but a real creator, for he alone understood the nature and urgent needs of our Party. When I compared the other leaders with Lenin, they always seemed to be a head shorter than he. Beside them, Lenin was not a person of the same order of things, but a commander of a superior type, a mountain eagle, a fearless fighter leading the Party forward through the hitherto unexplored paths of the Russian revolutionary movement. This impression anchored itself so firmly in the depths of my mind that I felt compelled to write about him to a close friend of mine who happened to be away from Russia at the time, and to ask him for his opinion of him. Sometime later I received an enthusiastic reply from my friend, addressed to Siberia, and at the same time I received a simple but profound letter from Lenin. I understood that my friend had shown him my letter. Lenin's letter was relatively short, but he criticized incisively and intrepidly the practical work of our Party, and disclosed with remarkable clarity and precision the whole future plan of action of the Party.
I met him for the first time in December 1905, at the Bolshevik Conference of Tammerfors (in Finland). I was expecting to see, in the eagle of our Party, a great man not great only in the political sense, but physically great also, for in my imagination I pictured Lenin as a giant,

fascinating, and symbolic. What was my surprise then, to see before me a man of less than middle height, in no way distinguishable from ordinary human beings!
A great man is supposed to arrive late at meetings, so that the assembly may anxiously await his arrival. The appearance of a great man is always heralded by remarks such as: Sh!… Silence!… Here he comes! But I found that Lenin had arrived long before the others, and I saw him in a corner engaged in the most ordinary conversation with one of the least important of the delegates. He was quite clearly not behaving according to the accepted rules."
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 30

LENIN COMPLIMENTS STALIN'S WRITINGS

Lenin put the greatest value on Stalin's writings. In 1911 he expressed himself as follows: "Kobi's articles deserve the closest attention. It is difficult to imagine a better refutation of the opinions and hopes of our pacifiers and our conciliators."
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 45

SOME PEOPLE WANT TO DISTORT THE ROLE OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

A large number of people did not wish to push things further than the overthrow of the historic muck-heap surmounted by a hedged-in crown, further than by replacing the hereditary dictatorship of Peter the Great's descendants by a middle-class government professing to be democratic, to which would be returned in rotation two or three Parties all equally democratic in word and anti-democratic in deed; with a President instead of an Emperor, an armchair instead of a throne. No difference except the erasure of a few coats of arms, slight alterations in the flag and the postage-stamps, and, at the beginnings of almanacks and directories, a change in the personnel charged with keeping the people in subjection. And the dictatorship of proletariat and, in consequence, social justice sinking head first into this republican mixture. And the system of endemic warfare and the exploitation of man by man remaining intact. A fresh lie, in fact, a fresh political crime against the people.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 50

LENIN AND STALIN BEGAN TO CREATE A STATE WITHIN A STATE

Lenin brought into existence what one might call duality of power: a Socialist State within the State. Side-by-side with the official Government, he created another Government, fully constituted, having its form in the Petrograd Soviet, functioning and consolidating itself, quite ready to become the only one. And the mass of workers openly began to prefer this Government to the official Government beside it.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 51

LENIN REMAINED IMPASSIVE WHEN FACING THOSE STALIN CALLED THE HYSTERICS

…against those whom Stalin called “the hysterics,” that is to say the revolutionary-Socialists and the Anarchists (Spiridovna threatening Lenin with the revolver at a meeting; Lenin remaining quite impassive, apparently almost amused….
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 56

TROTSKY WAS AN ANTI-BOLSHEVIK MENSHEVIK AT HEART

Whatever may have been the various causes which incited it, the great reason for Trotsky’s schism is chiefly his conception of political principles. Even if the incidental cause is vanity, the fundamental cause is ideological. It is based upon a fundamental divergence of tendencies between his own and Lenin’s principles of Bolshevism. It reveals a different political temperament, a different set of values and different methods. And it is as a result of the intensive and bitter development of these fundamental differences and of their exploitation that Trotsky gradually took an opposition stand against the whole of the official Bolshevik policy.
Menshevik to start with, Trotsky always remained a Menshevik. He may have become anti-Bolshevik because he was a Trotskyist, but he certainly did so because he was an old Menshevik. Let us put it, if you wish, that the Trotskyist aroused the old Menshevik in him.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 166

TROTSKY WAS TOO INDECISIVE, IMPRACTICAL, AND VACILLATING TO LEAD

…But, above all, the two people [Lenin and Trotsky] are not on the same scale, and in any case, one cannot reasonably put any other personality on a parallel with the gigantic figure of Lenin.
But Trotsky’s very qualities had serious counterparts which easily changed them into defects. His critical sense, hypertrophied but without any broadness (Lenin’s, like Stalin’s, was encyclopedic), rivetted his attention upon details, prevented him from visualizing situations as a whole and made him pessimistic.
Besides, he had too much imagination. He had an uncontrolled imagination. And this imagination, jostling against its own self, would lose its balance, and cease to be able to distinguish the possible from the impossible (which, in any case, is not the function of the imagination). Lenin used to say that Trotsky was perfectly capable of producing nine good solutions and a Tenth disastrous one. The men who worked with Trotsky will tell you that, every morning when they awoke, they murmured, as they opened their eyes and stretched themselves: “I wonder what Trotsky is going to invent today.”
He saw all the alternatives too clearly, so that all sorts of doubts would assail him. The thesis and the antithesis haunted him at the same time. “Trotsky is a human shuttle cock,” said Lenin. So he would hesitate and vacillate. He was unable to make a decision. He was afraid, and consequently always instinctively opposed the actual work in hand.
Again, he was too fond of talking. He would become intoxicated by the sound of his own voice. “Even when speaking confidentially to a single person, he becomes declamatory,” said one of his former companions. To sum up, Trotsky possessed the eminent qualities of an advocate, of a debater, of an art critic, and of a journalist–but not that of a statesman having to break new ground. He lacked the exclusive and absolute sense of reality and of life. He lacked the great straightforward ruthlessness of the man of action. He did not

possess really strong Marxist convictions. He was afraid. He had always been afraid. It was out of fear that he remained a Menshevik, and it is equally out of fear that he has become unbalanced and is sometimes seized with frantic attacks of extremeness. One cannot understand Trotsky unless one can discern his weakness through his fits of violence.
In a general survey Manuilsky has given us an even broader view of the matter: “The almost uninterrupted succession of Oppositions was the expression of the retirement of the feebler elements of the Party from Bolshevik positions.” All Opposition is a confession of retrogression, discouragement, incipient paralysis, and sleeping sickness.
It was the same abroad: “During the period of the actual and relative stabilization of Capitalism, Socialists began to waiver and to leave the ranks of the Communist International.” It is hard work having to keep on marching forward, constantly bearing that manner. After a certain time one’s feet grow tired, one’s fingers lose their grip–unless one has a vocation for it.
It is because of the platitude, the bustling pettiness and the impotence of Menshevism, because of what Stalin has called “the dissolute character of the Mensheviks in the matter of organization, “that Trotsky was beaten. If Trotsky had been right he would have won. In the same way as the Bolsheviks who, at the dawn of the New Era, opposed the Mensheviks in the heart of the Social-Democratic Party and forced a separation, would themselves have been beaten–if they had been wrong.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 167-169

Trotsky appears to me as the type of the pure revolutionary: of great service in the emotional stress of war, but of no further use when all that is needed is calm, steady, systematic work instead of exultation. As soon as the heroic period of the revolution was past, his vision of men and affairs became distorted and he began to see all things in a false light. Obstinately, long after Lenin had adapted his views to the facts, Trotsky clung to the principles which had been proved during the heroic, emotional, but which were bound to go awry the moment they had to serve everyday needs. As his book shows, Trotsky knows how to carry away crowds in moments of great excitement. Certainly when feelings ran high he was able to let loose a mighty flood of enthusiasm, but what he could not do was to “canalize” the flood and turn it to account in the building up of a great state.
This Stalin can do.
Trotsky is the born writer. His affectionate descriptions of literary activities make good reading, and I take him at his word when he says: “A well-written book, in which one finds new thoughts, and a good pen, with which one can communicate one’s own thoughts to others, have always been and still are for me the most precious and intimate products of civilization.” Trotsky’s tragedy is that he was not content with being a great writer. This insatiability turned him into a contentious doctrinaire who, by the mischief he made, and meant to make, caused innumerable people to forget his merits.
I know this type of writer and revolutionary well, even if only in miniature. Certain leaders of the German revolution, the Kurt Eisner’s and Gustav Landauers, had much in common with Trotsky, although, of course, on a smaller scale. Their rigid adherence to a dogma, their inability to adapt themselves to changed circumstances, in short, their lack of practical political psychology, made these theorists and doctrinaires fitted for political action for a short time only. For the greater period of their lives they were good writers, but no politicians. They did not find the way to the heart of the people. They did not know enough of popular and mass psychology. They felt a kinship for the masses which the masses did not feel for them.

While the great conflict between Trotsky and Stalin rests on differences of opinion on all-important points, these differences arise from a more fundamental divergence. It was the natures of the two men which led them to opposite conceptions in regard to the most important questions of the Russian Revolution, to the nationality problem, the peasant problem, and to the question whether it was possible to establish socialism in any one country. Stalin held the opinion that complete and practical socialism could be established without a world revolution, and, moreover, that by the protection of the national interests of the various Soviet peoples, it could be established in one separate country; he believed that the Russian peasant had the possibility of socialism within him. Trotsky disputed that. He declared world revolution to be a necessary condition for the establishment of socialism; he adhered rigidly to the Marxist doctrine of absolute internationalism; he advocated the tactics of the permanent revolution and demonstrated with a great show of logic the correctness of the Marxist position that the establishment of socialism in any one country was impossible…. Before the end of 1935 at the latest, the whole world recognized that socialism had been established in one country and that, what was more, the military resources had been created for the defense of this new structure against any conceivable foe.
What could Trotsky do? He could keep quiet. He could admit himself beaten and say he had been wrong. He could reconcile himself with Stalin.
He found it impossible. He could not conquer himself. The man who had seen so much that others had not seen, now failed to see what every child saw. Food was being produced at a great pace; the machines were functioning; raw materials were being reclaimed as never before; the country was electrified and motorized. Trotsky would not admit it. He said that the very fact that all this had been accomplished so quickly, and the feverish tempo of the construction, must result in fragility. The Soviet Union, the ” Stalin State,” as he called it, must sooner or later fall to pieces of its own accord, and it was bound to collapse in any case as soon as the Fascist powers attacked it. And Trotsky launched forth into extravagant outbursts of hatred against the man in whose name the construction had become a fact.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 97-101

During the crisis [Brest Litovsk] the ‘deserter and strike-breaker’ of October, Zinoviev, rallied to his [Lenin] side; and Lenin was as quick in forgetting an old grievance as he had been ruthless in voicing it. On the other hand, Trotsky suffered a temporary eclipse. He had laid bare an important weakness of his–a certain lack of plain realism, a propensity to verbal solutions and theatrical gestures in a situation which brooked neither. His eclipse was not serious. His moral authority was still second only to Lenin’s.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 192

(by Joseph Hansen)
Even Deutscher viewed Trotsky’s engagement in building a world party of socialist revolution as a “foible.”
Trotsky, Leon. My Life. Gloucester, Massachusetts: P. Smith, 1970, p. v

He [Trotsky] was, as I have hinted, an intellectual’s politician not a politician’s. He was arrogant, he was a wonderful phrase-maker, he was good at points of dramatic action. But, as with Churchill (there are some resemblances), his judgment, over most of his career, tended to be brilliantly wrong. In politics, particularly in the life-and-death politics of revolution, you can’t afford to be brilliantly wrong.

…He was a brave and dashing extemporizer: but when it came to steady administrative policies, he could suddenly swing into a bureaucratic rigidity stiffer than any of the others'. Above all, he [Trotsky] hadn' the animal instinct that a politician needs. When Lenin died, he was convalescing in the Crimea. He didn't return to Moscow. He did not obey one of the oldest of political rules: never be too proud to be present. In a time of crisis, the first essential is to be on the spot, in physical presence, in the flesh.
Snow, Charles Percy. Variety of Men. New York: Scribner, 1966, p. 255

STALIN CONTINUED THE IDEAS OF LENIN AND PROTECTED THEM

"The proletariat must have a clear objective (a programme) and a definite line of action (tactics)," said Stalin, who always acts according to his words.
Since those days, Stalin has watched more jealously than ever over the unimpaired greatness of Leninism, which he had saved from intrigue at a moment when the great experiment of liberty, which had never ceased to make progress, had nevertheless not yet reached its full maturity; at a period at which the Soviet Revolutionaries and the proletariat were eagerly yet slowly giving life to the monumental new organism by a self-sacrifice comparable to a transfusion of blood.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 191

SOCIALISM FAVORS MAXIMUM OF GOOD OVER MINIMUM OF EFFORT

Besides, the whole of Socialism itself tends strictly towards "Maximum of good with minimum of effort."
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 225

CHURCHILL BLASTS TROTSKY AND HIS IMMENSE EGO

It is probable that Trotsky never comprehended the Marxian creed: but of its drill-book he was the incomparable master. He possessed in his nature all the qualities requisite for the art of civic destruction–the organizing command of a Carnot, the cold detached intelligence of Machiavelli, the mob oratory of a Cleon, the ferocity of Jack the Ripper, the toughness of Titus Oates. No trace of compassion, no sense of human kinship, no apprehension of the spiritual, weakened his high and tireless capacity for action. Like the cancer bacillus he grew, he fed, he tortured, he slew in fulfillment of his nature. He found a wife who shared the Communist faith. She worked and plotted at his side. She shared his first exile to Siberia in the days of the Czar. She bore him children. She aided his escape. He deserted her. He found another kindred mind in a girl of good family who had been expelled from a school at Kharkov for persuading the pupils to refuse to attend prayers and to read Communist literature instead of the Bible. By her he had another family. As one of his biographers (Max Eastman) put it: "If you have a perfectly legal mind, she is not Trotsky's wife, for Trotsky never divorced Alexandra Sokolovski who still uses the name of Bronstein." Of his mother he writes in cold and chilling terms. His father–old Bronstein–died of typhus in 1920 at the age of 83. The triumphs of his [Trotsky's father] son brought no comfort to this honest hard-working and believing Jew. Persecuted by the Reds because he was a bourgeoisie; by the Whites because he was Trotsky's father, and deserted by his son, he was left to sink or

swim in the Russian deluge, and swam on steadfastly to the end. What else was there for him to do?

… All the collectivism in the world could not rid him [Trotsky] of an egoism which amounted to a disease, and to a fatal disease. He must not only ruin the State, he must rule the ruins thereafter. Every system of government of which he was not the head or almost the head was odious to him. The Dictatorship of the Proletariat to him meant that he was to be obeyed without question. He was to do the dictating on behalf of the proletariat. “The toiling masses,” the “Councils of Workmen, Peasants and Soldiers,” the gospel and revelation of Karl Marx, the Federal Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, etc., to him were all spelt in one word: Trotsky.
Churchill, Winston. Great Contemporaries. New York: Putnam, 1937, p. 170

The Army must be remade; victory must be won; and Trotsky must do it and Trotsky must profit from it…. He used his exceptional prowess to the full. The officers and soldiers of the new model army were fed, clothed and treated better than anyone else in Russia. Officers of the old Czarist regime were wheedled back in thousands. “To the devil with politics–let us save Russia.” The salute was reintroduced. The badges of rank and privilege were restored. The authority of commanders was reestablished. The higher command found themselves treated by this Communist upstart with a deference they had never experienced from the Ministers of the Czar.
Churchill, Winston. Great Contemporaries. New York: Putnam, 1937, p. 171

REVOLUTIONARY INTELLECTUALS OFTEN PUT THEIR EGOS ABOVE THE CAUSE

…But the revolutionary intellectuals, time and again in moments of crisis, have shown their tendency to put personal prestige before everything else, and to fight to the bitter end against political opponents, even if this sacrifices the very principles that they were verbally accepting.

Pritt, Denis Nowell. The Moscow Trial was Fair. London: ” Russia To-day,” 1937, p. 10

It a surely of such men that Mao was thinking when he wrote: “All wisdom comes from the masses. I’ve always said that intellectuals are the most lacking in intellect. The intellectuals cock their tails in the air, and they think, ‘If I don’t rank No. 1 in all the world, then I’m at least No. 2.’”
Spence, Jonathan D. Mao Zedong. New York: Viking, 1999, p. 159

TROTSKY DENOUNCES LENINISM

That Trotsky launched vicious attacks against Leninism and Lenin is not an ‘invention’ of Stalin’s, as the Trotskyites usually assert, can be seen from the following extracts from a letter of Trotsky’s to Chkiedze written in 1913:

“The entire edifice of Leninism is built on lies and falsification and bears within itself the poisonous elements of its own decay.”

Further on in the same letter Trotsky describes Lenin as: “a professional exploiter of every kind of backwardness in the Russian working-class movement.”

Here, straight from the horse’s mouth, you have in unadulterated form the true regard that Trotskyism has for Leninism….
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 82

LENIN OPPOSES TROTSKY ON MAJOR ISSUES

Proceeding from the theory of ‘permanent revolution’ Trotskyism cannot but attack Leninism. Leninism says that the proletariat in a single country can build socialism, whereas Trotskyism says that it cannot. Leninism holds that the peasantry is a reliable and firm ally of the proletariat, while Trotskyism says it is not. Leninism says that under the conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the leadership of the working-class it is possible to mobilize the poor and middle peasantry in the task of building socialism, whereas according to Trotskyism this is an impossibility.
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 150

TROTSKYISM HAS NEVER SUCCEEDED IN LEADING ANY NATION

Trotskyites have never ever made a successful revolution nor will they ever be able to make a revolution unless and until they shed their Trotskyism…
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 335

TROTSKY WAS A PROLIFIC WRITER ALWAYS READY TO LIE ABOUT OPPONENTS

Trotsky was a fierce hater and a prolific writer, a polemicist rather than a historian, who was always ready to distort and invent evidence against his enemy.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. xii

STALIN WAS DEFINITELY NOT THE GREY BLUR IN SOVIET HISTORY TROTSKY SAID HE WAS

Far from being a “grey blur,” he was gaining the respect and confidence of members, as was shown at the Seventh Party Conference in late April 1917, when he received the third highest number of votes after Lenin and Zinoviev in the secret ballot for the Central Committee.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 92

Trotsky, in one of his articles, wrote about Stalin’s lack of creative input from 1900 to 1910. This assertion is unjust. Stalin was not only an activist; he also aspired to the role of theoretician, at least on the Transcaucasian level. From 1900 to 1910 he wrote quite a few articles and pamphlets,… But it is incorrect to speak of a complete absence of creative output on Stalin’s part.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 30

Much has since been written in order to belittle or to exaggerate Koba's role in those days [imprisonment in the early 1900s]. This suggests that at the age of 22 he was already some sort of 'grey eminence' in the underground of his native province. He was certainly not the undistinguished member of the rank-and-file, the nonentity, described by Trotsky.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 50

When the Seventh Party Conference assembled toward the end of April 1917, the membership was approaching 80,000…. Stalin was elected to the Central Committee and his current stature in the Party was attested to by the fact that in the secret balloting he received 97 of the 109 delegate votes. Only Lenin with 104 and Zinoviev with 101 were ahead. The barely known Caucasian of 1912, the man whom five weeks earlier it had been proposed should be kept out of the Party councils because of his bad temper and manners, was now freely acknowledged by his fellow Bolsheviks to be the leading "practitioner" in

the Party. In the turbulent months ahead Stalin remained at the center, one of the principal leaders of the Party, though only a secondary figure of the Revolution.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 141

But those who concluded that he was a 'grey blank' simply demonstrated their ignorance of central party life.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 132

True, he was not a gray blur or a mediocrity or the "creature of the party bureaucracy" claimed by Trotsky in later years.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 9

TROTSKY SAYS LENIN LIKED STALIN'S FIRMNESS & CHARACTER NOT HIS CREATIVITY & IDEAS

As Trotsky wrote later:

"…What Lenin valued in Stalin was his character, firmness, tenacity, insistence, and partly also his craftiness. He valued these as indispensable qualities in a fight. Independent ideas, political initiative, or creative imagination he did not expect or demand of Stalin."
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 64

Undoubtedly he [Lenin] valued certain of Stalin's traits very highly, his firmness of character, his persistence, even his ruthlessness and conniving, attributes indispensable in struggle and consequently at Party Headquarters.
Trotsky , Leon , Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 373

LENIN WAS VERY WORRIED ABOUT STALIN'S HEALTH

Lenin's attitude toward Stalin was so benevolent in the years 1918-1921 that he personally concerned himself with finding a quiet apartment for him in the Kremlin. He reprimanded

Ordjonikidze for disturbing Stalin while the latter was on vacation in the Northern Caucasus. Lenin asked for a doctor to be found to treat Stalin and asked that he'd be sent the doctor's conclusions about Stalin's health.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 67

LENIN WAS HARSH IN DEBATES WITH OPPONENTS

This is what Yakubovich says about him [Lenin] in his memoirs;

"Lenin was harsh in his polemics with ideological opponents; he never liked to use a conciliatory tone or to gloss over conflicts; he made a definite point of any disagreements he had with other party figures.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 137

STALIN WAS THOROUGHLY ANTI-CAPITALIST

I am profoundly convinced that Stalin never sought to restore capitalism.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 599

LENIN WAS AN EXCELLENT DEBATER

While his [Lenin] speeches were swift and fluent and crowded with facts, they were generally as unpicturesque and unromantic as his platform appearance. They demanded sustained thought and were just the opposite of Kerensky's. Kerensky was a romantic figure, an eloquent orator, with all those arts and passions which should have swayed, one would think, "the ignorant and illiterate Russians." But they were not swayed by him. Here is another Russian anomaly. The masses listened to the flashing sentences and magnificent periods of this brilliant platform orator. Then they turned around and gave their allegiance to Lenin, the scholar, the man of logic, of measured thought and academic utterance.
Lenin is a master of dialectics and polemics, aggravatingly self-possessed in debate. And in debate he is at his best. Olgin [a publicist who left Russia for the U.S. in 1914 and wrote a number of articles and books about the USSR] says: "Lenin does not reply to an opponent. He vivisects him. He is as keen as the edge of a razor. His mind works with amazing acuteness. He notices every flaw in the line of argument. He disagrees with, and he draws the most absurd conclusions from, premises unacceptable to him. At the same time he is derisive. He ridicules his opponent. He castigates him. He makes you feel that his victim is an ignoramus, a fool, a presumptuous nonentity. You are swept by the power of his logic. You are overwhelmed by his intellectual passion."
Lenin aimed primarily at the intellect, not at the emotions.
Williams, Albert R. Through the Russian Revolution. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967, p. 32

LENIN TRANSLATES ENGLISH INTO RUSSIAN

When Lenin stepped down, Podvoisky announced, "An American comrade to address you." The crowd pricked up its years and I climbed upon the big car.
"Oh, good. You speak in English," said Lenin. "Allow me to be your interpreter."

“No, I shall speak in Russian,” I answered, prompted by some reckless impulse.
… I wanted to tell them that if a great crisis came I should myself be glad to enlist in the ranks of the Red Army. I paused, fumbling for a word. Lenin looked up and asked, “What word do you want?” “Enlist,” I answered. “V stupit.” He prompted.
Williams, Albert R. Through the Russian Revolution. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967, p. 34

LENIN WAS FIERCE TOWARD HIS ENEMIES IN DEBATE AND ARGUMENTS

Lenin is sincere even with his avowed enemies. An Englishman, commenting on his extraordinary frankness, says his attitude was like this: “Personally, I have nothing against you. Politically, however, you are my enemy and I must use every weapon I can think of for your destruction. Your government does the same against me. Now let us see how far we can go along together.”
Williams, Albert R. Through the Russian Revolution. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967, p. 41

LENIN SHOWERS OPPONENTS WITH INVECTIVE AND INSULTING LABELS

As is well known, Lenin generously showered his opponents in debate with insulting invective and spiteful labels.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin’s Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 344

TROTSKY USES LEFTIST RHETORIC BUT IS ACTUALLY DEFEATIST AND PESSIMISTIC

The bold revolutionary, who always liked to pose as being more resolute than anyone else, is clearly exaggerating the difficulties.
This was always a characteristic of Trotsky. While he seldom missed an opportunity of adopting a revolutionary pose, of “being more revolutionary than anyone else,” very often the pose concealed the profoundest pessimism; concealed the fact that the poseur had no faith in the Russian masses and was preparing to surrender to capitalism.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 45

LENIN IS CLOSEST TO STALIN AND FAVORS HIM OVER TROTSKY

The log of Lenin’s activities during this time (May 25-Oct. 2, 1922) indicates Stalin to have been the most frequent visitor to Gorky, meeting with Lenin 12 times; according to Bukharin, Stalin was the only member of the Central Committee whom Lenin asked to see during the most serious stages of his illness. According to Maria Ulianova, these were very affectionate encounters: “Lenin met [Stalin] in a friendly manner, he joked, laughed, asked that I entertain him, offer him wine, and so on. During this and further visits, they also discussed Trotsky in my presence, and it was apparent that here Lenin sided with Stalin against Trotsky.” Lenin

also frequently communicated with Stalin in writing. His archive contains many notes to Stalin requesting his advice on every conceivable issue, including questions of foreign policy. Worried lest Stalin overwork himself, he asked that the Politburo instruct him to take two days' rest in the country every week. After learning from Lunacharsky that Stalin lived in shabby quarters, he saw to it that something better was found for him. There is no record of similar intimacy between Lenin and any other member of the Politburo.
After obtaining Lenin's consent and then settling matters among themselves, the triumvirate [Stalin, Zinoviev, Kamenev] would present to the Politburo and the Sovnarkom resolutions that these bodies approved as a matter of course. Trotsky either voted with the majority or abstained. By virtue of their collaboration in a Politburo that at the time had only seven members (in addition to them and the absent Lenin, Trotsky, Tomsky, and Bukharin), the troika could have its way on all issues and isolate Trotsky, who had not a single supporter in that body.
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 464-466

Until the end of 1922, Stalin's relations with Lenin were extremely close. From the end of May until the beginning of October in that year, Stalin visited Lenin at Gorky 12 times, more often than any other person. As Lenin's sister Maria wrote to the Presidium of the Combined Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission of July 1926:
"Lenin valued Stalin very highly…. Lenin used to call him out and would give him the most intimate instructions, instructions of the sort one can only give to someone one particularly trusts, someone one knows as a sincere revolutionary, as a close comrade…. In fact, during the entire time of his illness, as long as he had the possibility of seeing his comrades, he most frequently invited Comrade Stalin, and during the most difficult moments of his illness Stalin was the only member of the Central Committee he invited."
This letter was written to bolster Stalin in the savage internecine struggle going on in the leadership, but it nevertheless reflects the reality.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 268

STALIN MERELY FOLLOWED LENIN

All efforts to whiten Lenin and make a saint of him are useless: 50 years of history tell a different story. Stalin did not discover or devise anything new.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 182

Anyone who wished to attack the status quo would have serious difficulty demonstrating that either the leadership personnel or the policies were not those established by Lenin, the barely surviving founder whose image was increasingly revered. Had not Lenin, while still alive, participated in the election of the present Central Committee, Politburo, Secretariat? Had he not inaugurated the New Economic Policy? Had he not established a correspondingly moderate foreign policy, which favored cooperation with reformist socialists in the West and with nationalist revolutionaries in semi-colonial countries, such as China? And had he not shaped the domestic political order, whatever he might say about its 'bureaucratism'? Most particularly, had he not banned 'factions' within the Communist Party?
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 82

LENIN'S SHUT HIMSELF IN LIBRARY TO WRITE MATERIALISM AND EMPIRIO-CRITICISM

For a time Lenin detached himself from day-to-day politics and, to the grave embarrassment of his pupils, shut himself up in the Paris libraries in order to produce his philosophical magnum opus, Materialism and Empirio-criticism, in which he flayed the neo-Kantians, the God-seekers, and all the other questioners of Marxist philosophy.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 106

CLASSICS WERE NOT MEANT TO KNOW ALL & PROVIDE SOLUTIONS TO ALL LATER PROBLEMS

[Report to the 18th Congress on March 10, 1939]
We cannot expect the Marxian classics, separated as they were from our day by a period of 45 or 55 years, to have foreseen each and every zigzag of history in the distant future in every separate country. It would be ridiculous to expect that the Marxian classics should have elaborated for our benefit ready-made solutions for each and every theoretical problem that might arise in any particular country 50 or 100 years afterwards, so that we, the descendants of the Marxian classics, might calmly doze at the fireside and munch ready-made solutions.
Franklin, Bruce, Ed. The Essential Stalin; Major Theoretical Writings. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p. 383

TROTSKY SAYS HE CAME FROM THE UPPER CLASS

This, however, scarcely affected my own position. As the son of a prosperous landowner, I've belonged to the privileged class rather than to the oppressed.
Trotsky, Leon. My Life. Gloucester, Massachusetts: P. Smith, 1970, p. 86

TROTSKY WAS A FANATICAL DOGMATIST WHO REFUSED TO RECANT WHEN WRONG

Another of Trotsky's weak points was his lack of substance as a theoretician and thinker. He was more of a fanatical believer. First he believed in Marxism, then in its interpretation by Lenin. His faith was profound and unshakable. He never manifested doubt or hesitation as to the dogma. He was unable to capitulate except in the face of his Party, which he believed to be the perfect instrument of universal revolution. He never recanted his ideas and believed in them fanatically to the end of his days.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 117

He [Trotsky] rejected Kamenev's promptings with scorn and contempt. He declared that he would do nothing to "ease" his own re-entry into the party and that he would not beg his persecutors to recall him to Moscow. It was up to them to do so if they wished, but even then he would not cease to attack them and the capitulators as well.

This was Trotsky's reply not only to Kamenev's suggestions, but also to Stalin's vague and allusive blandishments. Conciliation between them was out of the question. He responded far more favorably to Bukharin's appeal [to unite against Stalin].
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 447

TROTSKY NEVER UNDERSTOOD PEOPLE

Another Trotsky trait that always surprised me: his astonishing naivete and incomprehension of people. One would think that he'd spent his entire life dwelling on abstractions without ever seeing living people as they really are. In particular he never understood anything of Stalin, although he wrote a long book about him.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 122

HOW ARE STALIN AND TROTSKY DIFFERENT

Trotsky detested Stalin so heartily that he studiously insulted him in public; for instance, in committee meetings he would ostentatiously pick up a newspaper and begin to read to himself whenever Stalin made a speech.
The difference in their characters was, of course, profound. Stalin, a passionate politician, above all a creature of committees; Trotsky, a lone wolf, a violent individualist, who for 20 years could not bear to shackles himself with allegiance to either the Bolshevik or Menshevik divisions in the party. Stalin, patient as an icon; Trotsky, vivacious as a satyr. Stalin, immobile, silent, cautious; Trotsky, a lively, frank, and inveterate conversationalist. Stalin, a bomb-thrower, literally; Trotsky, horrified by sporadic violence. Stalin, a hard-headed practical wire puller, unyieldingly jealous of his career; Trotsky, lover of the abstract, impulsive, vain. Stalin, a supreme organizer; Trotsky, a bad politician, incapable of compromise, very hard to work with. Observe their smiles. Stalin's smiles like a tiger who is just swallowed the canary. Trotsky smiles brightly and spontaneously like a child. Observe their escapes from Siberia, Stalin went about it soberly, efficiently, with methodical coldness; Trotsky–puff!–has disappeared into clear air; he escapes like Ariel.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 525

TROTSKY IS DECEPTIVE, CUNNING, NON-BOLSHEVIK, DIVISIVE AND INDIVIDUALISTIC

The triumvirs were anxious to bring the contest to a speedy conclusion. They replied to Trotsky's letter [a December 8th open letter to party meetings in which he made clear his position] with a deafening barrage of counter-accusations. It was, they said, disloyal on Trotsky's part to vote with the whole of the Politburo for the New Course and then to cast aspersion upon the Politburo's intentions. It was criminal to incite the young against the Old Guard, the repository of revolutionary virtue and tradition. It was wicked of him to try to turn the mass of the party against the machine, for every good old Bolshevik was aware how much importance the party had always attached to its machine and with how much care and devotion it had surrounded it. He equivocated over the ban on factions: he knew that the ban was essential to the party's unity and did not dare to demand plainly that it be revoked; but

he sought to sap it surreptitiously. He played falsely when he described the party regime as bureaucratic; and he played with fire when he aroused an exaggerated and dangerous appetite for democracy in the masses. He pretended to speak for the workers, but played up to the students and the intelligentsia, that is to the petty bourgeois gallery. He spoke about the rights and responsibility of the rank-and-file only to cover up his own irresponsibility, and frustrated dictatorial ambition. His hatred of the party machine, his contumelious attitude towards the Old Guard, his reckless individualism, his disrespect for Bolshevik tradition, yes, and his notorious “underestimation” of the peasantry–all this clearly indicated that at heart he had remained something of a stranger in the party, an alien to Leninism, an unreformed semi-Menshevik.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 125

LUDWIG COMPARES STALIN TO TROTSKY

I never saw Lenin. But I met Trotsky a few years ago on Princes Island, near Stamboul, and I can compare Stalin with him, for it is only recently that I have been conversing with Stalin in the Kremlin…. Except for their energy, they have not a single characteristic in common. Trotsky’s head is remarkable for the brow and the eyes, whereas in the case of Stalin these two are insignificant. This does not mean, however, that Stalin is not a thinker and an observer…. The only thing common to Trotsky and Stalin in their physical appearance is the delicate hands, which seem to be a general characteristic of dictators.
The peculiarities of character which one finds in each of these two are in keeping with the contrast in their physical appearance. As the leading disciples of Lenin, they showed the mini-sidedness of their teacher. Trotsky has the same kind of elan as Lenin, Stalin the same kind of perseverance. Trotsky works from above through speeches and the arousing of mass emotion, whereas Stalin works from below by developing the individual. Trotsky is an enthusiast, Stalin a politician. Trotsky is the strategist, Stalin the tactician. Trotsky inspires the masses, Stalin organizes them. Trotsky is frank and expansive and talkative, Stalin reserved and silent. Trotsky is pleasantly witty, Stalin destructively humorous. In Trotsky everything is quick and brilliant. The Word is his weapon. It is with that that he destroys his opponent. He can speak it and write it in several languages. Over against this brilliant and alert and versatile Trotsky, everything in Stalin is slow and ponderous. He annihilates his opponent with the weight of his carefully gathered material. Trotsky is a prophet, Stalin a father. We might compare Trotsky to a high-powered motor-car that can take all gradients on first speed and will win in almost any speed test. And we may compare Stalin to those tractors that he has introduced into Russia and that turn up the earth in their slow plodding movement, preparing it for the seeds of the new State, silently and inexorably breaking through the hardest soil.
Ludwig, Emil. Leaders of Europe. London: I. Nicholson and Watson Ltd., 1934, p. 358-359

TROTSKY LIED ABOUT STALIN AND UNJUSTLY ACCUSED HIM

Nevertheless, in composing the portrait [of Stalin], he [Trotsky] uses abundantly far too often the material of inference, guess, and hearsay. He picks up any piece of gossip or rumor if only it shows a trait of cruelty or suggests treachery in the young Djugachvili. He gives credence to Stalin’s schoolmates and later enemies who in reminiscences about their

childhood, written in exile thirty or more years after the events, say that the boy Soso “had only a sarcastic sneer for the joys and sorrows of his fellows”: that “compassion for people or for animals was foreign to him”; or that from “his youth the carrying out of vengeful plots became for him the goal that dominated all his efforts.”…
There is no need to go into many examples of this approach. The most striking is, of course, Trotsky’s suggestion, mentioned earlier, that Stalin had poisoned Lenin….
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 452

Yet he never states whether he himself had conceived the suspicion or conviction of Stalin’s guilt already in 1924 or whether he formed it only during the purges, after Yagoda and the Kremlin doctors had been charged with using poison in their murderous intrigues. If he had felt this conviction or suspicion in 1924, why did he never voice it before 1939? Why did he, even after Lenin’s death, describe Stalin as a “brave and sincere revolutionary” to none other than Max Eastman?… Thus he still treats the Stalin of 1924 as a basically honest though short-sighted man, who would have hardly been capable of poisoning Lenin. Such inconsistencies suggest that in charging Stalin with this particular crime, Trotsky is projecting the experience of the great purges back to 1923-24.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 454

Trotsky’s Stalin is implausible to the extent to which he presents the character as being essentially the same in 1936-38 as in 1924, and even in 1904. The monster does not form, grow, and emerge–he is there almost fully-fledged from the outset. Any better qualities and emotions, such as intellectual ambition and a degree of sympathy with the oppressed, without which no young man would ever join a persecuted revolutionary party, are almost totally absent. Stalin’s rise within the party is not due to merit or achievement; and so his career becomes very nearly inexplicable. His election to Lenin’s Politburo, his presence in the Bolshevik inner cabinet, and his appointment to the post of the General Secretary appear quite fortuitous…. Yet even from Trotsky’s disclosures it is evident that Stalin did not at all come to the fore in this way: that he had been, next to Lenin and Trotsky, the most influential man in the party’s inner councils at least since 1918; and that it was not for nothing that Lenin in his will described Stalin as one of the “two most able men of the Central Committee.”
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 455

Trotsky would have us believe that even before Lenin’s first stroke, Stalin had been maneuvering to isolate and replace the grandmaster of Bolshevism. It is a fascinating theory, but there is not a shred of evidence to support it. At the time Lenin was stricken, there was animus between him and Stalin, but of a transitory character.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 201

STALIN SAYS MARX DID NOT TOTALLY DISCOUNT HEROES MAKING HISTORY

…The extreme simplicity which is his distinguishing characteristic would be a matter of course in a man of intelligence if he ran no risk of megalomania. For the cult carried on about him is as ridiculous as that in Rome and Berlin. Hence, when I asked him why he

tolerated the busts and photographs in all the shop windows in contradiction to the Marxian theory that the masses, not individuals, make history, he replied:…
“You are mistaken! Your own theory, namely that individuals make history, stands in Marx’s Poverty of Philosophy. Yet not in the way the imagination conceives, but according to the circumstances into which those men are born. Great men are only valuable in proportion to their grasp of circumstances; otherwise they become Don Quixotes. For that matter, Marx does not contrast men and circumstances; he never denied the role of the hero. So far as I can judge, men certainly make history.”
Ludwig, Emil. Three portraits: Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin. New York Toronto: Longmans, Green and Company, c1940, p. 117-118

STALIN DISPENSED JUSTICE FAR MORE FAIRLY THAN TROTSKY

In Tsaritsyn he dealt cruelly with some of the military specialists: many were dismissed, some imprisoned and then shot. About the same time Trotsky was using similar measures against Bolsheviks at another segment of the front. A local commissar was executed, as were 26 men who had deserted, and he accompanied the executions with an order that in case of mass desertion or unauthorized withdrawals it would be the commissar who would be shot first. What could impress itself on the mind of some of the more primitive Communists was that Stalin was shooting “gentleman” for treason, while Trotsky was killing honest Communists for such a relative trifle as disobeying orders.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 173

LENIN FIGHTS TO CHANGE THE PARTY’S NAME TO COMMUNIST PARTY

All, with the exception of Lenin, decided to retain the title of the Social-Democratic Bolshevik Party. It was more than a year before Lenin’s “professional revolutionaries” consented to describe themselves as Communists.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 79

STALIN DID NOT BLINDLY FOLLOW LENIN

Yet again Dzhughashvili had spoken confidently for Bolshevism without automatically consenting to everything advocated by Lenin. He acknowledged him as his faction’s leader. But his obedience was not blind: Dzhughashvili thought his direct daily experience of the Russian Empire kept him in closer touch with revolutionary possibilities than the emigres.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 63

On 7 November 1939 Stalin said: “The slogan of “the United States of Europe” was mistaken. Lenin caught himself in time and struck that slogan.
Dimitrov, Georgi, The Diary of Georgi Dimitrov, 1933-1949. Ed. Ivo Banac. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 121

STALIN AND LENIN AGREE ON ALMOST EVERY ISSUE

The reason why Lenin chose Stalin was less administrative than political. He wanted one of his allies in a post crucial to the maintenance of his policies.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 190

The matters dividing them[Lenin and Stalin] were not of primary importance despite what was said by Lenin at the time (and despite what has been written by historians ever after). Stalin and Lenin agreed about basic politics. Neither questioned the desirability of the one-party state, its ideological monopoly or its right to use dictatorial and terrorist methods. They concurred on the provisional need for the NEP. They had also reached an implicit agreement that Stalin had an important job in the central party apparatus to block the advance of the Trotskyists and tighten the whole administrative order. Lenin had trusted him with such tasks. Stalin had also been the comrade in whom he had confided when he wanted to commit suicide. Whenever toughness was needed, Lenin had turned to him. Not once had there been a question of basic principle dividing them, and they had worked well together since the trade union dispute. Lenin had been behaving bizarrely in the summer of 1922 before he fell out with Stalin. But it was Stalin who had to deal with him. His difficulties with Lenin would have tested the patience of a saint….
Their quarrels about Georgia and about the state monopoly of foreign trade touched matters of secondary importance.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 195

LENIN COMPLIMENTS STALIN AS A SPLENDID GEORGIAN

We have a splendid Georgian staying with us here who is writing a long article for Prosveshcheniye [Enlightenment], after garnering all the Austrian and other material. We will bear down on it." The reference was to Stalin. Gorky, long connected with the party, knew all its leading cadres well. But Stalin evidently was utterly unknown to him, since Lenin had to resort to such an impersonal, although flattering expression as "a splendid Georgian." This is, by the way, the only occasion when Lenin characterized a prominent Russian revolutionist by the token of his nationality.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 154

TROTSKY SAYS STALIN IS HIS ENEMY

Stalin is my enemy.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 372

TESTAMENT DOES NOT DENOUNCE STALIN ON IDEOLOGY

It was at this period, however, that Lenin drafted his famous "Testament," which undoubtedly reflects his forebodings with regard to Stalin's brusqueness but says not one word in criticism of his policy…. Nor did Stalin challenge him on his return to activity in the latter part of the year. On the contrary, it appeared they were in complete accord….
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 146

There is no criticism in a [A OR THE] document–Lenin's testament–of Stalin's policy, but only this delineation of personal qualities,
That Stalin deeply felt Lenin's personal criticism is certain. For more than 20 years Lenin had been his teacher and he a faithful disciple. But he could "take it." He has many of the qualities of the master. He is no yes-man. He has deep convictions, tremendous will-power and determination, and–could Lenin have lived long enough to see it–a patience which at times seems inexhaustible.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 151

…although subsequent events proved that he [Lenin] had over-estimated Trotsky and underestimated his "wonderful Georgian."
When he [Stalin] read it [Lenin's Testament] to the 13th Congress of the Party and commented, "Yes, I [Stalin] am rude to those who would destroy Lenin's party, etc..," he shifted the issue from one of good manners to the larger battle — ground of the principles, aims and role of the Party as the leader of the Revolution.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 154

There began already at that time, though not openly, the struggle between Trotsky and Zinoviev for the succession to Lenin. But there was discussion also as to what was going on at Lenin's house at Gorky, in other words about Stalin. Thus it was almost a sensation when Kamenev brought the news that Lenin had broken with Stalin, and had written to Stalin dismissing him. Before long, however, the sensation shrank to its true proportions. It turned out that the actual personal difference had nothing to do with politics: Lenin had charged Stalin with rudeness and tactlessness toward his wife Krupskaya. It is easy to imagine that. It appears that Stalin never had any great opinion of Lenin's wife.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 106

Lenin's "testament" is, of course, favorable for the most part to Stalin; compared with the assessments given the others, the one of Stalin was the most positive…. But Lenin had for the entire preceding period given many descriptions of Trotsky, and they were entirely negative….
Stalin was, of course, distinguished by rudeness. He was a very blunt person. But if not for his harshness I don't know how much good would have been accomplished. I think harshness was necessary, otherwise there would have been even greater vacillation and irresolution.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 213

This addendum to Lenin's testament was read after his death to a plenary meeting of the Central Committee.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 108

Khrushchev's treatment of the relations between Stalin and Lenin concentrates on Lenin's growing apprehension of Stalin's bureaucratic methods in 1923. He omits Lenin's earlier admiration for Stalin and his forwarding of Stalin's career in the Party dating back at least to 1912. Nor does he note that Lenin's later attacks on Stalin were made when Lenin was ill and cut off from Party activity, and that even then, in his "testament," he considered Stalin to be one of the outstanding Party leaders, his faults not those of "non-Bolshevism"–as with Trotsky–but of an over-bureaucratic method of work and personal "rudeness." The fact that

people who had “worked with Lenin” were executed means little unless we know who the people were and why they were executed. The fact that people worked with Lenin does not mean they were pro-socialist, as witness Kamenev & Zinoviev, both of whom Lenin condemned in his “testament.”
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 124

[In the Testament] neither his [Stalin] orthodoxy as a party man nor his loyalty to Lenin were called to question.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 90

Another strange thing: of all those mentioned in the letter Stalin appears in the most favorable light. He is the one Lenin accuses of rudeness and intolerance, but that was never regarded as a fault in the proletarian party.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 208

TROTSKY DENIES THERE IS A TESTAMENT

Footnote: Trotsky himself at first admitted that Lenin had left no Testament or Will. In a letter to the New York Daily Worker on August 8, 1925, Trotsky wrote: “As for the “will’, Lenin never left one, and the very nature of his relations with the Party as well as the nature of the Party itself made such a “will’ absolutely impossible.
“In the guise of a “will’ the emigre and foreign bourgeois and Menshevik press have all along been quoting one of Lenin’s letters (completely mutilated) which contains a number of advices on questions of organization.
“All talk about a secreted or infringed “will’ is so much mischievous invention directed against the real will of Lenin and of the interests of the Party created by him.”
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 200

…[at the October 1927 combined meeting of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission] he [Stalin] exploited the fact that, at the Politburo’s (and above all his own) insistence, Bolshevik of September 1925 had published a statement by Trotsky concerning the Testament. Giving into pressure from Stalin on that occasion, Trotsky had written:
“Since becoming ill, Vladimir Ilyich had frequently written proposals, letters, etc. to the party’s leading bodies and its congresses. All these letters etc. were naturally always delivered to their intended destinations, and were brought to the attention of the delegates to the 12th and 13th Congresses and always, naturally, had the appropriate influence on party decisions…. Vladimir Ilyich left no testament, and the very nature of his relations with the party, as well as the nature of the party itself, exclude the possibility of any such testament, so that any talk about concealing or not carrying out a testament is a malicious invention and is aimed in fact entirely against Vladimir Ilyich’s intention.”
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 138

Citing the article in Bolshevik Stalin went straight for his target:
“That was written by Trotsky and by no one else. What basis can Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev now have for wagging their tongues and claiming that the party and its Central Committee are ‘concealing’ Lenin’s testament?…
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 139

It was only after they have been beaten, in the spring 1926, that Zinoviev and Kamenev at last threw in their lot with Trotsky. Meanwhile, Trotsky, too, had further weakened his position by renouncing his supporters abroad, who had published Lenin's testament. He even went so far– and all in the name of discipline–as to describe the document as apocryphal. The union of the two oppositions represented therefore little more than the joint wreckage of their former separate selves.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 307

It was ironically enough Trotsky who had publicly denied the existence of Lenin's Testament.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 115

The will afforded little political or moral advantage to Trotsky. It was his moment to strike at Stalin but either he was paralyzed by Lenin's words or he simply lacked the pluck. The will was waste paper as far as he was concerned, and he did not object to the proposal that its existence should be hidden from the Party as a whole and from the Russian people. When its contents were divulged onl hearsay by the emigre Press in Paris and Berlin Trotsky authoritatively denied that there had been such a document. In his autobiography Trotsky now gives his version of the will. The essence of it according to Trotsky was that Stalin be removed in order to avoid a split in the party. If so, why did he not press for it?
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 92

TROTSKY HAD TIME TO GET TO LENIN'S FUNERAL

When Lenin died, Trotsky was in Tiflis. He was at once informed by wire from Stalin. He had a week to get back to Moscow for the funeral and was not too ill to do so. Instead he went to Sukhumi on the Black Sea coast. His absence at the last rites was the first of a long series of political blunders.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 199

Whatever may have been his reasons, Trotsky's failure to pay his last tribute to the dead leader horrified the people of Moscow as a want of respect and good taste. It was, moreover a political error of the first magnitude and dealt a fatal blow to Trotsky's prestige…. To this day I cannot imagine why he did not come.
Duranty, Walter. I Write as I Please. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1935, p. 225

Such a combination of personal callousness and political insensitiveness does more to explain Trotsky's downfall than a hundred books by Stalin's warmest supporters. From that time onwards, although he had many devoted adherents in the Party, he had irretrievably "lost face" with the mass of the Russian people.
Duranty, Walter. I Write as I Please. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1935, p. 228

It is clear from his own account that it was not the state of his health which prevented Trotsky from taking part in Lenin's funeral.
Duranty, Walter. I Write as I Please. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1935, p. 229

One only of the highest party leaders was not there–Trotsky, President of the War Council and Minister of War. He was in the Caucasus.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 97

The body was laid in state in the Kremlin, while members of the Bolshevik Central Committee took turns to watch over the remains of the revered leader…. among the symbolic figures standing silently by the bier, Stalin was prominent, but Trotsky was never seen. In his later efforts to justify this amazing stupidity, Trotsky took refuge behind the fact that he was ill at the time and only received the news of Lenin's death while traveling to the Caucasian Riviera for a holiday, a fact which would certainly not have prevented Stalin from taking his place by the body.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 61

The absence of Trotsky was the absorbing question in that week of strain and sorrow to everyone in Moscow, whether Russian or foreign. It was a period of intense popular emotion and we all knew that to 9/10's of the Russian masses Trotsky was second only to Lenin in popular esteem. He was said to be sick and traveling to a cure in the Caucasus, but nothing could condone his absence save the fact that he was so near death that it would have been fatal for him to make the return journey, which was not the case. Whatever may have been his reasons, Trotsky's failure to pay his last tribute to the dead leader horrified the people of Moscow as a want of respect and good taste. It was, moreover, a political error of the first magnitude and dealt a fatal blow to Trotsky's prestige, which his adversaries were quick to see and turn to good account. To this day I cannot imagine why he did not come. The night after the funeral I discussed the problem with my friend Rollin, the only French correspondent in Moscow at that time….
Rollin agreed with me that Trotsky's absence was inexplicable. "From all I can learn," he said, "Trotsky is not even dangerously ill, although I won't accept the view that his illness is wholly, or mainly, diplomatic." He paused and rubbed his high, broad forehead. "Yes," he said, "it's extraordinary–worse than any surrender. How pleased Stalin must be!"
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 99

Rollin continues, "As a matter of personal respect to Lenin, Trotsky should have risen from his death-bed to be present; it was his duty and obligation, and there isn't a man or woman in the whole country who doesn't think so. It is a blunder that will cost him dearly. Think too of what he missed; if he had come to Moscow, he couldn't have failed to be the central figure in the funeral ceremonies. No one would have dared to interfere with him; he would have stolen the show, as you say in America, whether Stalin and the others liked it or not. But he did not come. Henceforth, I tell you, my money is on Stalin."
"So his mine," I said, "but it was already."
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 100

Trotsky's own explanation in his autobiography of his absence from Lenin's funeral is thin and unconvincing, and does small credit either to his heart or head. He declares that a coded message from Stalin announcing Lenin's death was delivered to him in his private car at the station in Tiflis on January 21st, that is to say a few hours after Lenin died. He continues, "I got the Kremlin on the direct wire. In answer to my inquiry I was told: 'The funeral will be on Saturday; you cannot get back in time and so we advise you to continue your treatment.' Accordingly, I had no choice. As a matter of fact, the funeral did not take

place until Sunday and I could easily have reached Moscow by then. Incredible as it may appear, I was even deceived about the date of the funeral."
This final accusation was as unjust as it was ungenerous. Lenin died on the afternoon of Monday, January 21st, and his funeral was originally set for Saturday, the 26, but the number of people who wished to see him was so great–thousands came from places more distant than Tiflis–that it was postponed 24 hours. The journey from Moscow to Tiflis by ordinary express takes three days and three nights–allow four or even five days and nights in 1924 in winter-time. Trotsky's private car was in the station when he received the news on Monday night. Tiflis is one of the biggest railroad depots in south Russia and there is not the slightest doubt that the Red war-lord, whose authority was still unquestioned, could have ordered a special chain and been back in Moscow within 72 hours. Trotsky's account continues theatrically, "The Tiflis comrades came to demand that I should write on Lenin's death at once. But I knew only one urgent desire–and that was to be alone. I could not stretch my hand to lift the pen." He then adds that he wrote a "few handwritten pages." Strangest of all, there is no word in Trotsky's recital of any surmise on his part, much less compunction, as to what people in Moscow might feel about his failure to return immediately. Any thought of the duty he owed to his dead comrade seems to have been as remote from his mind as perception of the political effects of his absence. Instead he writes of spending those days before the funeral lying on a balcony in the sun at Sukhumi, a twenty-four hour train journey from Tiflis which apparently caused him no physical distress–facing the glittering sea and the huge palms–and of his own "sensation of running a temperature" with which mingled, he says, thoughts of Lenin's death. To make the picture complete Trotsky quotes a passage from his wife's diary: "We arrived quite broken down; it was the first time we had seen Sukhumi. The mimosa were in full bloom, magnificent palms, camellias. In the dining room of the rest-house there were two portraits on the wall, one–draped in black–of Vladimir Ilich, the other of L. D. (Trotsky). We felt like taking the latter one down but thought it would be too demonstrative." Later Madame Trotsky wrote: "Our friends were expecting L. D. to come to Moscow and thought he would cut short his trip in order to return, since no one imagined that Stalin's telegram had cut off his return." (This refers to the [alleged] message from the Kremlin saying that the funeral would be on Saturday and that Trotsky could not get back in time.) "I remember my son's letter received at Sukhumi. He was terribly shocked by Lenin's death and, though suffering from a cold with a temperature of 104, he went in his not very warm coat to the Hall of Columns to pay his last respects and waited, waited, and waited with impatience for our arrival. One could feel in his letter his bitter bewilderment and diffident reproach." On these extracts from his wife's diary Trotsky makes no comment at all.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 100

Such a combination of personal callousness and political insensitiveness does more to explain Trotsky's downfall than 100 books by Stalin's warmest supporters…. From that time onwards, although he had many devoted adherents in the Party, he had irretrievably "lost face" with the mass of the Russian people. His adversaries in Russia have not failed to question the genuineness of his illness at that time; they have claimed that it was sickness of spirit rather than sickness of body, that Trotsky had made an ambitious bid for Lenin's succession and when he failed his wounded egotism turned on itself like a scorpion and poisoned him…. It is clear from his own account that it was not the state of his health which prevented him from taking part in Lenin's funeral.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 102

The most decisive of such shifts in personnel was the replacement of Slansky, Trotsky's right-hand man in the Commissariat of War, by Frunze, who later succeeded Trotsky as Commissar of War. This and other similar changes were approved by the Thirteenth Party Congress, in May, 1924, which Trotsky inexplicably failed to attend–a political blunder scarcely less disastrous than his failure to attend Lenin's funeral.
The truth of the matter was that Trotsky was prostrate and broken, not by defeat at the Conference or, as he himself suggests, by illness, but by the sickening realization of what his absence from the funeral had done to him and his career…. I have already suggested that the cause of his illness was psychological as well as physical. In what torment he must have writhed when letter after letter, friend after friend, told him, albeit unwillingly, the plain and sorry truth. At first, I have been informed, he refused to believe that his tremendous popularity had not only faded but was changed in no small degree to resentment. Gradually, despite himself, he was forced to understand that this was the case, and, worse still, that he had missed the heaven-sent opportunity of confirming in the mind of the masses the position that he claimed of Lenin's right hand and destined successor.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 108

On the day of Lenin's death, Trotsky arrived in Tiflis en route to the resort city of Sukhumi. He learned of it the next day from a coded telegram signed by Stalin. In response to a cable query, Stalin advised him that the funeral would take place on Saturday (Jan. 26) and added that since there was not enough time for him to return for the funeral, the Politburo thought it best that he proceed to Sukhumi as planned. As it turned out, the funeral took place on Sunday. Trotsky subsequently accused Stalin of deliberately misinforming him in order to have him miss the funeral. The charge does not stand up to scrutiny. Lenin died on Monday and Trotsky had the information on Tuesday morning. It had taken him three days to travel from Moscow to Tiflis. Had he immediately turned around, he could have reached Moscow by Friday at the latest, in good time to attend the funeral even if it had been on Saturday. Instead, for reasons he never satisfactorily explained, he followed Stalin's advice and went on to Sukhumi. There he basked in the Black Sea sun while Lenin's body lay in state in wintry Moscow attended by the Old Guard. His absence caused widespread surprise and dismay.
[Footnote]: The decision to postpone Lenin's funeral to Sunday was announced only on Friday, Jan. 25, so that it is by no means apparent that in cabling on Jan. 22 that it would take place on Saturday, Stalin was deliberately deceiving him, as Trotsky later claimed. Deutscher, in a not uncharacteristic instance of carelessness favorable to his hero, claims that Stalin advised Trotsky the funeral would be "the next day". Stalin's second cable stated that the funeral would be on Saturday, i.e., not the "next" day but in four days.
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 487

In any case, his [Trotsky] subsequent explanation that he was misled by Stalin as to the date of the funeral and that he could not possibly make it back to Moscow on time does not hold water….
[Footnote]: He [Trotsky] alleges being told on January 22 that it would be on January 26 (and not, as Deutscher states, on the next day), while it actually took place on January 27. Even so, only three days by regular train separated Tiflis from Moscow.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 235

At 6:50 p.m. on Monday 21 January 1924, Lenin died.

Stalin notified all regional and republican Party committees of Lenin's death, and called for immediate steps to maintain order and prevent panic. Among his numerous other chores, Stalin sent a coded cable to Tiflis: "Tell Comrade Trotsky that on 21 January at 6:50 p.m. Comrade Lenin died suddenly. Death was caused by paralysis of the respiratory center. Funeral Saturday 26 January 1924."
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 435-436

There is no persuasive evidence that Stalin was busy plotting to keep Trotsky, away from the funeral. In his autobiography, Trotsky says that he wired 'the Kremlin' and that 'the conspirators' falsely told him that the funeral would be on the 26th, which would not permit Trotsky to return in time from his sick-leave in Georgia. No substantiating documents have turned up in Trotsky's archive, although one might expect that he would have taken some pains to preserve such a communication. Even if true, the report does not mention Stalin by name, and tends to inculcate other comrades. Stalin's office was not in the Kremlin at this time, and if Trotsky had contacted Lenin's office, the office of the Sovnarkom, which was in the Kremlin, he would not have been dealing with Stalin. In any case, it was a remarkable political error on Trotsky's part not to make every effort to get the date of the funeral changed or to attempt to get back to Moscow. After all, the narkom of the armed forces could commandeer special trains or even aircraft.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 86

STALIN VOLUNTEERS TO RESIGN AFTER LENIN'S CRITICISM

So young Joseph — Soso, they called him….
Lenin criticized Stalin. Stalin told this himself three years ago in open Congress of the Communist Party, and said quietly: "I told you then and I repeated now, that I am ready to retire if you wish."
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 168

When Stalin came to speak [before the Central Committee in October 1927] he declared that he had twice offered his resignation as General Secretary, but that the Party had rejected it on both occasions.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 96

When Lenin's testament became public property through having been spread furtively by word-of-mouth, Stalin submitted his resignation,…
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 95

For nearly a year while he lived Lenin did nothing with his statement and it was only after his death that it was presented to the Party. When it was presented, Stalin offered his resignation but the Party, including Trotsky, would not accept it.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 25

Stalin consequently offered to resign but the Central Committee refused to accept his resignation.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 49

It must have come as a relief for him [Stalin] when it was decided that the Congress would be bypassed and the notes would not be published. Nevertheless, when the newly elected Central Committee met, he offered his resignation. He was probably confident that those he had carefully selected for election would not accept it. In any event the committee, including Trotsky, voted unanimously not to accept his resignation.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 197

Right from the first session of the Central Committee, after the 13th Congress, I asked to be released from the obligations of the General Secretaryship. The Congress itself examined the question. Each delegation examined the question, and every delegation, including Trotsky, Kamenev and Zinoviev, voted unanimously in favor of Stalin remaining at his post. What could I do then? Abandon my post? Such a thing is not in my character…. At the end of one year I again asked to be set free and I was again forced to remain at my post. What could I do then?
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 244

[In 1927 Stalin stated], I asked the first plenary session of the Central Committee right after the Thirteenth Congress to relieve me of my duties as secretary-general. The congress discussed the question. Each delegation discussed the question. And unanimously they all, including Trotsky, Kamenev, and Zinoviev, made it binding upon Stalin to remain in his post. What could I do? Run away from the post? This is not in my character. I never ran away from any post and I have no right to run away. That would be desertion. I do not regard myself as a free man, and I obey party orders. A year later I again submitted my resignation, but again I was bound to remain. What could I do?
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 281

It is said that in that "will" Comrade Lenin suggested to the congress that in view of Stalin's "rudeness" it should consider the question of putting another comrade in Stalin's place as General Secretary. That is quite true. Yes, comrades, I am rude to those who grossly and perfidiously wreck and split the Party. I have never concealed this and do not conceal it now. Perhaps some mildness is needed in the treatment of splitters, but I am a bad hand at that. At the very first meeting of the plenum of the Central Committee after the 13th Congress I asked the plenum of the Central Committee to release me from my duties as General Secretary. The congress itself discussed this question. It was discussed by each delegation separately, and all the delegations unanimously, including Trotsky, Kamenev and Zinoviev, obliged Stalin to remain at his post.
What could I do? Desert my post? That is not in my nature; I have never deserted any post, and I have no right to do so, for that would be desertion. As I have already said before, I am not a free agent, and when the Party imposes an obligation upon me, I must obey.
A year later I again put in a request to the plenum to release me, but I was again obliged to remain at my post.
What else could I do?
As regards publishing the "will," the congress decided not to publish it, since it was addressed to the congress and was not intended for publication….
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 10, p. 180-181

After the congress [May 1924], when the leading bodies of the party were being constituted, Stalin, referring to Lenin's testament, demonstratively declined to accept the post of general secretary. But Zinoviev and Kamenev, and after them the majority of the central committee members, persuaded him to withdraw his resignation….
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 85

The United Opposition suffered total organizational and ideological defeat at the 15th Party Congress. At the very first Central Committee plenum after that Congress, Stalin offered to resign as general secretary…. Addressing the Central Committee, he said:
"I think that until recently there were circumstances that put the party in the position of needing me in this post as a person who was fairly rough in his dealings, to constitute a certain antidote to the opposition…. Now the opposition has not only been smashed; it has been expelled from the party. And still we have the recommendation of Lenin, which in my opinion ought to be put into effect. Therefore I ask the plenum to relieve me of the post of general secretary. I assure you, comrades, that from this the party only stands to gain."
At Stalin's insistence this proposal was put to a vote. His resignation was rejected virtually unanimously (with one abstention).
The noisy battle with the United Left Opposition had barely died down when a fight began with the so-called right deviation.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 183

When Stalin heard about Lenin's letter, he announced his resignation. Had it been accepted, things might well have been different. He had made the right decision, as any Bolshevik in his position ought to have done, but it was not a determined act. As a matter of fact, he twice offered his resignation in the 1920s. The second time, after the 15th Congress in December 1927, he behaved more categorically. The Trotskyite-Zinovievite Opposition had been defeated and the Congress noted this formally. At the first plenum after the congress, Stalin submitted a request to the Central Committee:
"I think recent circumstances have forced the party to have me in this post, as someone severe enough to provide the antidote to the opposition. Now the opposition has been defeated and expelled from the party. We have Lenin's instructions moreover and I think it is now time to carry them out. I therefore request the plenum to release me from the post of General Secretary. I assure you, comrades, the party can only gain from this."
By this time, however, his authority had risen and he was seen in the party as the man who had fought for its unity and who had come out against various factionalists. His resignation was again rejected.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 93

Lenin's Letter disappeared from the party's view for decades. It was not published in Leninskii sbornik ('Lenin Miscellany'), despite Stalin's promise to do so. To be sure, the Letter did surface a few times in the 1920s in connection with the internal party struggle. It was even published in Bulletin No. 30 of the 15th Party Congress (printrun 10,000), stamped 'for party members only', and was distributed to provincial committees, Communist factions of the trade unions central committee, and part of it was printed in Pravda on November 2, 1927.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 96

The Committee decided that the Testament should not be read to the Congress (nor be published), and it was merely read to closed meetings of delegations from each province, with the comments of the Committee to the effect that Lenin had been ill and Stalin had proved satisfactory. Stalin submitted his resignation as General Secretary, which was unanimously rejected.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 111

The 13th Congress of the Party took place in June, 1924 and shortly afterwards at a plenary session of the Central Committee; Stalin begged to be relieved of his duties. Trotsky, Kamenev, and Zinoviev and all the delegates of the local parties asked him to remain. Thus he remained by the will of the Party. Next year Stalin repeated this gesture, knowing full well that he would not be taken at his word.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 93

On the basis of Lenin's testament he [Stalin] handed in his resignation but was again elected as head of the Party….
Ludwig, Emil. Leaders of Europe. London: I. Nicholson and Watson Ltd., 1934, p. 365

At the first Central Committee plenum after the 15th Congress, evidently in order to free his hands for the next stage of the struggle, Stalin unexpectedly asked to be relieved of his duties in the Party leadership:
"I believe that until recently there were conditions confronting the party which made it necessary for me to be in this post [i.e., that of general secretary]–a man who tended to be rather blunt as a kind of anecdote to the Opposition. But now these conditions have disappeared…. Now the Opposition has not only been defeated but also expelled from the Party. And we do have the instructions of Lenin, which in my view must be put into effect. Therefore I ask the Plenum to relieve me of the post of general secretary, I assure you, comrades, the Party will only gain."
At Stalin's insistence this proposal was put to a vote, and it was rejected unanimously (with one abstention).
Medvedev, Roy. On Stalin and Stalinism. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 59

At the First Central Committee Plenum after the 15th Congress Stalin offered to resign as general secretary. Addressing the joint meeting, he said:
"I think that until recently there were circumstances that put the party in the position of needing me in this post as a person who was fairly rough in his dealings, to constitute a certain antidote to the opposition…. Now the opposition has not only been smashed, it has been expelled from the party. And still we have the recommendation of Lenin, which in my opinion ought to be put into effect. Therefore I ask the Plenum to relieve me of the post of general secretary. I assure you, comrades, that from this the party only stands to gain."
Stalin insisted that his proposal should be put to the Plenum. As he well knew it would be, his resignation was rejected by a vote that was unanimous except for one abstention. At a single blow, Stalin had buried Lenin's Testament and secured an overwhelming vote of confidence to justify any measures he might now take.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 205

Following the 1924 13th Congress, Stalin offered his resignation to the Central Committee. But it was almost a foregone conclusion that it would be rejected. For Zinoviev and

Kamenev, Stalin was still an indispensable ally: Who would keep Trotsky and the Oppositionists in check? Trotsky did not want Stalin out since the job might go to a follower of Zinoviev-Kamenev. Other members kept their peace. And so Stalin was confirmed.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; the Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 239

[At the 13th Congress in May 1924] Stalin nonchalantly offered to resign his post in conformity with the testament.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 237

His health, too, was poor. Feeling humiliated, Stalin followed his usual course: he requested release from his duties. In a letter to the Central Committee on 19 Aug 1924 he pleaded that "honorable and sincere" work with Zinoviev and Kamenev was no longer possible. What he needed, he claimed, was a period of convalescence. But he also asked the Central committee to remove his name from the Politburo, Orgbureau, and Secretariat:…
"When the time [of convalescence] is at an end, I ask to be assigned either Turukhansk or Yakutsk Province or somewhere abroad in some unobtrusive posting….
He would be going back to Turukhansk as an ordinary provincial militant and not as the Central Committee leader he had been in 1913. Stalin was requesting a more severe demotion than even the Testament had specified.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 223-224

After all that had taken place during the preceding months, the Testament could not have been a surprise to Stalin. Nevertheless he took it as a cruel blow.
Trotsky, Leon. Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 375

TROTSKY COULD NOT FACE HIS DROP IN POPULARITY FOLLOWING LENIN'S FUNERAL

The truth of the matter was that Trotsky was prostrate and broken, not by "the smashing defeat" or even, as he himself suggests, by illness, but by the sickening realization of what his absence from Lenin's funeral had done to him and his career. They say that Hell is paved with good intentions, but the white-hot plowshares of opportunities missed and advantages lost make cruel treading for ambitious feet. Trotsky lay on his balcony in Sukhumi facing the sun and the sea…reading letters or receiving friends. Little comfort either brought him and no good medicine for distress of soul. I have already suggested that the cause of his illness was psychological as well as physical. In what torment Trotsky must have writhed when letter after letter, friend after friend, told him, albeit unwittingly, the plain and sorry truth. At first, I have been informed, he refused to believe that his tremendous popularity had not only faded but was changed in no small degree to resentment….
Duranty, Walter. I Write as I Please. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1935, p. 231-232

LENIN HATED POMP BUT AFTER HIS DEATH BECAME A CENTER OF SHOW

After his death Lenin, who had hated and ridiculed all ceremony, all pomp, all showmanship, , himself became the center of a display of Byzantinism.

Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 98

WHAT DOES THE TESTAMENT SAY

In the last few weeks of 1922, Lenin completed the letter to the party which is now generally known as the “Testament of Lenin.” The name conveys a wrong impression, it was in no sense a Will, for Lenin never regarded his position as something to be bequeathed to another, he knew that he occupied the President’s chair because of his abilities alone; it was his dearest wish that his successor should do likewise.
How wrong he was, how tragically optimistic, can be clearly seen from the fate of the Testament itself. The party leaders, each one of whom knew its contents, first decided not to publish it while its author was alive and later postponed publication indefinitely. Trotsky, who was later to make much of the “Testament,” concurred in this decision which was broken finally by accident. A copy had been received by a visitor to the USSR, the American left-wing journalist, Max Eastman, who promptly gave it worldwide publicity in the Press of the United States. Sad reflection that the last words of so great a leader should reach the Russian people from a back-stage newspapers scoop in New York.
In the testament, Lenin gave a brief characterization of the leading figures of the Party. Trotsky, brilliant but too diverse in his interests; Zinoviev and Kamenev, indecisive and untrustworthy in a crisis; Bukharin, clever but not a confirmed Marxist; Stalin also received his share of criticism as being “too rude” to fill the office of General Secretary to everybody’s satisfaction. In spite of this, Lenin’s rebuke to Stalin is the least severe of all; the faults of the others lay in fundamental weaknesses, Stalin was simply too brusque to smooth over the trivial personal frictions of his subordinates.
Stalin himself as always regarded Lenin’s reference to him as more of a compliment than otherwise. In an address to a later congress he repeated the words, adding: “Yes, comrades, I am rude to those who seek to weaken the Party by their activities and I shall continue to be rude to such people.”
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 60

I am rude towards those who traitorously break their word, who split and destroy the Party. I have never concealed it and I do not conceal it now.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 244

[In 1927 Stalin stated], “Yes, comrades, I am rude towards those who rudely and treacherously wreck and split our party,” Stalin continued. “I did not and do not conceal it.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 281

When Comrade Molotov sent me that article (I was away at the time), I sent back a blunt and sharp criticism. Yes, comrades, I am straight-forward and blunt; that’s true, I don’t deny it.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 7, p. 385

Krupskaya handed Stalin a sealed envelope which bore the inscription in her husband’s writing “To be opened after my death.” Stalin guessed the envelope contained important instructions and called a meeting of the Politburo. He took advantage of Zinoviev’s suggestion that the letter should be opened immediately. This was done.

Lenin's notes were not flattering to the majority of the Soviet leaders. Mekhlis, who was present and saw the Testament, has recorded the following:
"Zinoviev and Kamenev were described as 'hole and corner politicians,' Bukharin was 'scholastic, not a Marxist, weak in dialectic, bookish and lacking in realism but sympathetic,' Pyatakov was 'a good administrator, but, like Bukharin, not fit for political leadership.' Trotsky was 'not a Bolshevik but this fact must not be held against him, just as one must not blame Zinoviev and Kamenev for their attitude in October, 1917.' As for Stalin, the Old Man found no political fault in him. But–and his judgment must have been to some extent inspired by his retort to Krupskaya–'he is inordinately coarse and brutal, and also capable of taking advantage of his power to settle personal disputes.'
Fishman and Hutton. The Private Life of Josif Stalin. London: W. H. Allen, 1962, p. 56

Zinoviev, who felt himself especially maligned, declared: "These notes have no political value. They must be put in the archives. That's all they're fit for."
Because Lenin had criticized almost every single member of the Politburo, they all supported the suggestion.
Fishman and Hutton. The Private Life of Josif Stalin. London: W. H. Allen, 1962, p. 57

In his [Lenin] testament he made no choice of a successor but instead offended each of the leaders in turn.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 88

"Friendship," he [Stalin] said, "counts for nothing when the Party and its interests are at stake. I am extremely fond of Sylvester, and I am ready to offer him my personal apologies. But whenever he adopts an attitude that is contrary to the interests of the Party I shall oppose him with the same violence, the same energy. The absolute refusal to compromise is the most effective weapon in the revolutionary conflict. People may say that I'm rude and offensive; it's all one to me. I shall continue to fight all those who threaten to destroy the Party."
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 36

His Testament, written several days later, was patently an effort to offer his own frank opinion of the various candidates rather than to dictate his decision.
Trotsky, Leon. Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 357

TROTSKY REFUTES THE TESTAMENT

APPENDIX

Trotsky's Letter
(Translated by the U.S. Editor from Bolshevik)
1925, no. 16:67-70

In a 1925 letter regarding Lenin's testament Trotsky said, "Eastman proceeds to conclusions that are completely and utterly directed against our party and capable, if taken on faith, of discrediting the party and Soviet power.

…Where Eastman got his ridiculous information is completely unknown, but its absurdity strikes one immediately…. By the way, Eastman seems not to realize that his description of the Red Army also nourishes the completely rotten Menshevik legend about Bonapartism, praetorianism, and so on, for it is clear that an Army capable of "falling to pieces' because of a change in individual leadership would not be a Communist or a proletarian army, but rather a Bonapartist and praetorian one.
Clearly erroneous and false assertions can be found in this book in no small number. We will discuss only the most important.
In several places in his book, Eastman says that the Central Committee "hid' from the party a number of highly important documents that Lenin wrote in the last period of his life (letters on the national question, the so-called testament, and so forth); this cannot be termed anything other than a slander of the Central Committee of our party.
…After the onset of his illness, Vladimir Ilich turned more than once to the leading institutions of the party as well as to the Party Congress with proposals, letters, and so on. It goes without saying that all these letters and proposals came to the attention of the addressees and to the knowledge of the delegates of the 13th Party Congress…. Vladimir ilich did not leave any "testament,' and the character of his relation to the party, not to mention the character of the party itself, excludes the possibility of such a "testament….' The 13th Congress gave this letter, like all the others, it's close attention and drew the conclusions appropriate to the circumstances of the moment. Any talk of a hidden or violated "testament' is a spiteful invention aimed against the real will of Vladimir ilich and the interest of the party he created.
Just as false is Eastman's assertion that the Central Committee wanted to keep under wraps (that is, not publish) Lenin's article about the Worker-Peasant Inspection…. Since Comrade Kuibyshev also signed this letter…another of Eastman's false assertions is also refuted: the allegation that Comrade Kuibyshev was appointed to head the Worker-Peasant Inspection as an "opponent' of Lenin's organizational plan."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 244

STALIN REPLIES TO THE TESTAMENT

Stalin knew that Lenin's last words against him were being repeated throughout the country. Instead of repressing them, he was clever enough to repeat them with his own coloring. He said to the Congress:
"Yes, comrades, it is true that I am a gruff sort of fellow. I do not deny it….
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 99

But in 1927 the question [of the last testament] was raised in the Central Committee. It had to be admitted that such a document really existed. In a speech at a joint plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission, after reading aloud a section of Lenin's "Letter to the Congress," Stalin stated: "Yes, I am rude, comrades, toward those who are rudely and treacherously trying to destroy the party. I have not and I do not hide this."
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 86

Stalin stated, "It is said that in his testament Lenin suggested that, in view of Stalin's 'rudeness', the Congress should consider replacing him as General Secretary with someone

else. That is absolutely true. Yes, comrades, I am rude towards those who rudely and treacherously destroy and split the party. I have never hidden this, nor do I now. Maybe a certain gentleness is required towards the splitters. But it is not in me to be like that. At the very first session of the Central Committee plenum following the 13th Congress, I asked the plenum to release me from the duties of General Secretary. The congress itself had debated this question. All the delegates including Trotsky, Kamenev, and Zinoviev, unanimously obliged Stalin to remain at his post. What was I supposed to do? Run away from the job? That is not in my nature. I have never run away from a job, nor did I have the right to do so, as it would have amounted to desertion. A year later, I again asked the plenum to release me, and again I was compelled to remain at my post. What more could I do?
It is significant that the Testament contains not one word, not a hint about Stalin's mistakes. It speaks only of Stalin's rudeness. But rudeness is not, nor can it be, a shortcoming of Stalin's political line or his positions."
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 139

Now the oppositionists– too late for it to do them any good–brought up Lenin's complaint that Stalin was too rude. Stalin with his overwhelming majority was now in a position to shrug off the accusation. Yes, he admitted, Lenin had indeed said this. And he read out the passage from the Testament about his rudeness, and other faults. He emphasized that the decision not to publish it had been unanimous, and on the essentials said, 'Yes, comrades, I am rude towards those who rudely and treacherously break their word, who split and destroy the party.'
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 138

He [Stalin] had a violent argument with the founder of the Caucasian Social Democracy. His expulsion was demanded. Koba defended himself:
"Friendship counts for nothing when the Party and its interests are at stake," he declared. "I am ready to offer my personal apologies, but whenever he adopts an attitude contrary to the interests of the Party I shall oppose him with the same violence and the same energy. The absolute refusal to compromise is the most effective weapon in revolutionary conflict. People may say I'm rude and offensive but that is nothing to me. I shall continue to fight all those who threaten to destroy the Party."
Fishman and Hutton. The Private Life of Josif Stalin. London: W. H. Allen, 1962, p. 22

Obviously, talk about the Party concealing these documents is infamous slander. Among these documents are letters from Lenin urging the necessity of expelling Zinoviev and Kamenev from the Party. The Bolshevik Party, the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, have never feared the truth. The strength of the Bolshevik Party lies precisely in the fact that it does not fear the truth and looks the truth straight in the face.
The opposition is trying to use Lenin's "will" as a trump card; but it is enough to read this "will" to see that it is not a trump card for them at all. On the contrary, Lenin's "will" is fatal to the present leaders of the opposition.
Indeed, it is a fact that in his "will" Lenin accuses Trotsky of being guilty of "non-Bolshevism" and, as regards the mistake Kamenev and Zinoviev made during October, he says that that mistake was not "accidental." What does that mean? It means that Trotsky, who suffers from "non-Bolshevism," and Kamenev and Zinoviev, whose mistakes are not "accidental" and can and certainly will be repeated, cannot be politically trusted.

It is characteristic that there is not a word, not a hint in the “will” about Stalin having made mistakes. It refers only to Stalin’s rudeness. But rudeness is not and cannot be counted as a defect in Stalin’s political line or position.
Here is the relevant passage in the “will”:
“I shall not go on to characterize the personal qualities of the other members of the Central Committee. I shall merely remind you that the October episode with Zinoviev and Kamenev was, of course, not accidental, but that they can be blamed for it personally as little as Trotsky can be blamed for his non-Bolshevism.”
Clear, one would think.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 10, p. 182

STALIN VOLUNTEERED TO RESIGN SEVERAL TIMES

They [Lenin and Stalin] were very close in Lenin’s final days. Probably it was only Stalin’s apartment that Lenin visited. Several times Stalin sought to resign from the post of general secretary, but each time his request was denied by the Central Committee of the party. The struggle raged, and it was necessary that Stalin remain in that position.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 116

CHUEV: Avtorkhanov writes that after the 19th Congress, at the Presidium of the Central Committee, Stalin asked to be relieved of the responsibilities of General Secretary….
MOLOTOV: Correct. That did occur.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 234

[In a footnote] After the 19th party congress in October, 1952, he twice informed the Central Committee that he wished to retire. It was probably because he was ill. In any case the fact that he wanted to retire is known to everyone who belonged to the Central Committee at that time.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 206

…Lenin added, “He [Stalin] is too avid for power and his ambition is dangerous.” Stalin repeated this himself in open Congress of the Communist Party, and said quietly: “I told you then I repeat it now, that I am ready to retire if you wish it.”
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 170

“A year later [1925] I [Stalin] again put in a request to the plenum to release me, but I was again obliged to remain at my post.”
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 616

At the meeting of a group of party leaders in the Caucasus Zinoviev spoke of the need to guard against the Secretariat becoming too powerful. When Stalin learned of this speech he at once offered to resign. The offer was refused, for they could not manage without him.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 185

…Stalin’s criticism of Kamenev [at the central Committee plenum of January 1924] was condemned at a Politburo meeting as uncomradely and inaccurate about Kamenev’s true position. Stalin at once offered to resign. This was the second time he had done so as

General Secretary, though it would not be the last. Again his offer was turned down, and by none other than Kamenev, supported by Zinoviev.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 106

Stalin reminded them that he had put in his resignation, and that all the delegates, Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev among them, had voted for him to remain as General Secretary. It was not in his character, he added, to abandon his post, so he had continued to serve.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 138

The [Nineteenth Party] Congress was more interesting on other grounds. Stalin made a short speech, later saying proudly that he was still up to the job. At the plenum of the new Central Committee which followed, he offered his resignation as General Secretary, saying he was too old and tired to hold both that post and chairmanship of the Council of Ministers. This… was rejected in a spate of fulsome appeals to stay on.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 307

According to his former interpreter, Pavlov, elected a member of the Central Committee at the Nineteenth Congress, my father at the end of 1952 had twice asked the new membership of the Committee to sanction his retirement. Every member, as one, said that it was impossible.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 393

[From Serge In Portrait of Stalin]: There was the man of steel, as he had called himself,…face to face with that corpse [his wife's body]. It was about that time that he rose one day at the Politburo to tender his resignation to his colleagues. 'Maybe I have, indeed, become an obstacle to the party's unity. If so, comrades, I'm ready to efface myself….' The members of the Politburo–the body had already been purged of its right-wing– glanced at one another in embarrassment…. Nobody stirred…. At last Molotov said: 'Stop it, stop it. You have the party's confidence….' The incident was closed.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 334

When the Supreme Soviet met for the first time after the war, Stalin decided to teach Molotov and his followers a lesson. He submitted his own resignation and that of his entire Commissariat, to prove his power and popularity. He was certain he would be returned to office by an overwhelming majority vote, and he was not mistaken.
Fishman and Hutton. The Private Life of Josif Stalin. London: W. H. Allen, 1962, p. 168

It is a well-known fact, that Stalin had many times (starting with the 1920s) raised the question of resignation from the heavy workload of his responsibilities in the party and government. His requests were always not accepted and he was urged unanimously by all to stay in his position as head of the party and his post as the leader of the Soviet Union.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 7

Moreover, at the first organizational plenum of the Central Committee following the 19th Party Congress, Stalin unexpectedly asked to be relieved of his duties, pleading his advancing years. But the plenum…refused to accept Stalin's resignation…. Members of the Central Committee seated in the first rows fell on their knees, imploring Stalin to remain at

his post. Stalin agreed to do so, at the same time expressing his dissatisfaction with certain members of the old Politburo. But it was not Malenkov or Beria but Stalin himself who drew up the slate for election to the Central Committee Presidium, and it contained the names of almost all the members of the former Politburo (including those who had just been the objects of his critical remarks) along with a number of others who until then had not been influential in the Party in any way.
Medvedev, Roy. On Stalin and Stalinism. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 157

Zinoviev called an informal meeting of a number of colleagues on holiday, in the conspiratorial setting of a cave near the Caucasian spa of Kislovodsk, and secured agreement to a plan to curb Stalin's powers.
When the letter setting out their proposals reached Stalin, he reacted by going to Kislovodsk in person and proposing that Zinoviev, Trotsky, and Bukharin as members of the Politburo should be given seats on the Orgburo and see the "Stalin machine" from the inside. At the same time, he offered to resign: "If the comrades were to persist in their plan, I was prepared to clear out without any fuss and without any discussion, be it open or secret." Zinoviev, however, took advantage of Stalin's offer to attend Orgburo meetings only once or twice, while Trotsky and Bukharin failed to put in an appearance at all. As to his offer of resignation, Stalin well knew that, if he did reside, it would leave the way clear for Trotsky to claim the succession to Lenin, a prospect that was quite enough to stop Zinoviev and company from pressing their differences with him further.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 128

[In 1952] Stalin unexpectedly asked the Plenum to accept his resignation as general secretary, citing his age and the disloyalty of Molotov, Mikoyan, and several others. Whether this was meant to be taken seriously or not, the Plenum refused and begged him to stay. Having agreed, he then produced a paper out of his pocket and read out a list of the new members he proposed for the new Presidium, which was accepted without comment. The list included 10 of the 11 members of the existing Politburo, but an even larger number of younger and less well-known figures.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 964

On 15 March, 1946, at the time of the first meeting of the Supreme Council after the war, a sensational item of news was broadcast throughout the world. Stalin had presented his resignation, and that of his entire ministry. But a few hours later he was restored to office; and the brief excitement of the foreign commentators abated.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 400

Just occasionally he allowed his resentment to show. In November 1919 he tried to resign his job as Chairman of the Revolutionary-Military Council of the Southern Front. Lenin, alarmed, rushed to get a Politburo decision to implore him to reconsider. Stalin was too useful to be discarded.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 174

On 27 Dec 1926 he [Stalin] wrote to Sovnarkom Chairman Rykov saying: "I ask you to release me from the post of Central Committee General Secretary. I affirm that I can no

longer work at this post, that I'm in no condition to work any longer at this post." He made a similar attempt at resignation on 19 Dec 1927.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 247

According to Kaganovich, he [Stalin] also expressed a wish to retire. Molotov was his intended replacement; "Let Vyacheslav do the work." This caused consternation: Kaganovich did not like the prospect of yielding to Molotov.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 573

STALIN–"Comrade Molotov–the most dedicated to our cause. He should give his life for the cause of the party."
MOLOTOV–Coming to the speaker's tribune completely admits his mistakes before the Central Committee, but he stated that he is and will always be a faithful disciple of Stalin.
STALIN–(interrupting Molotov). This is nonsense. I have no students at all. We are all students of the great Lenin.
VOICE FROM THE FLOOR–We need to elect Comrade Stalin as the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU and Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR.
STALIN–No! I am asking that you relieve me of the two posts!
Speech by Stalin at the Plenum of the Central Committee, CPSU, October 16, 1952.

WHY STALIN AND KRUPSKAYA ARGUED AND LENIN'S HEALTHCARE

MOLOTOV: …My attitude toward Krupskaya was more or less positive in our personal relations. But Stalin regarded her unfavorably.
CHUEV: He had reasons. She made a poor showing at the 14th Party Congress.
MOLOTOV: Very bad. She turned out to be a bad communist. She didn't know what the devil she was doing.
CHUEV: Anyway, what caused the conflict between Stalin and Krupskaya?
MOLOTOV: Krupskaya acted badly after Lenin's death. She supported Zinoviev and obviously was confused by Zinoviev's line.
Doctors forbade visits to Lenin during his illness, once his condition grew worse. But Krupskaya allowed them. And this brought on the conflict between Krupskaya and Stalin. Stalin supported the Central Committee's decision not to let any visitors see Lenin. Stalin was right in this case.
What Lenin wrote about Stalin's rudeness was not without Krupskaya's influence. She disliked Stalin because he had treated her quite tactlessly. Stalin implemented the decision of the secretariat and did not permit Zinoviev and Kamenev to visit Lenin once this was prohibited by the doctors. Zinoviev and Kamenev complained to Krupskaya. Outraged, she told off Stalin. He responded, "Lenin should not have visitors." Krupskaya responded by saying, "But Lenin himself wants it!" Stalin then replied: "If the Central Committee says so, we might not let you see him either."
Stalin was irritated: "Why should I get up on my hind legs for her? To sleep with Lenin does not necessarily mean to understand Leninism!"
Stalin told me something like this: "Just because she uses the same bathroom as Lenin, do I have to appreciate and respect her as if she were Lenin?"

He was too coarse and rude.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 132

Krupskaya had a big grudge against Stalin. But he had a grudge against her, too, because Lenin's signature to his testament was supposedly affixed under Krupskaya's influence. Or so Stalin believed.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 135

On December 18, 1922, the Central Committee made Stalin responsible for his medical supervision.
On Dec. 22, Stalin learned that Lenin had just written to Trotsky congratulating him on their victory over the trade monopoly. Stalin telephoned Lenin's wife, Krupskaya, and abused her in terms both vulgar and violent for having let Lenin write in his state of health…. Stalin had threatened to take her before the Party Control Commission, and she said she had no doubt that if it came to that she would be unanimously supported there,…
Lenin had another stroke that very day (Dec. 22), but over the next two days recovered enough to refuse treatment unless he was allowed to dictate some notes. The Politburo granted this, and the next few days were spent in writing what came to be called his Testament.
In this well-known document, suppressed for 33 years,…
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 99

He [Lenin] now learned of Stalin's violent attack on Krupskaya, and he wrote Stalin as follows (with copies to Kamenev and Zinoviev):
'Very respectable comrade Stalin,
You allowed yourself to be so ill-mannered as to call my wife on the telephone and to abuse her. She has agreed to forget what you said. Nevertheless she has told Zinoviev and Kamenev about the incident. I have no intention of forgetting what has been done against me, and it goes without saying that what was done against my wife I also consider to have been directed against myself. Consequently, I must ask you to consider whether you would be inclined to withdraw what you said and to apologize, or whether you prefer to break off relations between us.
Respectfully yours, Lenin
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 103

One of Lenin's secretaries, Maria Volodicheva, gave Stalin the letter personally. He remained calm and said slowly, 'It is not Lenin speaking, it is his illness. I'm not a doctor. I'm a politician. I'm Stalin. If my wife, a member of the party, acted wrongly and they punished her, I would not assume the right to interfere in the matter. But Krupskaya is a party member. If Lenin insists I am ready to apologize to Krupskaya for rudeness.' Volodicheva returned with the oral apology.
Stalin immediately wrote a reply (which, like some of the rest of the information about the episode, has only just been published in the Soviet Union). In effect, he brazened it out. He said he had spoken to Krupskaya 'approximately as follows, "The doctors forbid giving Lenin political information, believing this regime the best way of treating him, but you Nadezhda Konstantinovna, it seems, have broken this regime. Do not play with Ilyich's health,"' and so on. This could not, he said, be regarded as rude, impermissible, or directed 'against' Lenin. He had done his duty, though there seemed to have been a misunderstanding. If 'to

preserve “relationships” I have to “withdraw” the words mentioned above, I can withdraw them, but I cannot understand in this business, where my “guilt” is, and what exactly is wanted of me.’
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 103

The ambiguity of the situation was further increased by the fact that the man chosen to make sure the doctors’ orders were scrupulously carried out was none other than Stalin. The actual orders were given by the doctors, but in close consultation with the supervisor [Stalin] appointed by the Central Committee. Stalin was officially instructed to keep himself informed of everything that happened at Lenin’s bedside. He applied himself zealously to the task.
Lewin, Moshe. Lenin’s Last Struggle. New York: Pantheon Books. C1968, p. 70

Lenin’s sister Maria described that occasion in her notes: “Stalin called her [Krupskaya] on the phone and, apparently counting on it not getting to Lenin, started telling her, in a pretty sharp way, that she shouldn’t talk business with Lenin, or he’d drag her before the Party’s Control Commission. Krupskaya was terribly upset by the conversation; she was quite beside herself, sobbing and rolling on the floor and so on.”
Lenin was up in arms when he heard about this incident. Ignoring Krupskaya’s entreaties, apparently that day he dictated a letter which indicated exactly what he thought about Stalin. The letter, which opens with an uncomradely formal address, was marked “Top secret” and “Personal,” but copies were sent to Kamenev and Zinoviev.
Respected Comrade Stalin,
You had the gall to call my wife to the telephone and abuse her. Although she agreed to forget what was said, she nevertheless told Zinoviev and Kamenev…. I have no intention of forgetting what has been done against me, as it goes without saying that what was done against my wife was done against me. Therefore I must ask you to consider whether you are prepared to take back what you said and apologize, or whether you would rather break off relations between us.
With respect,
Lenin

[Stalin replied]
Five weeks ago I had a conversation with Comrade Nadejda Konstantinova, whom I regard not only as your wife but as my old Party comrade, and I said roughly the following to her (on the telephone): “the doctors have forbidden [us] to give Ilich political information, as they regard this as the most important way of curing him. It turns out, Krupskaya, that you are not observing this regimen. We must not play with Ilich’s life,” and so on. I do not regard anything I said as crude or impermissible, or aimed against you, for I had no other purpose than your earliest recovery. Moreover, I regarded it as my duty to see that the regimen was observed. My conversation with Krupskaya confirmed that my suspicions were groundless, nor could they be otherwise. Still, if you think that to maintain our “relations” I should take my words back, then I can take them back, though I refuse to understand what the problem was, where my fault lay and what it is people want of me.”
Stalin
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 422-423

A recent discovery has produced a note from Stalin to Lenin in which he wrote: “If you consider that I must take back my words, I can take them back, but I fail to understand what the issue is, where my guilt is.”
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 123

To the Joint Plenum of the CC and CCC
From: Maria Ulyanova
No. 1
The oppositional minority in the CC in the recent period has carried out a systematic attack on Comrade Stalin not even stopping at affirming as though there had been a rupture between Lenin and Stalin in the last months of the life of V.I. With the objective of re-establishing the truth I consider it my obligation to inform comrades briefly about the relations of Lenin towards Stalin in the period of the illness of V.I. (I am not here concerned with the period prior to his illness about which I have wide-ranging evidences of the most touching relations between V.I. and Stalin of which CC members know no less than I) when I was continually present with him and fulfilled a number of charges.
Vladimir Ilyich really appreciated Stalin. For example, in the spring of 1922 when V. Ilyich had his first attack, and also at the time of his second attack in December 1922, he invited Stalin and addressed him with the most intimate tasks. The type of tasks with which one can address a person on whom one has total faith, whom you know as a dedicated revolutionist, and as a intimate comrade. Moreover Ilyich insisted, that he wanted to talk only with Stalin and nobody else. In general, in the entire period of his illness, till he had the opportunity to associate with his comrades, he invited comrade Stalin the maximum. And during the most serious period of the illness, he invited not a single member of the Politbureau except Stalin.
There was an incident between Lenin and Stalin which comrade Zinoviev mentions in his speech and which took place not long before Ilyich lost his power of speech (March, 1923) but it was completely personal and had nothing to do with politics. Comrade Zinoviev knew this very well and to quote it was absolutely unnecessary. This incident took place because on the demand of the doctors the Central Committee gave Stalin the charge of keeping a watch so that no political news reached Lenin during this period of serious illness. This was done so as not to upset him and so that his condition did not deteriorate, he (Stalin) even scolded his family for conveying this type of information. Ilyich, who accidentally came to know about this and who was also always worried about such a strong regime of protection, in turn scolded Stalin. Stalin apologized and with this the incident was settled. What is there to be said during this period, as I had indicated, if Lenin had not been so seriously ill then he would have reacted to the incident differently. There are documents regarding this incident and on the first demand from the Central Committee I can present them.
This way, I affirm that all the talk of the opposition about Lenin’s relation towards Stalin does not correspond to reality. These relations were most intimate and friendly and remained so.

No. 2.
M.I. Ulyanova on Vladimir Ilyich Lenin’s relation towards J. Stalin:
In my application to the Central Committee plenum I wrote that V. Ilyich appreciated Stalin. This is of course right. Stalin is a major worker and a good organiser. But it is also without doubt, that in this application, I did not say the whole truth about Lenin’s attitude towards Stalin. The aim of the application, which was written at the request of Bukharin and Stalin, was to refer to Ilyich’s relation towards him. This would have guarded him a little from the opposition attack. This speculation was based on the last letter by V. Ilyich to Stalin where

the question of breaking this relationship was posed. The immediate reason for this was personal V. Ilyich's outrage that Stalin allowed himself to be rude towards Nadezhda Konstantinovna. At that time it seemed to me that this very personal matter was used by Zinoviev, Kamenev and others for political objectives and the purpose of factionalism. Further weighing this fact with other statements of V. Ilyich, his political testament and also Stalin's behaviour after Lenin's death, his "political' line, I all the more started explaining to myself the real relation Lenin had with Stalin towards the end of his life. Even if briefly I think that it is my duty to talk about it.

V. Ilyich had a lot of control. He was very good in concealing. For whatever reasons whenever he thought it necessary he would not reveal his relations to other people .

He controlled himself even more in his relations towards the comrades with whom he worked. For him work was the first priority. He subjugated the personal in the interests of work. Never did the personal protrude or prevail.

A distinct example of this type of relation was the incident with Trotsky. In one Politbureau meeting Trotsky called Ilyich "a hooligan'. V. Ilyich turned as pale as chalk, but he controlled himself. "It seems some people are losing their nerves'. He said something like this in reply to Trotsky's rudeness. This is what the comrades told me while retelling the incident. He never had any sympathy for Trotsky. This person had so many characteristics which made it extremely difficult to work with him in a collective fashion. But he was a great worker and a talented person and I repeat for V. Ilyich work was the first priority and that is why he tried to retain him for the job and tried to work with him jointly in the future .

In the summer of 1922, during the first illness of V. Ilyich, when I was staying with him constantly almost without absences, I was able to closely observe his relation with the comrades with whom he worked closely and with the members of the Politbureau.

By this time I have heard something about V. Ilyich's dissatisfaction with Stalin. I was told that when V. Ilyich came to know about Martov's illness, he requested Stalin to send him some money. In reply Stalin told him "I should spend money on the enemy of the workers! Find yourself another secretary for this'. V. Ilyich was very disappointed and angry with Stalin .

In the winter of 20-21, 21-22 V. Ilyich was feeling sick. He had headaches and was unable to work Lenin was deeply disturbed. I exactly do not know when, but somehow during this period V. Ilyich told Stalin that he would probably be stricken with paralysis and made Stalin promise that in this event he would help V. Ilyich to obtain potassium cyanide. Stalin promised. Why did he appeal to Stalin with this request? Because he knew him to be an extremely strong man devoid of any sentimentality. V. Ilyich had nobody else but Stalin to approach with this type of request.

In May 1922 after his first attack he appealed to Stalin with the same request. V. Ilyich had then decided that everything was finished for him and demanded that Stalin should be brought to him immediately. This request was so insistent that nobody could gainsay it. Stalin was with V. Ilyich within 5 minutes and not more. When Stalin came out he told Bukharin and me that V. Ilyich had asked him to obtain poison. The time had come to fulfil his earlier promise. Stalin promised. V. Ilyich and Stalin kissed each other and Stalin left the room.

But later on after discussing the matter together we decided that V. Ilyich's spirits should be raised. Stalin returned to Lenin and told him that after talking it over with the doctors he was convinced that everything was not yet lost and therefore the time for fulfilling his promise had not come. V. Ilyich noticeably cheered up and agreed. He said to Stalin, "you are being cunning?' In reply Stalin said "when did you ever know me to be cunning?' They parted and

did not see each other till V. Ilyich's condition improved. He was not allowed to meet his comrades.
During this period Stalin was a more frequent visitor in comparison to others. He was the first to come to V. Ilyich. Ilyich met him amicably, joked, laughed and demanded that I should treat Stalin with wine and so on. In this and in other meetings they discussed Trotsky and from their talk in front of me it was clear that here Ilyich was with Stalin against Trotsky .
V. Ilyich was most annoyed with Stalin regarding the national, Caucasus question. This is known from his correspondence with Trotsky regarding this matter. It is clear that V. Ilyich was completely outraged with Stalin, Ordjonikidze and Dzerzhinsky. During the period of his further illness, this question would strongly torture him.
To this the other conflict was also added, and which was brought about by V. Ilyich's letter to Stalin on 5.3.23 and which I am going to quote below. It was like this. The doctors insisted that V. Ilyich should not be informed anything about work. The maximum fear was of Nadezhda Konstantinovna discussing anything with V. Ilyich. She was so used to discussing everything with him that sometimes completely unintentionally and unwillingly she might blurt things out. The Politbureau gave Stalin the charge of keeping watch so that the doctors' instructions were maintained. It seems, one day coming to know about certain conversations between N.K. and V.I., Stalin called her to the telephone and spoke to her quite sharply thinking this would not reach V. Ilyich. He warned her that she should not discuss work with V.I. or this may drag her to the Central Control Commission of the party. This discussion deeply disturbed N.K. She completely lost control of herself she sobbed and rolled on the floor. After a few days she told V.I. about this incident and added that they had already reconciled. Before this it seems Stalin had actually called her to smooth over the negative reaction his threat and warning had created upon her. She told Kamenev and Zinoviev that Stalin had shouted at her on the phone and it seems she mentioned the Caucasus matter.
Next morning Stalin invited me to V. Ilyich's office. He looked upset and offended. He told me "I did not sleep the whole night. Who does Ilyich think I am, how he regards me, as towards a traitor, I love him with all my heart. Please, somehow tell him this.' I felt sorry for Stalin. It seemed to me that he was sincerely distressed. Ilyich called me for something and in between I told him that the comrades were sending him regards "Ah' objected V.I. "And Stalin has requested me to tell you, that he loves you'. Ilyich frowned and kept quiet. "Then what' I asked "should I convey your greetings to him?' "Convey them' answered Ilyich quite coldly. But I continued "Volodia he is still the intelligent Stalin'. "He is absolutely not intelligent' frowning Ilyich answered resolutely.
I did not continue the discussion and after a few days. V.I. came to know that Stalin had been rude with N. K. and Kamenev and Zinoviev knew about it. In the morning very distressed Lenin asked for the stenographer to be sent to him. Before this he asked whether N.K. had already left for Narkompros (People's Commissariat of Enlightenment ed. R.D.) to which he received a positive answer. When Volodicheva came V.I. dictated the following letter to Stalin:
"Absolutely secret. Personal. Respected Comrade Stalin! You were rude enough to call my wife to the telephone and insult her. Even though she has expressed to you her willingness to forget the incident, but even then this fact came to be known through her by Zinoviev and Kamenev. I am not ready to forget so easily what has been done against me and what is done against my wife I consider as having been done against me. Therefore I ask you to inform me whether you are ready to take back what you said and apologise or whether you prefer to break off our relationship. With respect Lenin. Written by M.V. 5/III-23'.

V.I. asked Volodicheva to send it to Stalin without telling N.K. and to put a copy of the letter in a sealed envelope and give it to me.
After returning home and seeing V.I. distressed N.K. understood that something had happened. She requested Volidicheva not to send the letter. She would personally talk to Stalin and ask him to apologize. That is what N.K. is saying now, but I feel that she did not see this letter and it was sent to Stalin as V.I. had wanted. The reply of Stalin was not handed over immediately and then it was decided probably by the doctors and N.K. not to give it to V.I. as his condition had worsened. And so V.I. did not come to know about the reply of Stalin in which he apologised.
But howsoever irritated Lenin was with Stalin there is one thing I can say with complete conviction, his words that Stalin was “not at all intelligent’ were said without any irritation. This was his opinion about him decided and complex and which he told me. This opinion did not refute the fact that V.I. valued Stalin as a practical worker. He considered it absolutely essential that there should be some initial control over his ways and peculiarities, on the force of which V.I. considered that Stalin should be removed from the post of general secretary. He spoke about this very decisively in his political will, in his description of a group of comrades which he gave before his death. But these documents never reached the party. But about this some other time.

Appendix
Letter of Joseph Stalin to Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, 7th March, 1923.
To Comrade. Lenin from Stalin
Personal
Comrade Lenin!
Five weeks ago I had a discussion with Nadezhda Konstantinovna whom I consider not only your wife, but also my senior party comrade. I told her on the telephone something very close to the following :
“The doctors have forbidden any political information to be given to Ilyich. They consider this routine the most effective method to cure him, whereas you Nadezhda Konstantinovna are violating this routine. To play with the life of Ilyich is not allowed’.
I do not think that these words can be seen as anything rude or impermissible directed “against’ you nor I did I proceed from any other purposes other than your quick recovery. Moreover, I think it my duty to see that this routine is maintained. My explanation to Nadezhda Konstantinovna confirms that there was nothing except a simple misunderstanding.
If you think that to maintain the “relationship’ I must “take back’ the above-mentioned words, then I can take them back but I do not understand where is my “fault’ and what exactly is wanted from me.
I. Stalin.

[Lenin’s letter and Stalin’s answer were kept in an official envelope in the department of administrative matters of Sovnarkom on which it was written “Letter from Lenin dated 5/III-23 (2 copies) and reply from Stalin not read by Lenin. Single copy’. Stalin’s reply was written on 7th March immediately after receiving Lenin’s letter from M.A. Volodicheva editor].
M.I. Ulyanova to the Presidium of the Joint Plenum of the CC and CCC of the RCP(b), 26th July, 1926

LENIN CRITICIZED ZINOVIEV AND BUKHARIN IN THE END

Zinoviev deviated from Lenin after 1925. Krupskaya also moved away from Lenin, but in truth she didn't meddle in big politics.
So Lenin lived in such circumstances. And he was, after all, a man who could cut right through any obstacle. How irreconcilable he was with the right and the left! Bukharin and Zinoviev were closest to him, but he criticized them too, especially in the end.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 146

LENIN REALIZED STALIN AND TROTSKY WERE THE TWO MAIN LEADERS

CHUEV: Lenin attributed such dreadful qualities to everyone, without exception!
MOLOTOV: Certainly. But he gave very accurate descriptions. He could not come to run-of-the-mill conclusions. It was not without reason that Lenin distinguished Stalin and Trotsky as leaders, as the two who stood apart from the rest, as the most talented.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 148

MOLOTOV AGREES WITH LENIN'S TESTAMENT ON STALIN

I think Lenin was right in his evaluation of Stalin. I said it myself right after Lenin's death, at the Politburo. I think Stalin remembered it because after Lenin's death we got together at Zinoviev's in the Kremlin, about five of us, including Stalin and me, and talked about the "testament." Isaid I considered all of Lenin's evaluation of Stalin to have been right. Stalin, of course, didn't like this. Despite this we remained close for many years. I think he appreciated me because I spoke out about certain matters in a way others hypocritically avoided, and he saw that I addressed the matter of the "testament" forthrightly.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 212

THE TESTAMENT WAS NOT KEPT HIDDEN BY STALIN

During the 1927 conflicts, Trotsky brought up documents written by Lenin in his final illness which show that Lenin was attempting to oust Stalin as General Secretary of the Party. The most famous of these, Lenin's so-called "Testament," had been made known to delegates for the Thirteenth Congress of the Party in 1924….
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 49

Recalling the July-August 1927 plenum [at the October 1927 combined meeting of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission], Stalin regretted having dissuaded the comrades from expelling Trotsky and Zinoviev from the Central Committee immediately. 'Maybe I was being too kind and made a mistake…'
As for dealing with Lenin's 'Letter to the Congress', Stalin gave his own interpretation: "It has been shown time and again, and no one is trying to hide anything, that Lenin's Testament was addressed to the 13th Party Congress, that it was read out at the congress, that the Congress agreed unanimously not to publish it because, by the way, Lenin himself did not want or ask for it to be published."
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 138

His handling of the plenum [the joint plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission in October 1927] was a masterpiece of persuasion. He reminded the Opposition that previously he had rejected calls for the expulsion of Trotsky and Zinoviev from the Central Committee. “Perhaps,” he suggested, “I overdid the “kindness’ and made a mistake.”
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 249

The evening before the congress, on May 21, 1924, there was an extraordinary plenum of the Central Committee, called to hear Lenin’s Testament.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 75

… it is important to note that the Central Committee did not support Stalin’s battle to have the full correspondence openly published surrounding the “Lenin Testament.”
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 3

Stalin took up the challenge of the Lenin testament a month later, at the climax of the series of inquisitorial sessions. “The oppositionists have cried here that the Central Committee is ‘concealing’ the testament of Lenin. You know that this question has been discussed a number of times at our joint sessions. Again and again it has been proved that no one hides anything, that the testament of Lenin was addressed to the Thirteenth Congress, that it, the testament, was made public there, that the congress unanimously decided not to publish it. One of the reasons for this decision, among others, was that Lenin himself did not wish or demand it. And nevertheless the opposition has the audacity to declare that the Central Committee is ‘concealing’ the testament…. It is said that Lenin proposed the removal of Stalin. Yes, that it is altogether true.” And Stalin then proceeded to read the uncomplimentary part of Lenin’s last message relating to him!
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 280

LENIN’S ILLNESS WAS AFFECTING HIS MENTAL BALANCE

This and other incidents suggested that Lenin’s illness was affecting him mentally. He had become increasingly capricious and flew into rages over minor matters.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 168

STALIN IS DEEPLY HURT BY LENIN’S CRITICISM AT THE END

Stalin must have felt surprised and hurt by Lenin’s behavior during the last months. As yet he knew nothing of the Testament which was still held secret, but he had been made aware of Lenin’s personal hostility. He had served Lenin and the Bolshevik cause loyally for 20 years; he had worked closely with him as a member of the Central Committee for 10 years. On occasions he had expressed disagreement, and during the Civil War when they had been under unbearable pressures, he had shown bad temper, as had Trotsky and others. Lenin had uttered no recriminations. Their relationship had always been based on trust and

devotion to the cause and he had never conspired to displace him or to undermine his authority. The reward for this loyalty was a vicious campaign to destroy his position in the party. Stalin can only have seen it as a terrible betrayal. Certainly he did not respond then or later with hostility or resentment. In fact his attitude towards Lenin was accurately expressed in his lecture to the Kremlin Military Academy on Jan. 28, 1924. Although carefully contrived to show him as the natural successor, this speech had laid stress on the qualities of the great leader, “the mountain eagle.” The Lenin who had turned on him had been an ill and dying man. Nevertheless, Stalin had a tenacious memory, and this betrayal by his old leader probably contributed to the cancerous growth of suspicion and distrust of others, which was to contort his outlook in the years to come.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 191

KRUPSKAYA BRINGS FORTH THE TESTAMENT AT THE LAST MINUTE TO DAMAGE STALIN

Stalin’s majority support in the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission and his control of the party apparatus made his position seem unchallengeable. But five days before the 13th Party Congress was to open, something happened which suddenly threatened his career. Krupskaya sent to Kamenev notes which Lenin had dictated between December 23rd, 1922, and January 23rd, 1923, with a covering letter explaining that she had suppressed the two notes, known as the “Testament,” because Lenin had expressed the “definite wish” that these notes should be submitted to the next Party Congress after his death…. Her reasons for holding them secret for so long were not stated, but in bringing them forward at this time she was clearly seeking to damage Stalin politically.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 195

ZINOVIEV & KAMENEV WANT TESTAMENT IGNORED SO STALIN IS IN POWER AGAINST TROTSKY

Zinoviev and Kamenev were both concerned to keep Stalin in office. He was their indispensable ally against Trotsky and the oppositionists. Zinoviev declared that, while they had all sworn to carry out Lenin’s wishes to the letter, they knew that his fears about their General Secretary had been baseless.

Trotsky recalled that during the discussion Stalin referred to the Lenin who had dictated these notes as “a sick man surrounded by womenfolk,” a barbed reference to Krupskaya, but he did not take an active part. Trotsky himself did not contribute to the discussion. Finally by 30 votes to 10 it was decided that the notes should not be published, but that their content should be conveyed to selected delegates to whom it should be explained that Lenin had been seriously ill at the time and misinformed by those around him.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 196

Kamenev opened the seance and read Lenin’s letter. There was silence. Stalin’s face was somber and strained. Following a scenario prepared in advance, Zinoviev took the floor right away: “Comrades, you all know that Lenin’s posthumous wishes, each word of Ilyich, is law for us. We have sworn more than once to accomplish what Lenin passed on to us. And you know perfectly well that we will do so. But we are happy to note that on one point it seems

that Lenin's fears were not justified. You have all witnessed our joint work during these past months and, just like me, you have been able to see with satisfaction that that which Ilyich feared has not happened. I speak of our general secretary and the dangers of scission within the Central Committee." (I've given the sense of his presentation.)

…Everyone kept quiet. Zinoviev proposed that Stalin be re-elected general secretary. Trotsky kept silent also, but he showed his extreme disgust with the comedy by a vivid mimicry.

Kamenev, for his part, urged members to keep Stalin in the general secretaryship. Stalin continued to gaze out of the window, teeth clenched and features drawn. His career was at stake.

Because there was silence, Kamenev proposed to settle the matter by vote. Who favored leaving Stalin in as general secretary? Who was against? And who abstained? I looked down the rows, counting the votes and giving the totals to Kamenev. The majority voted in favor of Stalin, while the small Trotsky group voted against. There were some abstentions. I was busy counting the votes and didn't notice who abstained, which I much regret.

In addition to leaving Stalin as general secretary, the plenum decided not to read Lenin's Testament to the congress and not to distribute his text to the delegates. Instead, the heads of delegations were to convey it to their own delegates.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 76

The Central Committee and senior delegates met on 22 May 1924 to acquaint themselves with Lenin's will which had hitherto been in Krupskaya's keeping. The reading of the will had the effect of a bolt from the blue. Those present listened in utter perplexity to the passage in which Lenin castigated Stalin's rudeness and disloyalty and urged the party to remove him from the General Secretariat. Stalin seemed crushed. Once again his fortunes trembled in the balance. Amid all the worshipping of Lenin's memory, amid the endless genuflexions and vows to "hold Lenin's words sacred," it seemed inconceivable that the party should disregard Lenin's advice.

But once again Stalin was saved by the truthfulness of his future victims. Zinoviev and Kamenev, who held his fate in their hands, rushed to his rescue. They implored their comrades to leave him in his post. They used all their zeal and histrionic talents to persuade them that whatever Lenin held Stalin guilty of, the offense was not grave and that Stalin had made ample amends. Lenin's word was sacred, Zinoviev exclaimed, but Lenin himself, if he could have witnessed, as they all had, Stalin's sincere efforts to mend his ways, would not have urged the party to remove him….

All eyes were now fixed on Trotsky: would he rise, expose the farce, and demand that Lenin's will be respected? He did not utter a word. He conveyed his contempt and disgust at the spectacle only through expressive grimaces and shoulder shrugging. He could not bring himself to speak out on a matter in which his own standing was so obviously involved. It was resolved to disregard Lenin's advice on Stalin.

Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 137

The 13th Party Congress had arrived. Lenin's "Letter to the Congress" was to be read there. On the eve of the Congress Krupskaya solemnly presented the Central Committee with certain sealed packets.

…Yaroslavsky recalled that "when these few pages written by Lenin were read to the members of the Central Committee the reaction was one of incomprehension and alarm." It was true. The members of the Central Committee could not understand what Lenin wanted. Why was he abusing all the leaders, without suggesting any replacement? Why should Stalin be driven out of the Secretariat if all he could be reproached with was rudeness? Besides, they all knew that it was Lenin, not Stalin himself, who had "concentrated power" in the Gensek's hands. It was all rather embarrassing because it seemed that the only reason for these attacks was that Lenin's wife had been offended. That Stalin was terrified of this letter, that he was saved by Kamenev, and so on, is mere legend. Kamenev spoke for everyone when he said that "our dear Lenin's sickness prevented him at times from being fair. And since Stalin has already confessed to the character faults noted by Lenin and will, of course, correct them, we should begin by accepting the possibility of leaving Stalin in the post of Secretary-General." And so, out of concern for Lenin's reputation, it was resolved that these "sickbed documents" should not be reproduced. They would be read to each delegation separately.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 216

BUKHARIN WAS PUT ON THE POLITBURO TO FILL LENIN'S VACANCY

Bukharin was elected to the Politburo to fill the vacancy left by Lenin.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 201

BUKHARIN GIVES THE MEMORIAL SPEECH ON LENIN'S DEATH

It is true that at the end of January 1929 Bukharin was asked to give the speech at the memorial meeting marking the fifth anniversary of Lenin's death.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 200

SICK LENIN IS KEPT AWAY FROM EVERYONE

The Chronicle of his [Lenin] activities indicates that during 1923 he saw neither Trotsky, nor Stalin; not Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin, or Rykov. All were kept away on his [Lenin] explicit orders.
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 475

BUDU SAYS LENIN'S BODY IN THE TOMB IS A FAKE

The talk continued. It was a lengthy conference, during which it was easy to see that my uncle attached great importance to the preservation of Lenin's body.

Finally he said, “If it turns out to be absolutely impossible to preserve the body, we’ll have to substitute something for it. We will have to replace it by an artificial figure. It will have to be made of some special material, something stable, solid, and lifelike. It must be perfectly done.”
And this, in the end, was what was done. I learned afterward that the embalmed body of Lenin had been replaced by an artificial statute, made at Kazan by a group of sculptors selected by Beria. They produced a faithful reproduction of the body, which was then cremated. The ashes were placed in an urn, which was submerged in the Volga, near Ulyanovsk, formerly Simbirsk, where Lenin-Ulianov was born in 1870.
Thus the pilgrims who wait patiently at the mausoleum of Lenin to file by what they believe to be the body of the saint of Russian Communism are not gazing at Lenin’s body, but merely at a replica of it.
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 189

THE TESTAMENT IS CRITICAL OF TROTSKY AND TROTSKY FAILED LENIN

On the whole, the reservations made [in the Testament] about Trotsky must seem more serious when it comes to politics proper, and his “ability” to be an administrative executant rather more than a potential leader in his own right. It is only fair to add that it was to Trotsky that Lenin turned for support in his last attempts to influence policy; but Trotsky failed to carry out Lenin’s wishes.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 4

… Indeed, in his “Testament” Lenin chose to remind the party of Trotsky’s non-Bolshevik past, even though his tone was not accusatory. There may have been political intimacy between them, but not close friendship. Trotsky’s wife, Natalya Sedova, did not visit Krupskaya, and Trotsky, unlike Kamenev, Zinoviev, Bukharin, and Stalin, did not visit Lenin at home. Nor was he drawn to his sick leader’s bedside, where the others were frequently to be found.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York : Free Press, 1994, p. 256

That paragraph [comparing Stalin with Trotsky in Lenin’s testament] is probably a genuine excerpt from Lenin’s letter. But there is another sentence which is admittedly an authentic postscript and which Stalin himself has quoted. It runs thus: “Stalin is too crude, and although this failing does not count for very much amongst us as Communists it will not be borne with in the business office of the General Secretary. Therefore I would suggest that we find a way to remove him from this position. These apparent trivialities can sometimes be of decisive significance.”
To this double-sided criticism I must add by way of comment a very important statement which I have on the authority of Radek. He said: “After Lenin’s death we, nineteen men of the Executive Committee, sat together and anxiously awaited the advice which our leader would give us from the tomb. Lenin’s widow had brought us the letter. Stalin read it aloud to us. As he did so, nobody made a sound. When it came to speak of Trotsky, the letter said: ‘His un-Bolshevik past is not an accident.’ All at once Trotsky interrupted the reading and asked: ‘What was that?’ The sentence was repeated. These were the only words that were spoken during that solemn hour.” It must have been a terrible moment for Trotsky. His heart

must have stood still when he heard these six words, words which really decided his career. Lenin had not concealed his misgivings in regard to those two men whom he singled out as the most capable followers.
Ludwig, Emil. Leaders of Europe . London : I. Nicholson and Watson Ltd., 1934, p. 364

TESTAMENT HITS TROTSKY MUCH HARDER THAN STALIN

“Comrades Trotsky and Stalin are the two most able men in the present Central Committee,” read Kamenev. “Their rivalry might quite innocently lead to a split. Comrade Trotsky is perhaps the most talented of the leaders but he is too conceited. And then he is not a Bolshevik.”
This last statement proved fatal to Trotsky’s chances. Stalin got a punch on the nose, nothing more, but Trotsky got his in the solar plexus.
According to Maxim Gorky, Lenin thought highly of Trotsky’s organizing abilities. “And yet,” said he, “he isn’t one of us. With us but not of us. He is ambitious. There is something of Lassalle in him, something which isn’t good.”
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 91

In short, Trotsky emerges from the considerations of the “Testament” in a somewhat diminished position, mainly because he is not placed above Stalin and because his former non-Bolshevism, even though it cannot be held against him personally, is nonetheless mentioned.
… Trotsky’s non-Bolshevism had already gone against him in a number of disputes in which Lenin had had to exert his own prestige to defend him.
Lewin, Moshe. Lenin’s Last Struggle. New York: Pantheon Books. C1968, p. 82-83

TROTSKY DOES NOT DENY THERE IS A TESTAMENT

It must have been then that he [Lenin] formulated mentally the document that later became known as his “Will.”
Trotsky, Leon. My Life. Gloucester, Massachusetts: P. Smith, 1970, p. 478

This is the substance of the “Will.”
Trotsky, Leon. My Life. Gloucester, Massachusetts: P. Smith, 1970, p. 480

Like Moses on Mount Nebo, he viewed the promised land of the world proletariat from afar and during intervals of improvement between the recurrent attacks dictated his last commandments–his Testament, which he completed on January 4, 1923;…
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 355

It was in line with the train of thought Lenin expressed explicitly in his Testament.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 365

BAZHANOV SAYS TROTSKY ERRS SAYING LENIN WAS ALIVE WHEN TESTAMENT WAS READ

In his book on Stalin, written in the last years of his life, Trotsky said, after describing the plenum at which the Testament was read, “Actually, the Testament not only failed to terminate the internal struggle, which was what Lenin wanted, but, on the contrary intensified it to a feverish pitch. Stalin could no longer doubt that Lenin’s return to activity would mean the political death of the General Secretary.”
One can deduce from these lines that Lenin was still alive when his Testament was divulged. Since it was made public at the plenum which preceded the congress, Trotsky meant the plenum of the Central Committee of April 15, 1923, and the 12th Congress of 17-25 April 1923. But it is a gross error. The Testament was read to the Central Committee plenum of 21 May 1924 (the 13th Congress was May 22-31, 1924), which was four months after Lenin’s death. It is easy to demonstrate that it was Trotsky, not I, who was in error. In the same passage of his book, Trotsky quotes me as a witness to the plenum: “Bazhanov, another former secretary of Stalin’s, described the seance of the Central Committee at which Kamenev read the Testament. ‘Terrible embarrassment paralyzed all those present. Stalin, sitting on the steps of the rostrum, felt small and miserable. I studied him closely…etc.’”
From these texts, one could only conclude that we were both at the same plenum. Although I was at the 1924 plenum, it was impossible for me to have been at the 1923 one, since I was not yet Politburo secretary. Consequently it is beyond doubt that the Testament was divulged at the May 21, 1924 plenum, after Lenin’s death, and that Trotsky was mistaken.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 77

STALIN REFUSED TO GIVE LENIN POISON

On March 17, 1923, the day Semashko and the doctors signed the bulletin, ratified by the Central Committee and describing Lenin’s condition as ‘good’, Stalin, as General Secretary, wrote a note to the Politburo in which he reported that Lenin was urgently requesting a lethal dose of potassium cyanide. Krupskaya was ‘stubbornly insisting that Lenin’s request should not be refused’. She had even ‘tried to give it to him herself, but had lost her nerve’, and that was why she had asked for Stalin’s help. Stalin concluded by saying that although he believed giving Lenin cyanide would be ‘a humane mission’, he himself would be unable to carry it out.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Autopsy for an Empire. New York: Free Press, c1998, p. 66

Maria wrote in her memoir of Lenin’s last six months that:
“In the winner of 1920-21 or 21-22 Ilich was very, very bad. Headaches and an inability to work troubled him deeply. I don’t remember exactly when, but at some time during that period, Ilich told Stalin that he would very likely end up being paralyzed, and he got Stalin’s word that in that event he would help him get hold of some potassium cyanide. Stalin promised….”

She returns to this topic elsewhere:
“Lenin made the same request to Stalin in May 1922, after his first stroke. Lenin had decided that he was finished and asked for Stalin to come to him for the shortest possible time. He was so insistent that it was decided he should be indulged. Stalin stayed for literally no more than five minutes. And when he came out, he told me and Bukharin that Lenin had asked him to get some poison, as the time to fulfil his earlier promise had arrived. Stalin had

promised, they had embraced, and Stalin had left. But then, after discussing it together, we decided we must give Lenin courage, so Stalin went back to Lenin again and told him that, having talked to the doctors, he was convinced that all was not yet lost…. Lenin was visibly cheered and agreed.
Maria's memoirs, although they are not always accurate, are nevertheless clear that the thought of suicide was in Lenin's mind from the moment the illness struck him.
The archives, however, hold a more reliable document–a "strictly secret" letter from Stalin to the Politburo, dated 21 March 1923:
"On Saturday 17 March in the strictest secrecy Comrade Krupskaya told me of 'Vladimir Ilyich's request to Stalin,' namely that I, Stalin, should take the responsibility for finding and administering to Lenin a dose of potassium cyanide. In our conversation Krupskaya said, among other things, that 'Vladimir Ilyich is suffering unbelievably,' that 'to go on living is unthinkable,' and she stubbornly insisted that I 'not refuse Ilyich's request,' in view of Krupskaya's insistence and also because Ilyich was demanding my agreement (Lenin twice called Krupskaya to go to him during my conversation with her in his study, where we were talking, and emotionally asked for 'Stalin's agreement,' causing us to break off our conversation twice), I felt it impossible to refuse him, and declared: 'I would like Vladimir Ilyich to be reassured and to believe that when it is necessary I will fulfil his demand without hesitation.' Ilyich was indeed reassured.
I must, however, state that I do not have the strength to carry out Ilyich's request and I have to decline this mission, however humane and necessary it might be, and I therefore report this to the members of the Politburo.

The reactions of the Politburo were summed up in an informal resolution: "I have read it. I propose that Stalin's 'indecisiveness is correct. There should be an exchange of opinion strictly among Politburo members. Without (administrative) secretaries. Signed Tomsky, Zinoviev, Molotov, Bukharin, Trotsky, Kamenev.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 425-426

Stalin received a request which he immediately reported in writing to members of the Politburo. On March 17 Krupskaya, "in the strictest secrecy…communicated to me Lenin's request to obtain and pass on to him a quantity of potassium cyanide…. Krupskaya said that Lenin's suffering was beyond belief…. I must declare that I lack the strength to carry out the request and I am compelled to refuse this mission…and hereby inform the Orgbureau accordingly." The unfortunate Leader [Lenin] was by now scarcely able to think at all. Krupskaya herself was trying to carry out his former wish and spare him from further suffering. In fact, Stalin informed his friends in the triumvirate, Zinoviev and Kamenev, that "Krupskaya said…she had 'tried to give him cyanide' but 'couldn't go through with it,' and so was 'asking for Stalin's support.'" But Stalin was a connoisseur of character. He knew then his partners would subsequently accuse him. No, Lenin must oblige by dying unaided. The members of the Politburo naturally approved his decision. So now his hands were clean.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 202

Here naturally arises the question: how and why did Lenin, who at the time was extremely suspicious of Stalin, turn to him with such a request [for poison], which on the face of it, presupposed the highest degree of personal confidence?
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 377

SOON AFTER LENIN DIED STALIN ORDERED ALL OF HIS WRITINGS COMBINED IN ONE INSTITUTE

Soon after Lenin died a year later, Stalin had the Marx-Engels Institute re-named the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute. He insured, by means of a special Central Committee decision, that all materials, documents, and letters, including those of a personal nature, would be deposited in this new center for the “research of Lenin’s heritage.” A Lenin archive of 4500 documents was created, as Tikhomirnov informed Stalin in early 1933. It would soon grow to 26,000. On Stalin’s orders all Lenin material that had belonged to Bukharin, Zinoviev, Kamenev and other leading figures was transferred to it, and expeditions by Ganetsky, Adoratsky, and Tikhomirnov scoured Vienna, Warsaw, Cracow, Zurich, Brussels, and Paris in search of more Leniniana.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 274

STALIN WANTED TO BE LET OUT OF WATCHING LENIN’S HEALTH BUT THEY SAID NO

After the unforgettable telephone conversation, Stalin bothered her no more; he simply ignored her. Evidently now certain that Lenin would not recover, he was finding his responsibilities onerous. On 1 February 1923 he read a statement to the Politburo, asking to be relieved of having ‘to observe that the regime established by the physicians for Comrade Stalin is carried out.’ The response was a unanimous ‘no.’
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 421

On December 24, 1922, a committee of the Politburo composed of Stalin, Kamenev, and Bukharin held a conference with the doctors. It was decided that “Vladimir Ilyich has the right to dictate every day for 5 or 10 minutes, but this cannot have the character of correspondence and Vladimir Ilyich may not expect to receive any answers. He is forbidden [political] visitors. Friends or those around him may not inform him about political affairs.” Stalin was delegated the Politburo’s liaison man with the doctors, in effect Lenin’s guardian.

When these details were finely published in Russia in 1963, it was, of course, the intention of Khrushchev’s regime, which authorized the release, to cast unfavorable light on Stalin. Yet as in the case of many such revelations, the story reflects more discredit on his [Stalin] colleagues than on him. He had not sought this assignment and, as a matter of fact, tried on at least one occasion to lay it down. It was bound to increase Lenin’s already increasing dislike and suspicion of Stalin, would almost inevitably embroil Stalin with Lenin’s family. And if Lenin had a spell of recovery, Stalin would feel his wrath.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 216

But it must have been clear that the old man [Lenin] was up to something, getting his wife and secretaries to smuggle him “forbidden” Party materials and news, dictating to them not only lofty historical reflections, as would behoove a dying leader, but scandalous subversive pieces designed to throw the Party into disarray. Stalin kept calling the poor women, asking who it was that was telling Vladimir Ilyich these things, reminding them that they were subject to Party discipline and had better watch their step. After one such call, on December 23, Krupskaya appealed to her friends Kamenev and Zinoviev to protect her from ”

invectives and threats." But when they mildly remonstrated with Stalin he declared that he would resign his charge–let somebody else deal with the impossible invalid, his busybody wife, his hysterical old-maid sister, and those gossipy secretaries–but he was prevailed upon to stay on as Lenin's guardian.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 218

KRUPSKAYA OBJECTED TO CC VOTING TO SUPPRESS THE TESTAMENT & TROTSKY WAS SILENT

Against Krupskaya's protest the Central Committee voted by an overwhelming majority for the suppression of the will. To the end Trotsky, as though numb and frozen with detestation kept his silence.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 138

EVIDENCE SHOWS TROTSKY LIES WHEN HE SAYS STALIN POISONED LENIN

Trotsky would later speak of "Stalin's poison." But this is irrelevant. Professor V. Shklovsky, son of the imminent physician M. Shklovsky, found in his father's records the testimony [originally meant to be destroyed] of V. Osipov, one of the senior doctors attending Lenin, and a speech therapist S. Dobrogayev. We read in particular that "the final diagnosis dismisses the stories of the syphilitic character of Lenin's disease, or of arsenic poisoning. It was atherosclerosis, mainly affecting the cerebral blood vessels. The calcium deposit was so thick that during dissection the tweezers made a noise as if they were rapping on stone. Lenin's parents also died of this disease." But the story that Lenin had been poisoned would never die.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 213

This delusion has been utilized by various writers, Trotsky the most eminent, who have argued that Stalin murdered Lenin. Lenin was not in such bad shape, they maintain, so is it not strange that he died so suddenly? In the nature of things Stalin's innocence cannot be proven, and in history, unlike some judicial systems, it cannot be presumed. But it strains the imagination to believe that the official account of Lenin's arterial sclerosis was fabricated. Furthermore, the general impression of Stalin's tactics in this whole period, roughly 1922-28, is that he considered time to be on his side and was remarkably patient in waiting to see whether events would unfold to his advantage. It is unlikely that in early 1924 he feared that Lenin might revive and cause trouble.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 85

LENIN DID NOT REPRIMAND STALIN EVEN WHEN HIS METHODS WERE ROUGH

Most of all, Lenin was inhibited by a complex of his own in dealing with Stalin. Stalin's brutality and occasional insolence were undoubtedly distasteful to him, but did his qualms spring from his own background as a bourgeois and intelligent? Stalin's behavior was perhaps the kind of proletarian forthrightness that was now so badly needed and that must

not be curbed, lest the Communists share the fate of the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries. He never had occasion to admonish Stalin, as he did another front commander, “I am afraid you are mistaken in not applying utmost severity, but if you are absolutely certain that your forces are inadequate for a savage and ruthless repression, then wire all the details without any delay.” For all the ample provocations there is no record of Lenin so much as reprimanding Stalin for the tone, if not the substance, of his messages.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 183

Opposition

GREAT FREEDOM GIVEN TO THE OPPOSITION

Footnote: The public propaganda of the Opposition exploited every possible kind of political argument against the Soviet regime. The social and economic policies of the Stalin administration were subjected to continuous criticism under such slogans as “incompetence in administration,” “uncontrolled bureaucracy,” “one-man, one-party dictatorship,” “degneration of the old leadership” and so on. No attempt was made to suppress Trotsky’s agitation until it had openly exposed itself as, in fact, anti-Soviet and connected with other anti-Soviet forces. From 1924 until 1927, in the words of Sydney and Beatrice Webb, in Soviet Communism — A New Civilization, “There ensued what must seem surprising to those who believe that the USSR lies groaning under a preemptory dictatorship, namely, three years of incessant public controversy. This took various forms…. There were hot arguments in many of the local soviets, as well as in the local Party organs. There was a vast [Oppositionist] literature of books and pamphlets, not stopped by the censorship, and published, indeed, by the state publishing houses, extending, as is stated by one who has gone through it, to literally thousands of printed pages.” The Webbs add that the issue “was finally and authoritatively settled by the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party in April 1925;… after these decisions, Trotsky persisted in his agitation, attempting to stir up resistance; and his conduct became plainly factious.”
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 204

But during the 1920s the Stalinist leadership had often permitted the publication of statements and articles by various oppositionists within the party, at least until the moment of their defeat and expulsion. Trotsky’s works were published until the mid-1920s, and Bukharin continued to publish, howbeit within controlled parameters, until his arrest in 1937; he was in fact editor of the government newspaper Izvestia until that time. [Stalin had personally nominated Bukharin to the Izvestia position in 1934]
Getty & Naumov. The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 103

…After all, it is interesting that we went on living with the oppositionists and oppositionist factions until the events of the late 1930s…. Without a man like Stalin it would have been very, very difficult, especially during the war. There would no longer have been teamwork. We would have had splits in the party. It would have been nothing but one against another. Then what?
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 258

In the course of some six months the party had been shaken by two major revolts. First, there had been the “waverers,” the faction led by Zinoviev and Kamenev, who had opposed the Bolshevik seizure of power. Then, distinct from this faction, came the left communists, led by Bukharin, who called for a return to the purity of socialist principles. In both cases there had been free debate within the party.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 109

Interest groups in the bureaucracy usually could not oppose the established line, but in cases where there was no firmly fixed policy, debate, negotiation, and lobbying were possible even in the Stalin years.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 11

Actually Trotsky wanted to try another test of strength with the Politburo. It seemed to him that the mood in the party had shifted in his favor. Dozens of oppositionists who came to see him at the offices of the Chief Concessions Committee assured him that this was so. Thus Trotsky decided on a renewal of factional political activity, which was conducted on a large scale and attracted more supporters than in the fall of 1926. The opposition groups in the various Soviet cities had their own local leaderships and their own faction discipline, and dues were collected from members. Opposition materials were published secretly on government printing presses, and a small illegal print shop was set up in Moscow for the same purpose. Trotsky knew about, and fully approved of, the use of such prerevolutionary conspiratorial methods. Assessing these events several years later, Trotsky wrote:
“In a very short time it was apparent that as a faction we had undoubtedly gained strength–that is to say, we had grown more united intellectually, and stronger in numbers….”
In this passage Trotsky obviously exaggerates the extent of Opposition influence among rank-and-file party members. He overstates even more the extent to which Stalin had been discredited by the Chinese events. Moreover, most of the illegal meetings and Opposition materials were no secret to Stalin and his immediate circle. He followed the activities of the opposition leaders very closely.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 171

In November 1923 the alarm caused by the crisis led the triumvirs to table a motion in favor of democratic reform in the party. As in the Georgian affair, so now Stalin agreed to make any verbal concession to Trotsky. The motion was carried by the Politburo unanimously. Trotsky had no choice but to vote for it. On November 7 the sixth anniversary of the revolution, Zinoviev officially announced the opening of a public discussion on all issues that troubled the Bolshevik mind. The state of siege in the party, so it might have seemed, was at last being lifted.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 260

If a workers democracy was needed, did that mean that the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries were to be allowed to come back? Most of Stalin’s critics, including Trotsky, agreed that the Mensheviks should remain outlawed.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 261

After the 13th Congress, in 1925, 1926, the 1927, the same freedom existed within the Party. The fight against the opposition was carried out in the committees, Party cells, and meetings of organs and militants of the Party. Leaders of the opposition vehemently urged their

partisans to be as active as possible to attack the Central Committee. In so doing, they would underline the strength and influence of the opposition.
I was astonished when, after the 14th congress [December 1925], Stalin and his new majority in the Central Committee did not oppose this freedom…. it would have been simpler to forbid discussions within the Party and to proclaim, by a resolution of the Central Committee's plenum, that such discussions harmed the Party and turned its efforts away from constructive lines, etc.
… I was able definitely to confirm my theory during a conversation with Stalin and Mekhlis. The latter was holding in his hands the report of the local Party meeting, and he cited violent intervention by opposition elements. He was indignant and said, "Comrade Stalin, don't you think this goes too far, and the Central Committee is wrong in letting itself be discredited so openly? Wouldn't it be better to forbid it?" Stalin smiled, "Let them speak! Let them speak! The dangerous enemy is not he who shows his hand. It's the hidden enemy, whom we don't know, who is dangerous. We know all the people [in this report] and have files on them…."
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 92

The bans on other political parties remained but, during the period of the New Economic Policy (1921-1928) there was a relatively high level of tolerance for diverse perspectives in Soviet society. Restrictions on the press were relaxed and scores of private printing houses and non-party journals were founded.
In the 1924-25 period nomination rules were relaxed in order to make it easy for candidates not approved by the Communist Party to win elections to the local Soviets. In new electoral instructions issued in early 1925, Party organizations were told to cease to 'impose their list at election meetings' and no longer to insist that voters 'be excluded merely because they have been critical of local Soviet authorities.' As a result the majority of those elected to the village Soviets in the rural areas of the Ukraine and Russian republic were non-Party. After the 1927 elections about 90 percent of the delegates and 75 percent of the local Soviet chairmen in both Republics were non-Party.
The ban on organized factions in the Party was not rescinded, but a vital internal party life, as well as toleration of widely diverse viewpoints within the Party, continued throughout the period of the New Economic Policy…. While the center-right alliance of those around Stalin and Bukharin had the upper hand in the period after Lenin's death (they were united on the continuation of the New Economic Policy and a fairly moderate international line), their left opponents continued to occupy leading positions.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 211

The workers' Opposition was not alone in voicing disillusionment. At the 11th Congress, last attended by Lenin, Trotsky saw himself and Lenin attacked by old and intimate friends: Antonov-Ovseenko, who spoke about the party's surrender to the kulak and foreign capitalism; Ryazanov, who thundered against the prevalent political demoralization and the arbitrary manner in which the Politburo ruled the party; Lozovsky and Skrypnik, the Ukrainian commissar, who protested against the over-centralistic method of government, which, he said, was all too reminiscent of the "one and indivisible" Russia of old; Bubnov, still the Decemist, who spoke about the danger of the party's "petty bourgeois degeneration"; and Preobrazhensky, one of the leading economic theorists and former secretary of the Central Committee. One day most of the critics would be eminent members of the "Trotskyist'

Opposition; and one-day Trotsky himself would appeal, as Shliapnikov and Kollontai had done, against the Russian Central Committee to the International.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 31

The discussion was at once focused on the statement of the Forty-Six who were now free to expound their views to the rank-and-file. Pyatakov was their most aggressive and effective spokesman; wherever he went he easily obtained large majorities for bluntly worded resolutions.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 116

…curious though the factional fights became, they were still contained within limits. Until the end of 1927, they were still fought out openly before the Central Committee Plenum, the Party Congress or Conference, where the opposition was free to challenge the leadership, issues were settled by votes, and the debates reported. The opposition spokesman were more and more subject to heckling and interruption, but that is true even of parliamentary assemblies; they had increasing difficulty in rallying support inside the party, but even when in 1928-29 the clash between Stalin and the right opposition took place behind closed doors, the opposition could not be suppressed, it had to be defeated. The leaders were not arrested or shot; even Trotsky was banished, not imprisoned or executed, and most of the others, like Zinoviev and Kamenev, were allowed back into the party–even, like Bukharin, to hold official posts.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 182

Comrades, oppositionists can and should be allowed to hold posts. Heads of Central Committee departments can and should be allowed to criticize the Central Committee's activities.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 6, p. 44

[In a report on the Results of the 13th Congress of the Party on June 17, 1924 Stalin stated]
What should our policy be with regard to these oppositionists, or, more precisely, with regard to these former oppositionists? It should be an exceptionally comradely one. Every measure must be taken to help them come over to the basic core of the Party and to work jointly and in harmony with this core.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 6, p. 267

Next question. Why did not the Central Committee publish the opposition's "platform"? Zinoviev and Trotsky say that it was because the Central Committee and the Party "fear" the truth. Is that true? Of course not. More than that. It is absurd to say that the Party or the Central Committee fear the truth. We have the verbatim reports of the plenums of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission. Those reports have been printed in several thousand copies and distributed among the members of the Party. They contain the speeches of the oppositionists as well as of the representatives of the Party line. They are being read by tens and hundreds of thousands of Party members. If we fear the truth we would not have circulated those documents. The good thing about those documents is precisely that they enable the members of the party to compare the Central Committee's position with the views of the opposition and to make their decision. Is that fear of the truth?
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 10, p. 183

Although, in the early years of the regime, its ideological opponents, such fans and socialist revolutionaries, had been put in prison, the game–at least in theory–was not depressed and physically or to put him into their intellectual life, but merely to segregate them from the rest of the population and prevent them from spreading their ideas.
Berger, Joseph. Nothing but the Truth. New York, John Day Co. 1971, p. 60

Since the revolution, and especially during the period of the New Economic Policy the arts and intellectual life had enjoyed a considerable degree of autonomy. True, open political opposition was forbidden, and the regime could use the power of the purse to support this or that tendency. But direct political supervision was sporadic, and diverse schools of thought and art could and did contend, even forming separate organizations in literature, for example.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 153

STALIN SAID THE OPPOSITION HAD DESCENDED FAR IN 7 YEARS

With deep disgust, Stalin gave his personal view of the tragic demoralization which had degraded the Opposition from a more or less honest political programme to the gutter tactics of Fascism and primitive murder. “From the political tendency which it showed six or seven years earlier, Trotskyism has become a mad and unprincipled gang of saboteurs, of agents of diversion, of assassins acting on the orders of foreign States.”
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 101

But in the course of the 1920s and particularly in the late 20s and early 30s, when the Trotskyite line had been overwhelmingly defeated inside the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, they ceased to be a political trend. Those who remained in the Soviet Union pretended in public to accept the line of the Party, but secretly began to work against the Party, against the Revolution. They degenerated into secret agents of capitalism, began to work for the various capitalist Intelligence services, plotted the restoration of capitalism in the USSR and the defeat of the Soviet Union in the course of the aggression which was being prepared by the great capitalist powers, organized the sabotage of Soviet industry and agriculture and the assassination of leading Communists. Trotsky himself, in exile, maintained close contact with the secret groups inside the CPSU, and became the center of a world-wide network of anti-Soviet sabotage and espionage, attempting to organize similar secret groupings inside the Communist Parties and militant labor, progressive, and national liberation organizations all over the world.
Klugmann, James. From Trotsky to Tito. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1951, p. 74

[At the Feb. March 1937 Plenum Stalin stated]…Before, these elements [Trotskyists] argued for their political tendency among the working class, not afraid to show their political orientation among the workers. Seven or eight years ago, Trotskyism was such a political tendency among the Bolsheviks.
Can we say that the Trotskyism of 1936 is the same as before among the working-class? No, we cannot say this. Why? Because today’s Trotskyites are afraid to show their activity to the workers,…they hide their political outlook from the masses, because the people would curse them as traitors. The modern Trotskyites are not propagating their political tendencies

openly, they hide their true identity. They try to be more Bolshevik than real, dedicated Bolsheviks–meanwhile, doing their anti-State activity.
If you will recall the trial of Kamenev-Zinoviev in 1936, they had a perfect opportunity to promote their political tendencies… but they refused and kept mum. Now, even the blind can see that they DID HAVE a political program. Then why did they not take the opportunity to espouse their ideas? Because they were afraid to expose their political face, thus trying to save others who were still active, but well hidden. They were afraid to officially state that they wanted to restore capitalism.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 232

In carrying on a struggle against the Trotskyite agents, our Party comrades did not notice, they overlooked the fact, that present-day Trotskyism is no longer what it was, let us say, seven or eight years ago; that Trotskyism and the Trotskyite have passed through a serious evolution in this period which has utterly changed the face of Trotskyism;… Trotskyism has ceased to be a political trend in the working class, it has changed from a political trend in the working class which it was seven or eight years ago, into a frantic and unprincipled gang of wreckers, diversionists, spies and murderers acting on the instruction of the intelligence services of foreign states.
Stalin, Joseph. Mastering Bolshevism. San Francisco: Proletarian Publishers, 1972, p. 9

“Political figures” hiding their views and their platform not only from the working class but also from the Trotskyite rank and file, and not only from the Trotskyite rank and file, but from the leading group of Trotskyites–such is the face of present-day Trotskyism.
Such is the indisputable result of the evolution of Trotskyism in the past seven or eight years. Such is the difference between Trotskyism in the past and Trotskyism at the present time.
Stalin, Joseph. Mastering Bolshevism. San Francisco: Proletarian Publishers, 1972, p. 12

The only weapon left to them [the Opposition] [by the early thirties] was terrorism–the assassination of Stalin and his close supporters. There were many psychological reasons against this. Used against the Tsarist regime, it had been condemned by the Bolsheviks as an individual (not a mass) weapon and as wasteful, difficult to control and politically ineffective. Their whole training and tradition were against it. This is perhaps the most important clue to an understanding of their defeat.
Berger, Joseph. Nothing but the Truth. New York, John Day Co. 1971, p. 163

WEAKNESSES OF SOME TOP LEADERS

Zinoviev could make a good speech and talk about world revolution by the hour but when it came to doing anything practical he was hopeless. Another example can be found in Radek–a superb writer and orator but a man who could not be depended upon. Similarly Bukharin was a spinner of wonderful theories but could not analyze a situation coolly and wisely and then act strongly.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 39

If we had not supported Stalin those years, I don't know what might have happened. But Brezhnev pinned medals on everyone, and persons who cannot be trusted on any account have wormed their way into leading positions. [3-9-86]
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 415

CHUEV: Forty years have passed since World War II. I believe the Brezhnev period slowed us down terribly.
MOLOTOV: He did slow us down, no question about that. Khrushchevism was repeated in the Brezhnev period. This is so. This speaks to the fact that we have many rotten apples within the party itself and much backwardness, ignorance, and undereducation in the country.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 416

Sudoplatov remains a believer in the dream of communism and attributes its fall to the lesser men who followed Stalin.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. xiii

PARTY PLAGUED BY FACTIONS WITHIN

At a Politburo meeting Trotsky declared–this was in my presence–that our time was up, that we could no longer retain state power…. It was one of the most critical moments in our history. It was a turning point. We somehow had to make the transition to a new policy, but how were we to do it? We had little economic experience. And the political enemy was within the party. There was not simply one faction, there was Trotskyism, the Workers' Opposition, Democratic Centralism, and all kinds of national groupings. Stalin played an outstanding role in their defeat.
A dangerous situation was developing in the party. There were two extremes: Trotsky at one end and right-wingers at the other.
Bukharin was promoting a different ideology, one that had nothing to do with looking after the people. He thought that since we had given land to the kulaks, if we now gave land to the middle peasants they too would be revived. But with what could we revive them?
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 126

WOMEN WERE NOT FOUND IN THE OPPOSITION

…it was only natural to expect that there would be some women members of the disloyal Opposition. Why there were not can perhaps be explained by the generalization that women as a sex benefited more than men from the Bolshevik revolution.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 232

OPPOSITION CLAIM THAT A NEW BOURGEOISIE HAD ARISEN IS FALSE

As we have seen, the "joint opposition" platform of 1927 proclaimed the rise of a "new bourgeoisie" in the USSR and, in the succeeding decades, the phrase became general in world anti-Soviet circles. But there was no bourgeoisie in any meaningful sense in the USSR. For there was no economic base for one. What did arise, as does not seem to have been recognized, was a historically new class.

Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 78

DIFFERENCES WITH THE OPPOSITION IN THE 20'S ARE NOT SMALL

The Opposition. In 1927 took place the massed offensive of the Opposition, all along the line, against the leadership of the Russian Party and of the Communist International….
Of what, exactly, did this Opposition consist? Reference used constantly to be made to it in our part of Europe. It is still quite frequently mentioned, even now. At first sight this Russian phenomenon or, rather, this phenomenon imported from Russia, is quite incomprehensible, except to the initiated. One hears that prominent revolutionaries, militant Socialists of the highest rank, suddenly begin to treat their Party as a foe, and to be treated as foes by it. One sees them suddenly leave the ranks and fight like demons amid torrents of abuse. They are eliminated, excluded, exiled–and all for questions of disagreement on what seem to be negligible shades of difference. One is tempted to conclude that everyone in the land of the New is terribly and fantasticly stubborn.
Not at all. When one goes closely into the matter one sees that what seemed complicated is really quite simple–but that what seemed superficial is really not so at all. It is not a question of shades of meaning, but of the widest possible differences really affecting the whole question of the future.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 157

OPPOSITION SPREADS DOOM AND GLOOM ABOUT THE REVOLUTION'S CHANCES

The Opposition did everything it could to discourage the Revolution and cast over the world (with all the force it could muster) doubt, the specter of ruin, desolation and perdition, and a shadow of decadence and of surrender.
"Shake up our Opposition," said Stalin, "throw aside its revolutionary phraseology, and you will see that at the bottom of it lies capitulation!"
Trotskyism, which has to some extent spread over the globe, attacking the network of the Communist International, has done everything it could to destroy the work of October. Around Trotsky, all sorts of people from all sides, persons who have been banished, renegades, malcontents, and Anarchists carry on a campaign of systematic detraction and machine-wrecking, a struggle which is exclusively anti-Bolshevik and anti-Soviet, absolutely negative and containing every possible form of treason. All that these turncoats wish to do is to become the grave-diggers of the Russian Revolution.
One is quite justified in considering Trotsky as a counter-revolutionary, although that obviously does not mean that Trotsky harbors all the ideas of middle-class reactionaries against the USSR.
Stalin once said: "The Opposition will end by hurling itself into the arms of the Whites." Some people were inclined to think that this prophecy went too far and was the result of the fierceness of the struggle. The bloody events of December 1934 have justified it in the most sinister way. Will this be the only justification of it that we shall have?
If the Opposition had won, the Party would have been split in two, and the Revolution would have been in a sorry state. Ordjonikidze wrote: "The triumph of Trotskyism would have meant the ruin of all the constructive plans of the Soviets. The victory of Stalin over Trotsky

and over those of the Right is like a fresh success for the October Revolution."
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 189-190

MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITION ATTACK ONE ANOTHER AS MUCH AS THEY ATTACK STALIN

The opposition groups remained small minorities within the party. Their leaders were motivated mainly by resentment of Stalin's powering position,… The opposition leaders were, moreover, filled with malice and hatred towards each other. Zinoviev and Kamenev had vied in the virulence of their attacks on Trotsky. Trotsky had never disguised his contempt for his opponents and had been brutally outspoken in attacking them.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 212

The commonest characteristic of these [anti-Soviet] organizations was their disdain or even hatred of each other.
Alexandrov, Victor. The Tukhachevsky Affair. London: Macdonald, 1963, p. 85

MANY IMPORTANT PARTY LEADERS HAD OPPOSED STALIN AND LENIN FOR YEARS

…The alleged members of the Leningrad center were Kotolynov, Rumyantzev, Mendelshtam, Myasnikov, Levshin, Shatsky, Sositzky, and Nikolayev. All these alleged Zinovievists had in fact detested the very name of Zinoviev ever since his declaration of loyalty to Stalin at the 17th Party Congress–but they were all Party members who had taken part in the famous Leningrad Conference of 1926, a Conference unique in Soviet history for having passed a resolution of lack of confidence in the Party Central Committee headed by Stalin.
More surprises were in store for the Party. On December 22nd, 1934 Pravda wrote: "It appears that the assassins, loathsome agents of the class enemy, prostituted scoundrels, declared rogues, cowards and traitors were… the Zinoviev, Kamenev… Bakayev, Kuklin… Evdokimov, Zalutsky… Kotolynov, Rumyantzev… Shatsky, and Tollazov." THESE WERE ALL VERY IMPORTANT PARTY OFFICERS AND MEN…
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 246

[Footnote]: In 1926 Pyatakov, then on the staff of the Soviet Embassy in Paris, sought to unite the various anti-Stalinist elements expelled from the French Communist Party. In Moscow, Trotsky & Zinoviev were forming the Joint Opposition, and Pyatakov's task was to create a French counterpart to it. He held meetings with Rosmer, Dunois, Loriot, Souvarine, Monatte, Paz, and others, and initiated the publication of Contre le Courant.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 31

…he [Ivan Smirnov] joined the Trotskyist Opposition as soon as it was formed. He helped to organize it, signed its every declaration, freely voiced extremist views, and was in and out of trouble from as early as 1923. Later he acted as a link between scattered Trotskyist groups and continued openly to support the movement even after Trotsky's exile. He recanted in the

end, though later than others. His apology to Stalin did not save him from arrest. He too confessed at his trial, but with certain important reservations.
Berger, Joseph. Nothing but the Truth. New York, John Day Co. 1971, p. 92

WHAT KINDS OF GROUPS ARE IN THE SUBVERSIVE OPPOSITION

What section of the population in the Soviet Union supported all these groups which based their whole political line on the impossibility of building Socialism in a single country? Obviously, those who did not desire to see Socialism built anywhere–the ex-Tsarist bureaucrat, the bourgeois specialist who hoped for the gradual restoration of capitalism, the urban merchant and shopkeeper, the capitalist peasant, the bourgeois nationalist and the politically degenerate sections of the army. During the years of the open Trotskyist opposition, from 1923 to 1927, those elements lay low and hoped for a Trotskyist victory. They did not mind under what slogans that trickery was achieved. Let the slogans appear to be ever so left, the victory of a group which did not believe in the possibility of realizing Socialism in the Soviet Union meant the victory of the forces of capitalist restoration.
It was when the defeat of Trotsky dashed all their hopes that these counter-revolutionary elements increased their activity enormously. The old bourgeois experts in the mining industry engaged in a course of systematic sabotage which was finally discovered and exposed in the Shakhty trial in 1928. An important group of bourgeois experts and technicians came together in the “Industrial Party,” decided on measures of sabotage and wrecking, established relations with Russian capitalist circles abroad, and prepared for intervention.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 228

After studying archival documents, Broue came to the conclusion that the Trial of Sixteen used certain facts which were actually true. “If we decide to treat the official minutes of the first Moscow trial as a palimpsest, suppressing from them all mention of terrorism,” he writes, “we find the story of a political evolution of political people in a changing but dramatic situation.” The French historian considers the following facts which were mentioned at the trial to be real. After his return from exile Safarov proposed to his comrades in the opposition that they return to a discussion of ways to fight against Stalin (Kamenev’s testimony); in 1931-1932 Zinoviev entered into oppositional contact with Smirnov, Sokolnikov, leaders of the former “Workers Opposition” Shliapnikov and Medvedev and members of the Sten -Lominadze Group (Zinoviev’s testimony); during this period Zinoviev and Kamenev thought that it was possible and necessary “to remove Stalin” (that is, to remove him from the post of general secretary), and also to establish contact with Trotsky (testimony of Zinoviev and Kamenev);…
the anti-Stalinist bloc finally took form in June 1932. After a few months Goltsman passed information to Sedov about the bloc, and then brought back to Moscow Trotsky’s reply about agreeing to collaborate with the bloc.
In relations with Trotsky and Sedov and their co-thinkers in the USSR, the conspiracy was outstandingly maintained. Although the GPU conducted careful surveillance of them, it was unable to uncover any meetings, correspondence or other forms of their contact with Soviet oppositionists. And far from all of the opposition contacts inside the Soviet Union were tracked down. Although there was a series of arrests of participants in illegal opposition groups at the end of 1932 and the beginning of 1933, not a single one of those arrested

mentioned negotiations about the creation of a bloc. For this reason several of the participants in these negotiations (Lominadze, Shatskin, Goltsman and others) remained at liberty until 1935-1936. Only after a new wave of arrests following Kirov's assassination, after interrogations and re-interrogations of dozens of Oppositionists, did Stalin receive information about the 1932 bloc, which served as one of the main reasons for organizing the Great Purge.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 63

STALIN'S OPPONENTS PRACTICED THE VERY SUPPRESSION THEY ACCUSED STALIN OF

On the face of it, the opposition could well have argued that Stalin's control of, and claim to represent, the Party was based on no higher sanction than success in packing the Party Congresses, that in fact he had no real claim to be regarded as the genuine succession. But the oppositionists themselves had used similar methods in their day, and had never criticized them until a more skilled operator turned the weapon against them.
In 1923, Stalin was already able to attack such arguments from his opponents by pointing out that appeals for democracy came oddly from people like Byeloborodov and Rosengoltz, who had ruled Rostov and the Donetz basin, respectively, in the most authoritarian fashion. Even more to the point, in 1924 Shliapnikov ironically remarked that Trotsky and his followers had all supported the action taken against the Workers' Opposition at the 10th Party Congress in 1921,so that their claims to stand for Party democracy were hypocritical.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 114

And the Stalinists were able to comment tellingly, as when Mikoyan said, "While Zinoviev is in the majority he is for iron discipline…. When he is in the minority… he is against it."
When Stalin proceeded to the further step of arresting those responsible for the Trotskyite underground printing press, headed by Mrachkovsky, in 1927, he was again able to refute opposition objections, remarking: "They say that such things are unknown of the Party. This is not true. What about the Myasnikov group? And the Workers' Truth group? Does not everyone know that comrades Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev themselves supported the arrest of the members of these groups?"
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 115

LEFT AND RIGHT DIFFER ON HOW FAST SOCIALIZATION SHOULD PROCEED

The left Bolsheviks saw the chief danger to socialism in the slow recovery of industry and pressed for rapid industrialization. The right-wing thought the position of socialism to be secure, even if industrialization were to proceed slowly, 'at a snail's pace' as Bukharin put it.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 300

OPPOSITION COMPLAINED THAT THE PARTY WAS NOT HARD ENOUGH

The party had tried to squeeze more out of the workers in factories and mines by rationalizing the process of production. But this was never enough to satisfy the critics on the

political left. In their diverse ways the oppositionists,The Democratic Centralists, The Workers' Opposition, the Left Opposition, the Leningrad Opposition, and the United Opposition,made the Politburo edgy by castigating it for ideological cowardice and betrayal.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 255

BUKHARIN WAS WEAK AND UNBALANCED

Bukharin had a special love of animals. His flat was filled with caged birds, and there were more in his country residence, a simple wooden datcha near Moscow. No greater pleasure could be offered him than the gift of a bird of a species of which he had no specimen. But he was also a sufferer from neurasthenia. His irresolution and infinite softheartedness–he would never have accepted an office in which he must sign death warrants–did not prevent him from suddenly making inflammatory speeches in the party or at meetings of the Politburo and demanding the death penalty. He was obviously weak and unbalanced.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 180

…But both [Bukharin & Zinoviev] were arrogant. Bukharin comported himself with great self-confidence, though he was extremely unstable politically.
…Lenin valued Bukharin, but he placed him last among the three candidates to the Politburo, after me and Kalinin…. I have said that Bukharin was very muddleheaded. Not only Lenin but others too recognized this.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 116

I didn't take part in the early years, but after 1921, after the transition to the NEP, I sat almost next to Trotsky at the Politburo. I sat next to Lenin, with Trotsky in front of me. Trotsky was the first and constant opponent of Lenin. But he was flexible at that time and worked as part of the team. That's why Lenin still valued him. But after Lenin, of the four Politburo members only Stalin remained. Trotsky, Kamenev, and Zinoviev deviated. And Bukharin, the third candidate to the Politburo, also deviated…. You see, he [Lenin] used to say that Bukharin was a wonderful person, a party favorite, but he was devilishly unstable in politics. In politics! And politics was the most important thing! Struggle was everywhere, relentless struggle. We were pressed first from one side, then from another.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 125

BUKHARIN OPPOSED STALIN'S MAJOR PROGRAMS

Neither of these two leaders [Bukharin and Rykov] could agree with the radical policy which Stalin had introduced in 1928; it was against their whole mentality and temperament…. Moreover, Bukharin was one of those who did not believe in the possibility of establishing a socialist economic system in the Soviet Union with capitalism still ruling in the rest of the world. He was also against accelerated industrialization, and especially against agricultural collectivization and the persecution of the big farmers.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 181

Regardless of his intentions, Bukharin's platform, like Trotsky's earlier, would have undermined the construction of socialism. If the NEP had continued for "many decades,"

capitalism would have become dominant. Without industrialization the Soviet Union would, as Stalin said and subsequent events demonstrated, have been crushed in war; the continuation of individual farms, with their kulak “nests,” would in time have undermined proletarian rule. When we examine the platforms of Trotsky & Bukharin, the strength of Stalin, with his stubborn practicality and firm socialist perspective, becomes increasingly obvious.
Once again, Stalin, as General Secretary, gave the answer of the majority of the Central Committee to the new opposition:
“Those who support Comrade Bukharin’s group hope to persuade the class enemy that he should voluntarily forgo his interests and voluntarily surrender his grain surplus. They hope that the kulak, who has grown, who is able to avoid giving grain by offering other products in its place and who conceals his grain surplus, they hope that this same kulak will give us his grain surplus voluntarily at our collection prices. Have they lost their senses? Is it not obvious that they do not understand the mechanism of the class struggle, that they do not know what classes mean? Do they know with what derision the kulak’s treat our people and the Soviet Government at village meetings called to assist the grain collections? Have they heard of facts like this, for instance: one of our agitators in Kazakhstan for two hours tried to persuade the holders of grain to surrender that grain for supplying the country. At the end of the talk a kulak stepped forth with his pipe in his mouth and said: “Do us a little dance, young fellow, and I will let you have a couple of poods of grain”…. Try to persuade people like that. Class is class, comrades. You cannot get away from that truth.”
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 63

Stalin and Bukharin differed profoundly over many aspects of socialism. Bukharin wanted to go slowly with the peasants, and delay the ending of the NEP; he was against subordinating the interests of the working-class movements in other countries to those of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union; he also held that the Revolution need not take place everywhere by armed uprising and force…. Stalin believed his socialism should be the pattern for all countries; Bukharin did not. Stalin wanted more and more centralization of power in the USSR “in the name of world Revolution”; but Bukharin’s views were diametrically opposed to his on this point.
Stalin…made it extremely difficult for Buryto to put forward their program; nevertheless they succeeded in publishing its main points: (1) Not to end NEP but to continue it for at least ten years; (2) to limit the compulsory sale of farm produce to the State and allow free market prices; (3) To curtail the State monopoly of trade; (4) While pursuing industrialization, to remember that the Revolution was made for the ordinary man, and that, therefore, far more energy must be given to light industry–socialism is made by happy, well-fed men, not starving beggars; (5) To halt the compulsory collectivization of agriculture and the destruction of kulaks.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press, 1956, p. 86

Stalin and Bukharin clashed every time they met.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 261

BUKHARIN OPPOSED THE IDEA OF SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY

There was therefore formed, under Bukharin's and Rykov's leadership, a small opposition group, which became known as the Right-wing Opposition…. The party congress had long-ago raised the formula 'It is possible to build up Socialism even in a single country' to a principal of the party which no one must question. Bukharin and Rykov had questioned it; they were therefore undeniably heretics.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 182

STALIN ATTACKS BUKHARIN WITH VICIOUS WORDS

In a letter of June 8, 1929, Voroshilov said to Ordzhonikidze, "At the last of Politburo meeting, a rather nasty affair broke out between Bukharin and me. The Chinese affair was being discussed. Some favored a demonstration of military force on the Manchurian border. Bukharin spoke out sharply against this. In my speech I mentioned that at one time Bukharin had identified the Chinese revolution with ours to such an extent that the ruin of the Chinese revolution was equivalent to our ruin. Bukharin said in reply that we have all said different things at different times, but only you, Voroshilov alone, had advocated support for Feng & Chiang Kai-shek, who are presently slaughtering workers. This unpardonable nonsense [against you] so infuriated me that I lost my self-control and blurted out in Bukharin's face, 'you liar, bastard, I'll punch you in the face,' and other such nonsense and all in front of a large number of people. Bukharin is trash and is capable of telling the most vile fabrications straight to your face, putting an especially innocent and disgustingly holy expression on his everlasting Jesuitical countenance; this is now clear to me, but still, I did not behave properly."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 149

In a September 16, 1926, letter to Molotov Stalin said, "Bukharin is a swine and perhaps worse than a swine because he considers it beneath his dignity to write even two lines about his impressions of Germany."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 127

In an August 21, 1929, letter to Molotov Stalin stated, "You're right when you say that Bukharin is going downhill. It's sad but a fact. What can you say?–it must be 'fate.' It's strange, though, that he hopes to trick the party with petty, underhanded 'maneuvers.' He is a typical representative of the spineless, effete intelligent in politics, leaning in the direction of a Kadet lawyer. The hell with him…."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 168

In an August 23, 1929, letter to Molotov Stalin stated, "Just as I thought, Bukharin has slid into the swamp of opportunism and must now resort to gossip, forgery, and blackmail: he doesn't have any other arguments left. Talk of 'documents' and 'land nationalization' and so forth is the fraud of a petty lawyer who has gone bankrupt in his 'practice.' If his disagreements with the present Central committee are explainable in terms of Stalin's 'personality,' then how does one explain his disagreements with the Central Committee when Lenin lived? Lenin's 'personality'? But why does he praise Lenin so much now, after

his death? Isn't it for the same reason that all renegades like Trotsky praise Lenin (after his death!)?"
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 173

In a letter around September 15, 1930, Stalin said to Molotov, "It is very good that the Politburo has opened fire on Rykov & Co. Although Bukharin, so it seems, is invisible in this matter, he is undoubtedly the key instigator and rabble-rouser against the party. It is quite clear that he would feel better in a Sukhanov-Kondratiev party, where he (Bukharin) would be on the "extreme left,' than in the Communist Party, where he can only be a rotten defeatist and a pathetic opportunist."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 216

[In a letter to Kaganovich on 30 August 1931 Stalin stated] I read Bukharin's speech (the transcript). It is an empty, non-Bolshevik speech that is out of touch with real life. At the same time, it is and an inept, amateurish attempt to "outline" a platform for the former rightists against the Central Committee of the All-Union of the Communist Party with regard to a host of economic issues and worker supply. A strange person, this Comrade Bukharin! Why did he have to put on this act?
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 69

BUKHARIN IS A SPLITTER

On August 13, 1929, the Politburo passed the following resolution by voice vote. "The two recent letters from Comrade Bukharin of July 22, 1929, addressed to the Central Committee, testify that Comrade Bukharin continues to use the method of struggle with the party and its Central Committee chosen by him of late, making indirect sorties against decisions of the Central Committee…and permitting himself further masked attacks on the party line in speeches and articles…. Furthermore, each time the party catches Comrade Bukharin at this, he squirms out of a direct answer and an admission of his mistakes and in reality covers them up….
Thus, instead of helping to mobilize the broad masses of workers under the Communist banner of the working class, in this speech, Comrade Bukharin completely violates the Marxist method of dialectics; furthermore, he continues to struggle against the party leadership…. he is using any excuse to continue the battle against the party's policy."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 154-155

BUKHARIN WAS BECOMING A SOCIAL-DEMOCRAT LIKE THOSE IN THE WEST

… Stalin aimed at one-party dictatorship and complete centralization. Bukharin envisaged several parties and even nationalist parties, and stood for the maximum of decentralization. He was also in favor of vesting authority in the various constituent republics and thought that the more important of these should even control their own foreign relations. By 1936,

Bukharin was approaching the social democratic standpoint of the left-wing socialists of the West.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 43

DZERSHINSKY ACCUSES BUKHARIN OF BEING OPPOSED TO THE GPU

[Letter from Bukharin, editor of Pravda, to Dzerzhinsky, December 1924 on the necessity for more liberal policies]

I was not at the last meeting of the executive group. I heard that you, by the way, said there that I and Sokolnikov are “against the GPU” etc.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 18

DESPITE HIS OPPOSITION BUKHARIN RETAINED HIGH POSITIONS

[In 1931 Tokaev said] Had they forgotten that, though dropped from the Politburo and the Comintern, Bukharin had still been re-elected to the Central Committee? Had they forgotten that he was Deputy-Commissar of the People for Heavy Industry?
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 149

In the first half of the 1930s neither Bukharin nor Rykov was charged with underground or anti-Soviet activities. References to “Bukharin’s group” would be made again and again at the political trials of 1936 and 1937, which were engineered by Stalin and his close aides. During public court hearings some of the accused would “suddenly” testify that Bukharin and Rykov had played a role in “counter-revolutionary centers” headed by Kamenev, Zinoviev, and Pyatakov.
The political accusations against Bukharin were picked up by the press. There appeared stories against “enemies in the people,” which referred to Bukharin as a “counter-revolutionary figure.” In the meantime, he remained editor-in-chief of Izvestia, and a candidate member of the Central Committee.
Bukharin joined the Bolshevik party in 1906, from 1917 to 1934 he was a member of the party’s Central Committee, and in 1934-1937 was a candidate member of the Central Committee. For 10 years he worked in the Central Committee’s Politburo (in 1919-1923 as an alternate member, and in 1924-1929 as a full member). For years he was the editor of Pravda, and in the last years of his life he was the editor of Izvestia. For a number of years he headed the Executive Committee of the Communist international. He was a member of the USSR Academy of Sciences.
Political Archives of the Soviet Union (Vol. 1, No. 2) Commack, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1990, p. 148

STALIN AND BUKHARIN WERE CLOSE FRIENDS FOR YEARS

From 1927, at Stalin’s insistence Bukharin lived in the Kremlin, and after the death of Stalin’s wife they even exchanged apartments, because, Stalin explained, he wished to escape the constant reminder of that fateful night. Bukharin, being a sensitive person, cherished his

feelings of friendship, decency, and sincerity in their relationship. They always addressed each other in the familiar 'ty' form. Stalin always called Bukharin 'Nikolai' and Bukharin always addressed the General Secretary by his old revolutionary nickname 'Koba'. In the period 1924 to 1928 Stalin listened attentively to Bukharin's views, frequently asserting in public 'that Lenin rated his theoretical mind highly' and that the party treasured his native abilities.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 174

STALIN PROTECTED BUKHARIN FROM LEFTIST ATTACKS IN THE 1920'S

From 1925 to 1927 Stalin and Bukharin were the most influential figures in the party. And it was Bukharin who in effect helped Stalin in his conflict with Trotsky, Kamenev, and Zinoviev, even though he tried at the same time to remain loyal to them. With their departure from the Politburo, Stalin's and Bukharin's influence over current and strategic issues rose noticeably. It had not been long before that Stalin turned angrily on the oppositionists who were attacking Bukharin, with, "So, you want Bukharin's blood? We won't give you his blood, and you'd better know it!"
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 179

BUKHARIN CALLS STALIN A GENGHIS KHAN AND CRITICIZES HIM

[Around 1930] Frightening news again from the countryside. Bukharin has called Koba a Genghis Khan.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 115

Anna…married Bukharin, and they lived in the Kremlin in an apartment that Stalin had abandoned after his wife committed suicide. Bukharin soon admitted to his bride that for the past few years he had considered Stalin a monster bent on destroying the Party of Lenin and ruling through sheer force of terror and personality.
Remnick, David. Lenin's Tomb. New York: Random House, c1993, p. 65

He [Stalin] is the new Genghis Khan. He will slaughter us all.–Bukharin, 1928.
Overy, R. J. Russia's War: Blood Upon the Snow. New York: TV Books, c1997, p. 19

Other things in the "Transcript" [transcript of Bukharin's conversation with Kamenev on January 20, 1929] also strike me as completely realistic: for example, when Bukharin is quoted as saying, " What can you do when you are dealing with an opponent like this Genghis Khan?"
Larina, Anna. This I Cannot Forget. New York: W.W. Norton, 1993, p. 117

On January 30, 1929, 10 days after the publication of the "Transcript," Bukharin sent an explanation of his sharp pronouncements about Stalin to the Central Committee. This statement became known as Bukharin's platform. In it, he assailed the general secretary's policies as synonymous with a military and feudal exploitation of the peasantry, with the disintegration of the Comintern, and with the installation of bureaucratism in the Party.
Larina, Anna. This I Cannot Forget. New York: W.W. Norton, 1993, p. 120

Set off by quotation marks, the phrase “caused the country to argue with the muzhik” was indeed Bukharin’s. So, too, was “had driven the country into a blind alley,” which should also have been put in quotation marks. But these phrases, which dated from 1928, were widely known.
Larina, Anna. This I Cannot Forget. New York: W.W. Norton, 1993, p. 259

In 1928 he [Bukharin] said to Kirov, “He [Stalin] will strangle us. He is an unprincipled intriguer who subordinates everything to his appetite for power.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin’s Shadow. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994, p. 83

BUKHARIN IS EXPELLED FROM 3 MAJOR POSITIONS IN 1929

[In the Introduction Stephen Cohen states]: In late 1929, the new Stalinist majority stripped him [Bukharin] of all his leadership positions–member of the Politburo, editor of the Party’s newspaper Pravda, and head of the Moscow-based Communist International.
Larina, Anna. This I Cannot Forget. New York: W.W. Norton, 1993, p. 16

STALIN REPEATEDLY SHOWED HIS FRIENDSHIP TOWARD BUKHARIN

Yet, simultaneously, Stalin “petted” my husband. In the spring of 1935, at a banquet for graduates of the military academies, he gave this toast: “Let us drink, comrades, to Bukharin, and let bygones be bygones!” The toast was considered a sincere expression of Stalin’s attitude toward Bukharin.
Larina, Anna. This I Cannot Forget. New York: W.W. Norton, 1993, p. 64

To take another example, Stalin phoned in the summer of 1934 to congratulate Nikolai on a speech about poetry he had given at the First Congress of Soviet Writers. Stalin was especially pleased by Bukharin’s analysis that the poet Bedny was in danger of falling behind the times. Another time, Stalin phoned in the dead of night, waking us up. When I went to the telephone, I heard three words: “Stalin. Call Nikolai!” Nikolai said to me, ” More trouble again,” and uneasily took the receiver. But there was no trouble. Stalin, not sober,” had called to which us well on our marriage. “Nikolai, I congratulate you! You outspit me this time, too!” Nikolai did not ask about the phrase “this time, too,” but did want to know how he had “outspit” Stalin, who replied, “A good wife, a beautiful wife, a young one… younger than my Nadya!” This is the way he talked, even though by then she was no longer among the living.
Larina, Anna. This I Cannot Forget. New York: W.W. Norton, 1993, p. 65

BUKHARIN AND TROTSKY OUTSIDE THE MAINSTREAM

Once more Bucharin, Trotsky, and others reflected the doubts and fears concerning the new era. Bucharin wanted to dispose of the state monopoly of foreign trade and to allow Western capitalism to satisfy the demand for consumer and industrial goods more freely. Trotsky was in favor of starting an economic drive against the peasants as a means of ending what was called the “scissors crisis” — the widening gap between industrial and agricultural prices.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 149

BUKHARIN, RYKOV, AND TOMSKY WENT TO TROTSKY'S SIDE

The Bolsheviks set a tremendous pace. Soon it proved too much for Rykov, Bucharin, Tomsky, and others, and they passed into Trotsky's camp. New leaders came up to the side of Stalin, leaders of a new type: Kaganovich, Kubishev, Kirov, all most able organizers and administrators, all passionately convinced that socialism in one country was possible.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 161

The Buryto group was formed because Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky were the only members of the Politburo to vote against Trotsky's banishment in 1928.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 85

Trotsky was assisted in his fight against Lenin and the Party by Bukharin. With Preobrazhensky, Serebryakov and Sokolnikov, Bukharin formed a "buffer" group. This group defended and shielded the Trotskyites, the most vicious of all factionalists. Lenin said that Bukharin's behavior was the "acme of ideological depravity."
Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Ed. History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks): Short Course. Moscow: FLPH, 1939, p. 253

BUKHARIN SWITCHES FROM LEFT TO RIGHT LEADER

Footnote: Bucharin had called himself a "Left Communist"; now, after Trotsky's debacle, he began to formulate the principles of what was soon to be publicly known as the Right Opposition.
Behind the scenes, Bucharin formulated the real program of the Right Opposition at conspiratorial meetings with Trotsky's representatives, and with agents of the other underground organizations.
Trotsky at first resented Bucharin's assumption of leadership of the movement he had initiated; but, after a brief period of rivalry and even feuding, the differences were reconciled.
The public and "legal" phase of the Right Opposition lasted until November 1929 when a plenum of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party declared that the propaganda of the views of the Rights was incompatible with membership in the Party. Bucharin, Rykov, and Tomsky were removed from their high official positions.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 207-208
Bukharin was a left-winger during the Brest Peace and afterward turned to the right.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 119

Only one member of the Politburo, Bukharin, openly backed the Georgian and Ukrainian oppositions.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; a Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 255

KAMENEV WAS TOO OFTEN A MENSHEVIK

Kamenev, who in all crises proved himself more a Menshevik and than a Bolshevik,
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 88

Kamenev was a rightist, a typical 100 percent rightist. Sometimes he concealed this, but most of the time he spoke quite openly. And against Lenin, too…. But Lenin never trusted Zinoviev…and he was extremely unsteady. Lenin kept correcting him, putting him in his place….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 106

STALIN OFTEN OPPOSED KAMENEV IN THE PAST

In the summer of 1915 Comrade Stalin managed to attend a large meeting of exiled Bolsheviks in the village of Monastyrskoye in Turukhansk…. Comrade Stalin at this meeting denounced Kamenev's despicable conduct at the trial of the Bolshevik Duma group.
Yaroslavsky, Emelian. Landmarks in the Life of Stalin. Moscow: FLPH, 1940, p. 79

ZINOVIEV AND KAMENEV BEGIN LEFT OPPOSITION AGAINST STALIN AFTER TROTSKY'S DEFEAT

Almost immediately after the defeat of the Trotskyist Left Opposition there arose a "new," or " Leningrad," Opposition headed by Zinoviev and Kamenev, about whom I shall speak briefly.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 136

ZINOVIEV AND KAMENEV TRY TO TAKE OVER THE PARTY AFTER SPLIT WITH STALIN

The majority of the Politburo did not support Zinoviev and Kamenev. Nevertheless, they continued to argue their views, mainly in the Leningrad press. The party apparatus of Leningrad and the northern regions was almost entirely handpicked by Zinoviev from among his close supporters; not surprisingly, then, the Leningrad press spoke up strongly in support of his position. All of Stalin's efforts to penetrate the Leningrad party apparatus with his own supporters were fruitless. The result was a phenomenon quite unusual in Soviet life: an open polemic between two units of the party, the Moscow committee and the Leningrad committee.

The Fourteenth Party Congress was held at the end of December 1925. Before the Congress Stalin proposed a compromise to Zinoviev but on the condition that the Leningrad party organization be under Central Committee control and cease to be under Zinoviev's personal command. Zinoviev refused. But he did try to obtain guarantees that after the congress no repressive measures would be taken against members of this so-called "New Opposition" as long as they ceased any open oppositional activity. Stalin refused to give any such guarantees. Thus he provoked the New Opposition into presenting its platform directly to the party congress, although it had no chance of success. Zinoviev was a sufficiently experienced apparatchik to understand the situation; yet he demanded the right to present a minority report at the congress. The request was granted….

As was expected, the New Opposition suffered a complete defeat at the congress. The resolution based on Stalin's report for the Central Committee was adopted by 559 votes to

65. In 1925 the party rejected Zinoviev and Kamenev's claims to leadership of the Central Committee just as it had rejected similar attempts by Trotsky in 1924.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 151-154

TROTSKY AND ZINOVIEV UNITE AND FORGIVE EACH OTHER

Not surprisingly the unification of these two groups [the Trotskyites and Zinovievites] in the party was accompanied by a mutual pardoning of sins.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 158

In May 1931 Sedov met in Berlin with Ivan N. Smirnov, a Civil War commander, close friend of Trotsky's, and former leading oppositionist. At the time of the meeting, he headed the important Gorky auto factory. According to Broue, negotiations began in June 1932 among dissidents inside the USSR with the object of forming a bloc. In October, a Soviet official named Holtzman, a former Trotskyist, also conferred with Sedov in Berlin and gave him a secret government memorandum on economic conditions in the USSR. It appeared the next month in Bulletin of the Opposition, an emigre socialist journal.

Holtzman also brought Sedov a proposal from Smirnov. Supposedly Smirnov had broken with Trotsky in the late 1920s, but he now proposed that a united opposition, to include Trotskyites, Zinovievites, and others, be formed inside the Soviet Union. Trotsky was excited by the prospect but cautious about his followers' participation in the bloc. It could be only a loose coalition, not a merger of groups against Stalin.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 25

KAMENEV PROPOSES STATE CAPITALISM OVER SOCIALISM IN 1925

[In 1925] another debate began to rage round the question of whether the Soviet industrial enterprises should be "rigorously Socialistic" in complexion. Kamenev used the phrase "State Capitalism", carrying his mischievous argument so far as actually to propose that the workers should be given a share in the profits of State enterprises.
Barmine, Alexandre. Memoirs of a Soviet Diplomat. London: L. Dickson limited,1938, p. 216

ZINOVIEV'S AIDE CAUSES TROUBLE IN THE MILITARY

The most delicate issue of all was the opposition's behavior in the army. After Frunze's death, Voroshilov was appointed Commissar of War, as if to crown the revenge of the Tsaritsyn group on Trotsky. But Lashevich, Zinoviev's friend and supporter, was still Voroshilov's deputy. Unlike the opposition of 1924, the present opposition, after much hesitation, began to carry the struggle into the armed forces. In July 1926 Stalin exposed before the Central Committee Lashevich's doings, the semi-secret organization of the sympathizers of the opposition among the military. This was a shattering blow for the opposition. Lashevich was dismissed from his military post and expelled from the Central Committee. Zinoviev, his protector, lost his seat on the Politburo.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 308

ZINOVIEV BECAME THE LEADER OF THE SPLITTERS

In a June 25, 1926, letter to Molotov, Rykov, Bukharin, and other friends, Stalin said, “Before the appearance of the Zinoviev group, those with oppositional tendencies (Trotsky, the workers opposition, and others) behaved more or less loyally and were more or less tolerable; with the appearance of the Zinoviev group, those with oppositional tendencies began to grow arrogant and break the abounds of loyalty; the Zinoviev group became the mentor of everyone in the opposition who was for splitting the party; in effect it has become the leader of the splitting tendencies in the party.”
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin’s Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 115

STALIN ATTACKS ZINOVIEV’S WRITING

On July 11, 1927, Stalin sent a letter to Molotov stating, “I received Zinoviev’s article ‘The contours of the Coming War. Are you really going to publish this ignorant piece of trash? I am decidedly against publication.”
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin’s Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 143

In a September 9, 1929, letter to Molotov Stalin stated, “Besides, I resolutely protest against the fact that, despite the Politburo resolution, Zinoviev has become one of the permanent staff members (and directors?) of Pravda. Can’t an end be put to this outrage?”
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin’s Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 178

As to Zinoviev and Kamenev, I [Stalin] despise them for lack of principle in their tactics. I know that they have directed their supporters to dissimulate in order to remain in the Party, and to go for me in the event of international complications. These are the tactics of treachery; we shall have to strike first, before they can carry into effect their plan of treason….”
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 56

SOME POLITBURO MEMBERS WERE KEPT OUT OF THE LOOP

As far as I know, no one has written about this, but in fact each member of the Politburo was backed by his own coterie. Even under Lenin. Lenin suggested convening Politburo meetings without Trotsky. We reached an agreement against Trotsky. And a year or two later we were meeting without Zinoviev and Kamenev. Later without Bukharin, Tomsky, and Rykov. They remained in the Politburo, but we didn’t keep them informed, of course.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 121

KRUPSKAYA EVENTUALLY SUPPORTED THE PARTY LINE AFTER LENIN’S DEATH

These remarks [by Krupskaya] were made from the floor. Krupskaya was becoming Trotsky’s comrade-in-arms; she was switching to Trotskyist rails…. After Lenin’s death she in

fact spoke out briefly against him [Bukharin]. But later she began supporting the party line and the trials of the Trotskyists and right-wingers as well. Krupskaya followed Lenin all her life, before and after the Revolution. But she understood nothing about politics. Nothing. In 1925 she became confused and followed Zinoviev. And Zinoviev took an anti-Leninist position.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 131

SOME TROTS STAYED IN HIGH POSITIONS EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE KNOWN AS TROTS

From 1921-23 he [Osinsky] was deputy commissar of agriculture. He supported Trotsky in 1923. He was made Gosplan president in 1925. The 1926-28 he directed the Central Statistical Administration, and in 1929 he was deputy chairman of the Supreme Council on National Economy. The Tenth, and Fourteenth through Seventeenth Congresses made him a candidate Central Committee member. 0sinsky objected violently, at the Eighth Party Congress of March 1919, to the Politburo's decision-making powers, pointing out that it made the other members of the Central Committee "second-rate."
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 252

He [Pyatakov] co-authored the Trotsky opposition from 1923-27, was expelled from the Party by the 15th Congress, then readmitted in 1929 as director of the State Bank. From 1930-36 he was Ordjonikidze's deputy commissar of Heavy Industry.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 251

From 1922-27 he [Drobnis] chaired the RSFSR Small Council for Peoples' Commissars but was expelled from the CP for Trotskyism by the 15th Party Congress. He recanted and was reinstated in 1929, but was accused of Trotskyist sabotage and executed in 1937.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 253

In September 1930 he [Stalin] wrote to Molotov:
"Careful surveillance needs to be maintained for a while over Pyatakov, that genuinely rightist Trotskyist (a second Sokolnikov) who now represents the most harmful element in the composition of the block of Rykov-Pyatakov"
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 279

SOME ZINOVIEVISTS RECANT

There had been very few capitulations among the deportees. One notorious case was that of Safarov, the former leader of the Komsomol who had signed a formula of recantation and was recalled to Moscow. However, Safarov's case was exceptional in that he was not a Trotskyist. He had belonged to Zinoviev's faction but had at first refused to capitulate with his leader, had gone with the Trotskyists into exile, and only then, on second thoughts, capitulated.

Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 411

KRUPSKAYA WAS A SPLITTER ALSO

In a September 16, 1926, letter to Molotov Stalin said, “Krupskaya is a splitter (see her speech about “ Stockholm’ at the 14th Congress). She has to be beaten, as a splitter, if we want to preserve the unity of the party.”
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin’s Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 127

TROTSKY’S SUPPORTERS DO FAKE RECANTATION

Trotsky’s supporters in Russia paid lip service to the victorious majority, and many of them were restored to posts of high importance, but in spirit they remained loyal to their exiled leader and were ready to do his bidding when the occasion should arise.
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, Inc., 1941, p. 73

A large number of Trotskyists were also re-integrated, including Preobrazhensky and Radek.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 135 [p. 116 on the NET]

In September 1928, Kamenev contacted some Trotskyists, asking them to rejoin the Party and to wait `till the crisis matures’.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 135-136 [p. 117 on the NET]

Just as the July 1928 plenum was taking place, about 40 Left Oppositionists, including Kamenev, were readmitted to the party and returned to Moscow.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 198

Trotsky and Rakovsky were unrepentant and unyielding. Zinoviev, Radek, Pyatakov, Sokolnikov, Smilga, and host of others were goaded on ‘to sin in loving virtue’. Throughout 1928 and 1929 there was a steady traffic of ‘repenting’ members of the opposition from their places of exile to Moscow.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 316

In April 1926, Evdokimov the only Zinovievite on the Secretariat, was removed. In July, Zinoviev was expelled from the Politburo, being replaced by the Stalinist Rudzutak; in October, Trotsky and Kamenev were expelled in turn. In October, the opposition submitted. Zinoviev, Kamenev, Trotsky, Pyatakov, Sokolnikov, and Evdokimov denounced their own offenses, a most striking precedent for the long series of self-denunciations by the oppositionists.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 11

Pyatakov capitulated as early as February 1928. By mid-1929, Krestinsky, Radek, and most of the other “Trotskyites” had petitioned for readmission to the Party. Of the leaders, Rakovsky alone held out (until 1934).
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 17

…Rakovsky and Sosnovsky, the last leading oppositionists in exile, finally made their peace with the regime, giving the war danger as their main motive…. But now he [Rakovsky] was persuaded. He was welcomed back by Kaganovich in person. It was plain that an air of general reconciliation was prevalent.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 30

[Commentary by David Doyle]
Footnote: All three [Serebryakov, Preobrazhensky, and Krestinsky] were supporters of Trotsky and were expelled from the party in 1927 along with most of Lenin’s former closest collaborators. Serebryakov was exiled to Siberia in 1928, capitulated and returned in 1929. He was tried in January 1937 and disappeared, probably shot. [He was openly sentenced to be shot and never disappeared].
…The three were expelled from the Central Committee in 1921 for their sport of Trotsky. In the early 1920s the Troika sent him [Krestinsky] to Berlin as ambassador. In 1927 he was expelled from the Party, but in 1928 was one of the important Party leaders who recanted, his defection being one of the first signs that Trotsky had finally lost to Stalin.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 243

Paradoxically, Stalin viewed with some uneasiness the rush of the capitulators to Moscow, much though he benefited from it. Many thousands of Trotskyists and Zinovievists were now back in and around the party, forming a distinctive milieu. Stalin did not allow a single one of them to occupy any office of political importance. But the administrators, the economists, and the educationists were assigned to posts on all rungs of the government, where they were bound to exercise an influence. Although Stalin could not doubt their zeal for the left course, especially for industrialization, he knew what value to attach to the recantations he had extracted from them. They remained Oppositionists at heart. They considered themselves the wronged pioneers of the left course. They hated him not merely as their persecutor, but as the man who had robbed them of their ideas.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 82

Professions of repentance came pouring in, and Stalin graciously allowed the repentant “leftists” to return from exile. Pyatakov, Smilga, Rakovsky, Beloborodov, and other notables condemned Trotsky and came back into the Party.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 237

The policy of the Soviet government after the hard fights against the opposition in the end of the 1920-ies giving a new chance to all those opposing the socialist construction was not very successful. All these Trotskyists and others belonging to the political right and the so called left within of the party, which had fought the Soviet government, were allowed to keep or got back their highly positioned posts, which caused considerable damage to the Soviet union during the 1930-ies.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle during the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

TROTSKYITES ARE READMITTED TO PARTY

January 11, 1929–is unlikely that the Trotskyists will be allowed to return or resume office in the near future, save at the price of complete submission. Some of them, including, Kamenev, Zinoviev, Sokolnikov, and Pyatakov, already have submitted and received responsible positions.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 161

If Lenin had been the Caesar of the Soviet Union, then Stalin was becoming its Augustus, it's "augmenter," in every respect. Stalin's building grew and grew. But he could not be blind to the fact that there were still people who refused to believe in this visible, tangible work, and who had more faith in Trotsky's theses than in the evidence of their eyes.
Even amongst the very men in whom Stalin was a good friend and whom he called to high positions, there were some who had more faith in Trotsky's word than Stalin's work. They hindered this work, resisted it, sabotaged. They were called to account and their guilt was established. Stalin pardoned them and reinstated them in important positions.
What must have been Stalin's thoughts and feelings when he found out that these, his colleagues and friends, despite the patent success of his work, still remained attached to his enemy Trotsky, were intriguing secretly with him and trying to sabotage his own work, the Stalin State, in order to bring back their old leader to the country?
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 104-105

Some of the disgraced left-wingers, who had been associated with Trotsky, were also in favor of 'decisive measures' in the countryside, and supported Stalin. Repentant declarations were submitted by Pyatakov, Krestinsky, Antonov-Ovseyenko, Radek, Preobrazhensky, and others and they were readmitted to the party. Pyatakov became the head of the State Bank and later deputy Commissar for Heavy Industry.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 164

The real situation was quite different. Even at its height, in the mid-1920s, Trotsky had very few supporters in the party. After his deportation some of them remained loyal, but they amounted to only a few hundred at the most. Some felt that Trotsky had long given up fighting for socialism and was conducting a personal vendetta verging on anti-Sovietism. Others condemned Trotskyism and gave up political life altogether. Those whom Stalin 'forgave' and permitted to return to Moscow–including Rakovsky, Preobrazhensky, Muralov, Sosnovsky, Smirnov, Boguslavsky and Radek–were given third-rate jobs in the economy and education ministries, but none of them was allowed back into the political fold.
… But he [Stalin] knew that deep in their hearts they were not reconciled, and that to him was a great danger.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 261

As he moved against the right, Stalin continued to strike at the left. In February 1929 Trotsky, who refused to abjure political activity, was expelled from the Soviet Union.
But meanwhile, the shift leftwards had begun to win over most of the more distinguished Bolsheviks who had followed Trotsky. First Pyatakov and Krestinsky, then even the theorist of the left, Preobrazhensky, and a whole range of others almost as well known, such as

Radek, made their peace with Stalin and were readmitted to the party. They felt, and in a sense were justified in feeling, that their view had triumphed over the Bukharinites. Zinoviev and most of his followers were also readmitted to the party. Except for Zinoviev, Kamenev and Sokolnikov they were of little weight. But Pyatakovs & Krestinskys had considerable value in the eyes of the second level of the party.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 151

Metigovsky, the director of the Saratov Raion power plant, is glad that Smirnov [expelled from the Party can 1927 for his ties to Trotsky, reinstated in 1930]….
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 118

An early Trotskyite, he [Smirnov] was arrested, released in 1929, and made people's commissar of post and telegraph, but he was rearrested in 1933. In 1936 he was a codefendant in the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial and was shot.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 136

SMIRNOV EXPELLED FROM KEY POSITIONS BUT NOT PARTY

In the end, Smirnov was expelled from the Central Committee and Orgburo but was allowed to remain in the party, with the warning that his continued membership depended on his future behavior.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 101

STALIN SAYS THE LEFT OPPOSITION IS AS RIGHT AS THE RIGHTISTS

During the course of the struggle against Bukharin, Stalin insightfully discussed the difference between "Rights"–Bukharinites–and "Lefts"–Trotskyists–using as an example the building of the great Dnieprostroy dam. He said, "If, for instance, the Rights say, 'It is a mistake to build Dnieprostroy,' while the 'Lefts,' on the contrary say, 'What is the good of one Dnieprostroy? Give us a Dnieprostroy every year' (laughter), it must be admitted that there is some difference between them." Yet either way they would end up with no Dnieprostroy. "But," Stalin continued, "if the Trotskyist deviation is a 'Left' deviation, does that not mean that the 'Lefts' are more Left than the Leninists? No, it does not. Leninism is the most Left (without quotation marks) tendency in the world working-class movement." In a later succinct comment he noted the basic identity of the right and the "left": "The 'lefts' are in fact Rights who mask their Rightness by Left phrases."
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 65

Zinoviev was immediately removed from the Politburo [in July 1926].
However, a few weeks later, during a 'stormy' session of the Politburo, at which many Central Committee members were present, Stalin…insisted that the opposition was a 'Social Democratic deviation',…
Next day the Central Committee voted to remove Trotsky from the Politburo and Kamenev from his candidate membership.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 137

TROTSKY AND ZINOVIEV WERE GIVEN ONE LAST CHANCE TO RECANT IN 1927 BUT WOULD NOT

The Plenum of the Central Committee and at the Control Commission, which met in 1927 before the 15th Congress, made a supreme effort with Trotsky & Zinoviev. It asked Trotsky to renounce his theories on the change of government and his calumnies on the “Thermidorian” character of the central power, and to come into unconditional line with the rest of the Party. Trotsky & Zinoviev rejected the possibility thus offered to them of definitely re-establishing peace within the Party. In consequence, they were excluded from the Central Committee, censured, and warned that if they went on they would be expelled from the Party itself. Trotsky & Zinoviev (the latter being particularly influential at Leningrad where he was President of the Council of the Soviets) went on with the war. They tried to excite the young Communists against the Party. There were more and more secret meetings, secret printing presses and tracts: they seized meeting-places by force and, on November 7th, 1927, for instance, made demonstrations in the streets. At the 15th Congress, a special report was presented on this intense political conspiracy against the central power. This made it abundantly clear that Trotsky and his followers had decided to create a party with a central committee, district committees, and town committees, a technical apparatus with its own funds and its own Press. And the same thing on the international plan, with the object of supplanting the Third International. Orthodox members of the Central Committee were prevented by force from being present at Trotskyist meetings (this was so, for instance, in the case of Jaroslavski and some others, who were “physically” ejected from a meeting at Moscow).

The 15th Congress attempted to clear up this deplorable and dangerous state of affairs, urged Trotsky to dissolve his organizations and, once more, to renounce his bellicose methods which not only overstepped the bounds of what a militant Bolshevik could be allowed to do, but even those of “Soviet loyalty,” and finally, once for all, to put an end to his systematic hostility towards the points of view of the majority. But the counter-proposals of the Trotskyists, signed by 121 people, so far from being conciliatory, accentuated the attacks and the split. Trotsky and his followers were expelled from the Party. Even this decision left a door open, namely the possibility was considered of their being individually taken back into the Party if they would alter their ideas and would adjust their behavior accordingly. This is a long way from the Trotskyist caricature showing Comrade Jaroslavski, president of the Control Commission, as a fierce, bloodthirsty watchdog held in leash by Stalin.

One might be tempted to say: “Has not the Opposition, in any case, been useful in drawing the special attention of the leaders to weak spots and in putting them on their guard against such & such a danger?”

No. In the first place, in principle, self-criticism was an infinitely more efficacious method than a duel to the death for keeping the leaders on the look out.

Again, it is patent that the curve of the regular and gradual achievements of the Soviet State bear no trace whatever of the intervention of the Opposition. The Opposition lost no opportunity for correction; on the contrary, it put obstacles in the way which had to be steered around; and that is one of the reasons why the great rise of the USSR dates from the moment at which the Opposition was reduced to harmlessness. The present leaders of the USSR deserve to be given credit for the fact that since the October Revolution they have not modified their attitudes and their points of view in any particular, and that everything they

have done since Lenin has been done according to Lenin, and not according to modifications and counterfeits of Leninism.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 186-187

One of the reasons for the opposition's defeat was the GPU's discovery of the opposition's illegal printshop. Those working at the shop were arrested, along with Mrachkovsky, who was in charge of it. One of those arrested had in the past been a White Guard officer, although at the time of his arrest he was a secret agent for the GPU, as Menzhinsky himself later admitted. The case of the underground print shop and the "White Guard officer" was used to maximum advantage to discredit Trotsky and the opposition. A joint plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission at the end of October 1927 passed a resolution expelling Trotsky and Zinoviev from the Central Committee while allowing them to remain as party members.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 172

The Central Control Commission warned Trotsky and Zinoviev of the consequences of their tactics. The opposition leaders were playing for time, to allow their ideas to penetrate into the masses. Again they executed a tactical retreat, and signed a paper in which they once more surrendered to the bugaboo of party unity. In a sense, it was a legitimate move. For they now openly aimed not at splitting the party, but at dislocating Stalin in taking over his machine. They retreated in order to consolidate their lines and to resume the offensive in the last assault for the coveted prize of absolutist power.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 266

ALL THE TROTS AND ZINOVIEVITES ARE EXPELLED

On December 27, 1927, the Central Committee declared that the opposition had allied itself with anti-Soviet forces and that those who held its positions would be expelled from the Party. All the Trotskyist and Zinovievite leaders were expelled.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 135 [p. 116 on the NET]

… With the support of other party leaders, Stalin secured Zinoviev's removal from the Politburo in July 1926, followed by Trotsky's in the following October. Kamenev was relieved of his duties as a candidate member. A Central Committee plenum recognized that further work by Zinoviev in the Comintern was impossible.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 134

… After several Central Committee and Central Control Commission meetings, Trotsky and Zinoviev were expelled from the Central Committee in October 1927, and from the party in the following month, a move ratified by the 15th Party Congress when it met in December of the same year. Among 25 other active members of the opposition expelled from a party at the same time was Kamenev, although he and Zinoviev would later be reinstated and even make declarations of repentance at the 17th Party Congress.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 136

At the next Congress, two years later (December 1927), Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev were expelled from the party.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 144

Only after many delays could he [Stalin], in November 1932 and January 1933, expel some of the malcontents and pronounce a new excommunication on Zinoviev and Kamenev, who were once again banished from Moscow, this time to Siberia. During this, his second deportation, Zinoviev allegedly stated that the greatest mistake of his life, greater even than his opposition to Lenin during the days of the October Revolution, had been his decision to desert Trotsky and to capitulate to Stalin in 1927. Soon thereafter Preobrazhensky, Smirnov, Mrachkovsky, Muralov, Ter-Vaganyan, and many other capitulators were once again expelled and imprisoned;….
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 172

On 9 November, 1927, he [Stalin] requested the Politburo exclude Trotsky and Zinoviev, “guilty of serious infraction of the statutes,” from the party. On 14 November an extraordinary assembly of the Central Committee and the Central Commission of Control confirmed the decision. In December it was ratified by the Pan-Russian Congress of the Party, which at the same time decided to apply the same measure to the active leaders of the opposition: Kamenev, Radek, Preobrazensky, Rakovsky, Pyatakov, L. Smirnov, Mdivani, Lifschitz, Smilga, Sapronov, Boguslavsky, Sarkiss, Drobnis, and V. Smirnov. The excluded members were dismissed from their posts, and those of them who took part in a demonstration on 7 November were deported to the regions of the Volga or the Ural.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 152

The 15th Party Congress approved the decision of the joint meeting of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission to expel Trotsky and Zinoviev from the Party and resolved on the expulsion of all active members of the bloc of Trotskyites and Zinovievites, such as Radek, Preobrazhensky, Rakovsky, Pyatakov, Serebryakov, I Smirnov, Kamenev, Sarkis, Safarov, Lifshitz, Mdivani, Smilga and the whole “Democratic-Centralism” group (Sapronov, V. Smirnov, Boguslavsky, Drobnis and others).
Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Ed. History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks): Short Course. Moscow: FLPH, 1939, p. 289

ZINOVIEV AND KAMENEV RECANT

However, in June 1928, several Zinovievites recanted and were re-integrated, as were their leaders Zinoviev, Kamenev and Evdokimov.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 135 [p. 116 on the NET]

Certain groups of oppositionists signed declarations of obedience to the decisions of the Congress and petitioned to be readmitted to membership. Trotsky himself signed several of these petitions but to no avail. Zinoviev and Kamenev petitioned to be readmitted and abjectly recanted, confessing that their opposition views had been antiparty and anti-Leninist. Their conduct was pitiful.

Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 219

He [Stalin] had no fear of Zinoviev and Kamenev. Their nerve had failed them at the time of the Great October Revolution. Expelled from the party, they had made abject confessions of error and had been readmitted in June 1928….
This applied with special force to those of the left opposition who, following the change in policy, had accepted his leadership. A number of senior members of this faction applied for readmission to the party. It was usually granted and they received minor posts. The first of these capitulators Boldakov, as they were called, was Pyatakov, whom Lenin in his "Testament" described as "a man of indubitably outstanding will and outstanding capacities."
In July 1929 a group, of whom Radek and Preobrazhensky were most senior, applied for readmission.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 240

It is clear that treatment of the opposition was variable. Zinoviev and Kamenev were in bad odor from 1927 to 1929 but were reinstated during the First Five Year Plan. They were arrested and exiled, however, at the end of 1932. At the beginning of 1934 (the time of the 17th Congress) they were welcomed back. They addressed the congress and their articles appeared in Pravda throughout 1934…. They were rearrested and imprisoned in early 1935 in connection with the assassination of Kirov, but were not charged with capital crimes until 1936. It seems, therefore, that the regime was not following any single consistent policy regarding the opposition. It seems safe to assume that the appearance of oppositionists at the 17th Congress represented the ascendancy of the soft line, whereas the jeers they received showed that all were not satisfied with the arrangement.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 19

Zinoviev and Kamenev had recanted publicly in the [1927 15th Party] Congress, severing all connection with the Opposition, and making unconditional submission to the majority. That was the beginning of the double game they were to play, consisting of simultaneously denying their own convictions and plotting secretly against the authorities, which eventually it was to bring them to their deaths.
Barmine, Alexandre. Memoirs of a Soviet Diplomat. London: L. Dickson limited,1938, p. 227

In the same month [May 1933], Zinoviev and Kamenev were brought back from Siberia to make another confession of error. Pravda published a piece by Kamenev, condemning his own mistakes and calling on the oppositionists to cease any resistance.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 30

Again denounced, expelled from the Party, and sent into exile in 1932, Zinoviev and Kamenev were readmitted in 1933 on similar but yet more abject self-abasement. Zinoviev wrote to the Central Committee:
"I ask you to believe that I am speaking the truth and nothing but the truth. I ask you to restore me to the ranks of the Party and to give me an opportunity of working for the common cause. I give my word as a revolutionary that I will be the most devoted member of the Party, and will do all I possibly can at least to some extent to atone for my guilt before the Party and its Central Committee."
And soon afterward, he was allowed to publish an article in Pravda condemning the opposition and praising Stalin's victories.

Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 116

And it must be remembered that Kamenev and Zinoviev had more than once in the past, when in conflict with the Central Committee of the Communist Party, “confessed their errors” and by this means succeeded in maintaining themselves in positions from which they could carry out their factional fight against the Party.
Shepherd, W. G. The Moscow Trial. London: Communist Party of Great Britain, 1936, p. 7

In 1930, despite having no higher education he [Zinoviev] was made the Rector of Kazan University, and in December 1931 Deputy Chairman of the State Scientific Council. But he kept alive the memory of his earlier closeness to Lenin, and always believed that sooner or later he would return to the pinnacle of power.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 282

In May 1933 Zinoviev and Kamenev once again capitulated and returned from exile. At their first capitulation, in 1927, they had surrendered to Stalinism, but had not gone, and no one expected them to go, on their knees before Stalin’s person. When this was required of them in 1932 they could not yet bring themselves to do it. This, however, was what they did in 1933:….
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 207

The same month [May 1933], Zinoviev and Kamenev, who had been expelled from the party a second time and deported to Siberia after the Ryutin affair, were allowed to return and purge their guilt by a further confession, calling upon former oppositionists to end their resistance. Rakovsky, the Bulgarian veteran revolutionary, the last of the leading Trotskyites to make his peace, and Sosnovsky, another exile, were welcomed back into the fold.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 299

Bukharin became editor of the government’s newspaper Izvestia in 1934; Zinoviev and Kamenev returned to prominence around the same time.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 285

… The Boss had them brought them back to Moscow. The featherbrained coxcomb Zinoviev was given a job on the magazine Bolshevik,
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 298

These endeavors did not go unrewarded. Kamenev, whom Gorky held in high esteem, was received by Stalin for a private talk in which he acknowledged and renounced his former oppositionism. Subsequently he was appointed to a leading post in the Academia publishing house. In the summer of 1933, he, Zinoviev, and number of other former oppositionists were reinstated as party members, making it possible for them to participate in the coming party congress, which was due to open at the end of January 1934.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 244

Hence, early in the summer of 1933, when it became certain that the harvest would be good, Kamenev, Zinoviev, and a number of other former members of the Opposition were once again readmitted as members of the Party. They were even permitted to choose their

spheres of work, and some of them actually received invitations to the Party Congress (February, 1934).
Nicolaevsky, Boris. Power and the Soviet Elite; “The letter of an Old Bolshevik.” New York: Praeger, 1965, p. 34

Be that as it may, there can be no doubt that in 1934, Stalin suddenly became milder, more affable, more yielding; he took pleasure in the society of writers, artists, and painters, in listening to their conversation and in stimulating them to frank discussion….
This mood soon found its reflection in Stalin’s attitude with respect to the former Oppositionists. Particularly significant in this connection was the reinstatement of Bukharin, who had been in disfavor for some years, as editor of Izvestia. More characteristic still was Stalin’s new attitude toward Kamenev. If I am not mistaken, Kamenev had been expelled from the Party three times and had as many times repented. His last sideslip had occurred in the winter of 1932-33, when he was discovered “reading and not reporting” Riutin’s program, a document Stalin hated with particular force. This time it seemed as though Kamenev was in for serious and protracted struggle. But Gorky, who greatly esteemed Kamenev, succeeded in softening Stalin’s heart. He arranged a meeting between Stalin and Kamenev at which Kamenev is said to have made some decoration of love toward Stalin….
No one knows the details of this meeting, which took place in strictest privacy, but its outcome was received with approval in Party circles. Stalin, as he almost publicly declared, had “come to believe Kamenev.” At the interview Kamenev is said to have spoken quite openly of his entire oppositional activity, explaining why he had formerly opposed Stalin and why he had now ceased his opposition. It was said that Kamenev gave Stalin his “word of honor” not to engage in any more oppositional activity. In return he was given wide powers in the management of the Academia publishing house and was promised important political work in the near future.
Nicolaevsky, Boris. Power and the Soviet Elite; “The letter of an Old Bolshevik.” New York: Praeger, 1965, p. 46

IN MID-20’S THE OPPOSITION SWEARS AN OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

The opposition was taken aback by the initial success of the official policy. Zinoviev, Kamenev, Pyatakov, Sokolnikov, Trotsky, and Evdokimov went so far as to sign a declaration on Oct. 16, 1926, which was in effect a confession of defeat and of support for the official policy.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 223

PUNISHMENT OF THE RIGHT OPPOSITION WAS TOO LIGHT

The members of the Right-wing Opposition, however, were not severely dealt with. Rykov had to resign as head of the Government, but remained People’s Commissar for Posts and Telegraphs. Bukharin, too, was not banished from Moscow. After a time he began to write again in newspapers, and later he became once more editor of Pravda.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 184

RIGHTISTS ARE DEFEATED BUT RETAIN HIGH GOVERNMENT POSITIONS

Among Stalin's concerns in 1929, the struggle with the Bukharin group figured prominently. In spite of the political defeat of the "rightists" in April 1929 at both the plenum of the Central Committee and the 16th Party Conference, Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky preserved some authority in the party-state apparat. All of them remained members of the Politburo. In addition, Rykov occupied the high government posts of chairman of the Council of Commissar's and chairman of the Labor Defense Council.
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 148

Addressing a plenary session of the Moscow Committee of the Communist Party on October 19, 1928, Stalin declared, "The victory of the Right Deviation in our party would mean an enormous strengthening of the capitalist elements in our country. And what will a strengthening of the capitalist elements of our country mean? It will mean a weakening of the proletarian dictatorship and increased chances for the reestablishment of capitalism."
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 79

Although some of the rightists were expelled from the party and its leaders lost their highest positions, Bukharin and his fellow leaders remained members of the Central Committee. They had, after all, played according to the terms of the unwritten gentleman's agreement not to carry the struggle outside the nomenklatura.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 60

But you must remember that quite a few right-wingers were operating within the NKVD. Yagoda was a right-winger through and through. Yezhov was different. I knew Yezhov very well, much better than Yagoda…. There was a difference, a political one. As concerns Yagoda, he was hostile to the party's policies. Yezhov had never been hostile, he just overdid it because Stalin demanded greater repression. That was somewhat different. Yezhov had no ulterior motives. The machinery rolled–stop it where? Sort everything out properly? But the sorting out was often done by rightists or even by Trotskyists. Through them we obtained a lot of incriminating materials.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 263

The Politburo knew about what was out in the open. But it was impossible to know everything as long as no opportunity arose to find out. In order to throw some light on this question, let me ask you: what do you consider Khrushchev to have been back then, a rightist, a leftist, or a Leninist, or what? Khrushchev sat on the Politburo under Stalin through the '40s and the early '50s. And Mikoyan, too. We purged and we purged, yet it turns out that rightists still sat in the Politburo! Look how complicated all this is! It is impossible to understand this if you judge only by facts and figures and formal criteria. Impossible. There were such profound changes in the country and in the party too, that even given all the vigilance of Stalin to liberate ourselves of Trotskyists and rightist…. Even in Stalin's time they served continuously in the Politburo, especially the rightists most adaptable and skilled in time-serving. Our rightists, so flexible, so closely and strongly connected with our own dear peasantry, resembled the muzhik in his ability to adapt himself ideologically to every twist and turn. Determining where Trotskyism begins and especially where rightism begins is a most complex subject, most complex.

In many cases the rightists import themselves no worse than genuine Leninists–but up to a point. Like Khrushchev.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 314

As the Five Year Plan began to unfold, a new opposition group arose within the Party, a "right" opposition led by Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky. Unlike Tomsky all were old Bolsheviks; and all belonged to the Central Committee and held high public office. Rykov was Chairman of the Council of Peoples Commissar's (the equivalent of "Premier"), Tomsky was chairman of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, Bukharin was editor of Pravda and General Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 61

In 1926 Bukharin became General Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 64

At the time (1928-30), the conflict between Bukharin and the Party majority appeared to be an honest disagreement between leading Party members. Bukharin, although removed from the Politburo, retained his seat on the Central Committee and was appointed to the Presidium of the Commissariat of Heavy Industry. In 1934 he was made editor of Izvestia. Rykov, removed as premier, was appointed Peoples Commissar of Posts and Telegraphs; Tomsky, removed from his post in the trade unions, retained his seat on the Central Committee, as did Rykov. All three signed a declaration admitting the errors of their program;
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 65

[In 1928] Bukharin and Tomsky now offered their resignation from the Politburo. Stalin is reported receiving it 'with trembling hands', and they were induced to withdraw.
…At the Central Committee plenum in April 1929 he [Stalin] accused the three men [Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky] of dangerous deviations and lack of party discipline. The Central Committee then, finally, removed Bukharin and Tomsky from their posts–editorship of Pravda and chairmanship of the Comintern in Bukharin's case, leadership of the trade unions in Tomsky's. It allowed Rykov to remain as head of the government, and demanded that all three remain on the Politburo, and that the matter not be publicized, though Stalin had spoken of Bukharin's 'treacherous behavior'.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 150

[Bukharin]… was dismissed from the office of editor-in-chief of Pravda, lost his party rank, and was expelled from the executive of the Communist International.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 293

… So, for example, he [Stalin] allowed Bukharin to assume the editorship of Izvestia after the party congress, and went on making good use of Radek's journalistic talents and expertise in German affairs.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 283

Radek became one of the editors of Izvestia, working under Bukharin. The Boss had made Bukharin chief editor of that newspaper, the second most important in the country, and shortly afterward delegated to him the task of drafting a new constitution.

Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 299

Yezhov presented the main report against these two [Bukharin and Rykov] who, in 1928-29, had led the Right deviation and opposed Stalin's radical policies of collectivization and rapid industrialization. Since then, both had held responsible state positions and remained candidate Central Committee members.
Chase, William J., Enemies Within the Gates?, translated by Vadim A. Staklo, New Haven: Yale University Press, c2001, p. 217.

WHEN THE RIGHTISTS WERE REMOVED FROM THE POLITBURO

Bukharin was removed from the Politburo in November 1929; Tomsky, in July 1930; and Rykov, in December 1930.
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 150

They [the rightists] recanted their "mistakes" in party forums and with good party discipline affirmed their support for Stalin's line. Although they were removed from the Politburo, they remained on the central committee and were not expelled from the party.
Getty & Naumov, he Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 42

Therefore, Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky declared that "the disagreements between us and the majority of the Central Committee have been eliminated." But even this statement was called "unsatisfactory." The November 1929 plenum therefore removed Bukharin from the Politburo and issued a warning to Rykov, Tomsky, and Uglanov.
… After the 16th Party Congress Tomsky was removed from the Politburo, and at the December 1930 plenum of the Central Committee Rykov was likewise removed. In 1931 Rykov was replaced by Molotov as chairman of the Sovnarkom and reassigned to the job of people's commissar of posts and telegraph. Bukharin was appointed leader of the scientific research planning sector of the Supreme Economic Council, and a few years later also became chief editor of Izvestia. The 16th Party Congress again elected Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky to the Central Committee, but after the Seventeenth Congress all three were reduced to the rank of candidate members of the Central Committee.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 206

Stalin's success in organizational detail now bore fruit. The Rightists were supported in the Central Committee by a mere handful of members. That body meeting in April 1929, condemned the right wing's views, removed Bukharin from his editorship of Pravda and chairmanship of the Comintern, and dismissed Tomsky from the trade union leadership.
In April, too, the principles of crash industrialization and of collectivization were adopted at the 16th Party Conference. After their views had been condemned, the Rightists submitted. On Nov. 26, 1929 they published a very general recantation of their views on "a series of political and tactical questions." Bukharin now lost his Politburo post.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 18

Tomsky was removed from the Politburo in July 1930 and Rykov in December. Henceforth, it was purely Stalinist.

Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 19

RYKOV HAS WRONG POSITIONS

On September 6, 1929, the Politburo passed a resolution by voice vote. “It is easy to see that in an attempt to find at least some sort of principled reason for his erroneous position, Comrade Rykov has, in the end, lost his way completely….
Turning to questions of principle, not only do Comrade Rykov’s claims have nothing in common with Bolshevism, but they are completely identical to the previous attempts by the Trotskyists to see the Central Control Commission and the Central Committee as in opposition.”
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin’s Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 158

In a September 30, 1929, letter to Molotov, Voroshilov, and Ordjonikidze Stalin stated, “Did you read Rykov’s speech? In my opinion, it’s the speech of a nonparty soviet bureaucrat pretending to take the tone of a “loyal’ person, “sympathizing’ with the soviets. But not a single word about the party! Not a single word about the right deviation! Not a single word to say that the party’s achievements, which Rykov underhandedly ascribes now to himself, were attained in struggle with the rightists, including Rykov himself! All our officials who give speeches usually consider it their duty to speak about the rightists and to call for struggle against the rightists. But Rykov, it seems, is free from such an obligation! Why?–I might ask–on what basis? How can you tolerate (meaning cover-up as well) this political hypocrisy? Don’t you understand that in tolerating such hypocrisy, you create the illusion that Rykov has separated from the rightists and you thus mislead the party, because everyone can see that Rykov has never had a thought of leaving the rightists? Shouldn’t you give Rykov an alternative: either disassociate openly and honestly from the rightists and conciliators, or lose the right to speak in the name of the Central Committee and Council of Commissars. I think this should be done because it’s the least the Central committee can demand–less than that and the Central Committee ceases to be itself.
I learned that Rykov is still chairing your meetings on Mondays and Thursdays. Is that true? If it’s true, why are you allowing this comedy to go on? Who is it for and for what reason? Can you put an end to this comedy? Isn’t it time?”
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin’s Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 181

In an October 7, 1929, letter to Molotov Stalin stated, “I read the Politburo resolution about Rykov. A correct resolution! This resolution is binding on us, of course.”
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin’s Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 182

[Concluding speech by Kuibyshev at the joint plenum of the CC & CCC December 19, 1930]
…Can ones say that Comrade Rykov, after deviating from the party, has demonstrated the slightest effort to march in step with those who are leading the party ahead? Can one say that in his struggle with a class-alien ideology, which he [himself] once mistakenly preached, Comrade Rykov has demonstrated so much as an iota of the passion necessary for a leader? No, one cannot say any such thing. For this reason, you’re forced to conclude that it

is apparently hopeless at the present time to see in Comrade Rykov a steadfast comrade-in-arms in these battles.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 51

RADEK ATTACKED STALIN A LOT

Karl Radek, a well-known and bitingly sarcastic critic of Stalin in the 1920s.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 3

Blumkin is a typical intellectual anarchist…. After he killed Mirbach he began to regard himself as an historic figure. I don't know why he had such admiration for Trotsky…. At any rate, so shrewd a scoundrel as Radek could not have found it very difficult to provoke so impetuous a revolutionary fool as Blumkin…. He must have put into his head the idea of some act of terrorism. After Mirbach, Stalin. Not a bad formula….
[That's Stalin's Foreign Minister?]
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 246

VICTORY OF THE RIGHT IN THE SU WOULD MEAN A CAPITALIST VICTORY

There cannot be the slightest doubt that the triumph of the Right deviation in our Party would release the forces of capitalism, would undermine the revolutionary position of the proletariat and increase the chances for the restoration of capitalism in our country.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 147

RADEK AND OTHERS BREAK WITH TROTSKY IN 1929

In June 1929 Radek was on his way back to Moscow under guard to make his peace with Stalin. His train stopped at a station in Siberia, where by chance a group of oppositionists met and spoke with him. Radek urged them to surrender to the Central Committee. He spoke of the difficult situation in the Soviet Union, the shortage of bread, the discontent of the workers, and the threat of peasant revolts. In this situation, Radek said, the opposition should admit that it had been wrong and rally to the party. "We ourselves have driven ourselves into prison and exile," he argued, and declared: "I have definitely broken with Trotsky–we are political enemies now." Smilga, Serebryakov, and Smirnov soon broke with Trotsky as well….

Toward the end of 1929 Rakovsky and his group (Sosnovsky, Muralov, Mdivani, etc.) wrote an "Open Letter to the Central Committee," which although it contained criticism of Stalin's policies and demanded the return of Trotsky to the USSR, was very conciliatory in its tone. Soon the majority of this group capitulated fully and returned to Moscow, where many of them were given posts recently held by members of the Bukharinist opposition….
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 178-179

RADEK PRAISES STALIN FOR BEING LENIENT AND NOT TAKING REVENGE

To his former associates in the Opposition Radek offered the following explanation of the praise he had lavished on Stalin: “We should be grateful to Stalin. If we [the Opposition] had lived at the time of the French Revolution, we would long ago have been shorter by a head.”
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 316

ORLOV ATTACKS ALL THE RIGHT-WING OPPOSITION LEADERS

Orlov was an engineer employed at an important technical center in Moscow. As soon as he came home in the evening he began to hold forth on political themes, flaying the leaders of the Right-wing Deviation. Rykov was a hypocrite, Tomsky a conspirator, Zinoviev a swine, Kamenev a cynic, Uglanov a blockhead; as for Bukharin–Orlov got so excited that he banged on the table–he was the protector of kulaks and NEP-men, a fox licking up to Stalin while its tail wagged encouragement to Stalin’s enemies.
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 121

RYKOV HELD MANY HIGH POSITIONS

And now [February 1934] came the crowning stroke. Rykov and Bukharin were known as the “peasants’ advocates” and their Right-wing Deviation had been largely a protest against Stalin’s peasant policy. Now Rykov was made People’s Commissar for Communications.
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 283

Rykov joined the party in 1898. At the 3rd Party Congress, in 1905, he was elected to the Central Committee. He was a member of the Central Committee from 1917 to 1937 (a candidate member from 1934 onward). Between 1924 and 1930 he headed the Soviet government. Earlier he had been deputy chairman of the Sovnarkom for several years. From 1922 to 1930 he was a member of the Central Committee’s Politburo.
Political Archives of the Soviet Union (Vol. 1, No. 2) Commack, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1990, p. 148

RIGHTISTS MORE DANGEROUS AND SUBTLE THAN THE LEFTS LIKE TROTSKY

The open Right Wing did not challenge the Party to a prolonged discussion in the manner of the Trotskyists. But it had in the State apparatus and the trade unions, and, to a lesser extent, in the Communist Party, a volume of support that was more formidable than that of the Trotsky faction, and did not expose itself in open struggle.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 79

RADEK RECANTS, ACCEPTS STALIN’S PROGRAM AND ADVISES TROTSKY TO DO THE SAME

Radek was dismissed from the party and condemned at the same time as Trotsky. While conversing with him on this theme, he said to me: “For 25 years I had been active in the Labor Movement and then I was condemned to exile by the Proletarian Government. Our

inner feelings told us that we were being sent into exile because the party was moving towards the Right. But I took half-a-hundred-weight of books with me–all our Socialist works in fact, beginning with Marx. I said to myself that I should study the whole development of Socialism from the start and think over it. On grounds of principle, are we right or are the others? I asked myself. For three months I studied the writings of Marx and Lenin and Stalin and then I recognized that the plan of campaign that was being initiated by our comrades was a magnificent conception for the development of the New State. It reminded me of the second part of Faust. Whereupon I withdrew my objection to Stalin's plan out of sheer conviction. I agreed to the new line of action and advised Trotsky to do the same."
Ludwig, Emil. Leaders of Europe. London: I. Nicholson and Watson Ltd., 1934, p. 368

STALIN WANTS PYATAKOV REMOVED YET HE IS LATER MADE THE HEAD OF INDUSTRY

In an August 24, 1930, letter to Molotov Stalin stated, "As for Pyatakov, all indications are that he has remained the same as always, that is, a poor, commissar alongside a specialist (or specialists) who are no better. He is a hostage to his bureaucracy. You really get to know people in practice, in daily work, in "trivial' matters. And here, in the practical matters of financial (and credit!) management, Pyatakov has shown his true colors as a poor commissar alongside poor specialists. And I have to tell you that this type of Communist economic manager is the most harmful for us at this time.
Conclusion: he must be removed. Someone else must be put in his place."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 204

In a September 1930 letter to Molotov Stalin said, "Pyatakov should be watched closely. He is a genuine rightist Trotskyist (another Sokolnikov), and he now represents the most harmful element in the Rykov-Pyatakov bloc…."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 214

After a period of political disfavor because of his Trotskyist sympathies, Pyatakov, whom Lenin, in his political testament, mentioned with Bukharin as one of the more promising among the younger Party members, has made his peace with the Party authorities and received an appointment as head of the State Bank.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 105

While Zinoviev and Kamenev had continued in effect to oppose the Stalin leadership, and had long since been excluded from decent Party society, Pyatakov had been of the greatest service…and had been admitted by him [Stalin] to his latest Central Committee. He was, in addition, under the apparently powerful protection of Ordjonikidze.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 128

As I was listening to him [Stalin] I couldn't help thinking of the concern he had shown for Pyatakov during his illness in 1931…. He even sent him honey….
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 249

STALIN ATTACKS RIGHTIST GROUPS

In a letter dated October 23, 1930, Stalin said to Molotov, “I’m sending you two reports from Reznikov on Syrtsov’s and Lominadze’s anti-party (essentially right-deviationist) factional group. It’s unimaginable vileness.”
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin’s Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 223

FROM DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES BUKHARIN AND TROTSKY KEEP PREDICTING DEFEAT

And Bukharin said, “Enrich yourselves!” …He was just a windbag. According to him, the people were in a situation in which they could do nothing without cooperatives, without collective farms, without industry. How could collective farms operate without machinery and without tractors? Where were the means to enable us to take the levers in hand and raise up the people? There was no machinery; factories had to be built. For some time they would turn out a small number of machines. Many people would lose faith, nothing would come of it! Bukharin said that in one way, and Trotsky said it in another. As for talks with imperialists, I think it was proven beyond a doubt that these occurred….
Trotsky himself was making speeches saying, “Nothing is working!” I really wondered, how could Lenin endure it?
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 127

…[as post-Lenin changes were instituted] the Trotskyist and Bukharinites lost their heads and started to scream “All is lost” or “Save the ship by sailing it into an enemy port.”
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 236

BUKHARIN, RYKOV, AND TOMSKY RECANT AND ACCEPT THE PARTY LINE

In November 1929 a plenary session of the Central Committee removed Bukharin from the Politburo and issued a sharp warning to Rykov, Tomsky, and others as deviators from and would be diverters of the party line. Perhaps after all they were cowardly,… because they all recanted in most abject terms and signed a declaration acknowledging the correctness of the party line.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 162

In the critical conditions in June 1930, the right-wing leaders might have been expected to offer opposition…. But they declared their fervent support for Stalin and the party line. Rykov and Tomsky both made abject confessions before the full Congress that they had been totally wrong, and they pleaded for the party’s forgiveness. Bukharin was absent from the Congress, but he was to abase himself on a later occasion.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 250

Bukharin was not chosen as a delegate to the 16th party congress. Of course he could have attended the Congress as a member of the Central Committee, but he preferred not to take

part in the Congress, especially since he was ill at the time…. All the same, the Congress elected not only Rykov and Tomsky but also Bukharin members of the Central Committee.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 319

The whole speech [by Stalin] was in this vein, lashing out with devastating criticism against Rykov and Tomsky as well as the chief target [Bukharin]. Bukharin and Rykov were removed from their posts, although they remained members of the Politburo….
In November 1929 the party general line on agriculture was confirmed when Stalin wrote that "the peasants are now joining collective farms not in individual groups, as they used to, but as entire villages, groups of villages, districts, and even regions". Nevertheless, Bukharin was unwilling to "repent", as he was being asked to do, and on Nov. 17, 1929 he was removed from the Politburo. A week later, however, tormented by pangs of conscience for their own pusillanimity, Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky wrote a brief letter to the Central Committee, in which they condemned their own position: "We regard it as our duty to state that the party and its Central Committee have turned out to be right in this dispute. Our views have turned out to be erroneous. Recognizing our errors, we shall conduct a decisive struggle against all deviations from the party's general line and above all against the right deviation."
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 183

… Those who had recanted were usually reinstated in the party fairly quickly, and they were given responsible jobs and began publishing their articles again. For instance, Zinoviev and Kamenev, who had been readmitted into the party in June 1928, openly expressed the hope that 'the party would again require their experience' no doubt with top posts in mind. Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky were still being dubbed 'accomplices of the kulaks' in the press, and yet at the 16th Congress they were elected onto the Central Committee.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 212

After he [Stalin] had finally removed Trotsky from the Russian scene, he hastened to rout the leaders of the right-wing. Rykov was deposed from the Premiership of the Soviet Government, in which he had succeeded Lenin. Tomsky was ousted from the leadership of the trade unions, on the ground that he had used his influence to turn the unions against industrialization. Bukharin was dismissed from the leadership of the Communist International, where he had replaced Zinoviev, as well as from the Politburo. Before the year 1929 was out, Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky repudiated their own views and thus bought a few years of spurious breathing space.
It would be easy for the historian to pass unqualified judgment on Stalin if he could assume that in his fight against Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky he pursued only his private ambition. This was not the case. His personal ends were not the only or the most important stakes in the struggle. In the tense months of 1928 and 1929 the whole fate of Soviet Russia hung in the balance.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 316-317

Nov. 17, 1929 Plenum (On the Bukharin Group)
2. Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky, who have now been forced–after the shameful miscarriage of all their predictions–to admit the party's unquestionable successes and who hypocritically affirm the 'retraction of all differences' in their statement, at the same time refuse to admit the

erroneousness of the views set forth in their platforms of January 30 and February 9, 1928, which were condemned by the April Plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission as 'incompatible with the general line of the party.'
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 39

In April 1929 the Central Committee removed Bukharin from his posts as editor of Pravda and president of the Comintern and Tomsky from his post as chairman of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions. Bukharin's supporter Uglanov lost his positions as secretary of the Moscow Committee, secretary of the Central Committee, and candidate member of the Politburo. The November 1929, Bukharin was expelled from the Politburo.
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 223

The April 1929 Joint Plenary Meeting condemned the "Bukharin group's" views "as incompatible with the party's general line and mostly coinciding with the right-deviation position." It dismissed Bukharin and Tomsky from their jobs on the Pravda editorial board, the Communist International, and the AUCCTU, but left them on the Central Committee's Politburo.
… At the November 1929 Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee "Bukharin's group" made a statement withdrawing their differences with the party, though not directly admitting their previous views to have been wrong. Despite the statement, the Plenary Meeting decided to drop Bukharin from the Central Committee's Politburo "as the initiator and leader of the right deviators."
Political Archives of the Soviet Union (Vol. 1, No. 2) Commack, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1990, p. 147

Bukharin, after being expelled from the Politburo, fired as chief editor of Pravda and removed as secretary of the Comintern Executive Committee, worked from 1930 to the beginning of 1934 in the Commissariats of Heavy Industry.
Larina, Anna. This I Cannot Forget. New York: W.W. Norton, 1993, p. 328

BUKHARIN AND RYKOV RECANT BUT OTHER RIGHTISTS DO NOT

While Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky had abandoned the opposition and publicly associated themselves with the Stalin policies, other rightist oppositions surfaced between 1929 and 1932.

… repression of these new dissidents was immediate but uneven. Some were expelled from the party, but others were merely censured publicly. Thus A. Smirnov was expelled from the Central Committee but not from the party. Lominadze was expelled from the party for short time, but soon was readmitted and appointed the party secretary in charge of the important Magnitogorsk construction project. Although Bukharin and Rykov were criticized for inspiring and knowing of these opposition platforms, they remained members of the Central Committee.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 19

TOMSKY HAD MANY JOBS BESIDES BEING ON THE POLITBURO

Up to 1930 he [Tomsky] had been a member of the Politburo. He had also been head of the Soviet Trade Unions. Latterly he had been chief of the State publishing system, the OGIZ.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 62

PEOPLE TAKEN OFF THE POLITBURO STILL RETAINED HIGH POSITIONS

… Since 1930, when the Buryto group (Bukharin, Rykov, Tomsky) were relieved of their high posts, he [Rykov] had been People's Commissar of Communications….
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 63

Although a confidential letter of the Central Committee was circulated in early 1935 to warn against the dangers represented by former oppositionists, their repented leaders continued to hold more or less important posts, including membership in the Central Committee, throughout the "verification" and "exchange" of Party cards.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 73

MAJOR OPPOSITION LEADERS RECANT THEIR FACTIONALISM TO RETAIN SOME PARTY POWER

At the same time Stalin set about discrediting the opposition, alleging with dubious evidence that it was not really left-wing, but a right-wing bourgeois deviation. Then the opposition leaders played into his hands. They organized demonstrations in factories, demanding full party discussion of their proposals. This was a flagrant breach of discipline and an affront to party unity. Appalled by their own temerity and recklessness, the six leaders–Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Pyatakov, Sokolnikov, and Evdokimov –confessed their guilt in a public declaration and swore not to pursue factional activity in the future. They also denounced their own left-wing supporters in the Comintern and the Workers' Opposition group. Apparently their confession was voluntary and an attempt to salve their consciences. They had sought, they admitted naively, only to retain some influence within the party. Their pusillanimous conduct exposed them and their few supporters to reprisals.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 213

At the same time that Rightists were being defeated, a number of left oppositionists were being readmitted to the party. With Stalin's shift to the left, Radek, Pyatakov, Smirnov, and other Trotskyists recanted their "errors" of 1927 and announced their solidarity with the new policies of the Stalinist apparatus. In fact, until 1935, it was only necessary for an oppositionist to recant to be readmitted to the party. So, beginning in 1929, the former leftists returned from their exiles and rejoined the party. Trotsky, from his lonely exile in Turkey, reacted bitterly to what he considered desertion by his followers. Of the major figures of the United Opposition, only Trotsky and Rakovsky remained in opposition and continued to denounce the policies of the apparatus.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 18

In mid-1928 Zinoviev, Kamenev, and many of their supporters were readmitted to the party and given posts in the government and economic apparatus.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 176

After renouncing their oppositional views, the majority of them directed whole branches of the national economy, large collectives and important structures in the economy and culture of the nation. On the same days when fear, hatred and despair ate away at their souls, they participated in making important decisions about the structure of investments (like Pyatakov), about the publishing plans of an enormous complex (like Tomsky), or about the most crucial diplomatic actions (like Radek).
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 80

After another month of haggling, on 13 July, Radek, Preobrazhensky, Smilga, and 400 other deportees finely announced their surrender. The advantages that Stalin derived from this were many. No event since Zinoviev's and Kamenev's capitulation at the 15th Congress, in December 1927, had done so much to bolster Stalin's prestige. As he was just engaged in a heavy attack on Bukharin's faction, the disintegration of the Trotskyist Opposition relieved him of the need to fight on two fronts simultaneously. Trotsky had often said that in the face of an acute "danger from the right" Trotskyists and Stalinists would join hands. Well, they were now doing so, but on Stalin's own terms–he was winning them over to his side without and even against Trotsky. Many of the capitulators were men of high talent and experience with whom he would fill industrial and administrative posts from which the Bukharinists were being squeezed out. He knew that the capitulators would throw themselves heart and soul into the industrial drive–many of them were to serve under Pyatakov, the arch-capitulator who was the moving spirit of the Commissariat of Heavy Industry. Radek alone was, as a propagandist, worth more to Stalin than hosts of his own scribes.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 74

Many of the former members of the opposition were allowed to take up useful employment. Bukharin, for example, was appointed chief editor of Izvestia, second only to Pravda as the voice of official policy, and was now able to write regular signed and unsigned articles.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 303

Immediately before and after the 17th Party Congress of 1934 some leaders of former oppositions were restored to party membership, including Kamenev, Zinoviev, Preobrazhensky, and Uglanov. Bukharin was appointed to the quite important post of chief editor of the newspaper Izvestia.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 237

Expelled from the party with the other Trotskyites in 1927, Pyatakov had discovered that there could be no life for him without it and that, as he told a former colleague in 1928, in order to become one with it he would abandon his own personality and be ready to declare black white, and white black, if the party required it. Breaking with Trotsky and returning to Russia, he had become deputy commissar for heavy industry. According to Ordjonikidze, the commissar, no one contributed more to the creation of Russia's industrial base as the brains and driving force behind the Five-Year plans. A major critic of Stalin in the 1920s, Pyatakov had since abandoned all opposition and accepted Stalin's leadership without reservations.

Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 483

In 1933 Bukharin began to participate more actively in Party and public life. He took part in a joint session of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission in January, where the successful completion of the first Five-Year Plan was announced.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 279

STALIN REJECTS TURNING PEASANTS AGAINST PROLETARIAT AND FIGHTS TROTSKY INSTEAD

This [Trotsky's New Course] Stalin dealt with, rejecting the proposal for a class war of the proletariat against the peasantry, and instead, at the Party Congress of December 1923 raising the cry of a fight against "Trotskyism."
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 150

In any case, it was impossible to accomplish anything without the peasants. But Trotsky did not simply propose to build socialism at the expense of the peasant. The essence of his view is that he did not believe in the possibility of an alliance with the peasantry, a worker-peasant alliance, for the building of socialism. That's the main thing…. Trotsky did not believe in the possibility of a worker-peasant alliance in order to move forward. But we believed in it. …Lenin was right. We couldn't do without the peasant.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 171

Trotsky did not believe the peasantry could follow our lead. That was his most flagrant error.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 375

The revolutions in France in 1848 and 1871 were crushed chiefly because the peasant reserves turned out to be on the side of the bourgeoisie. The October Revolution was victorious because it succeeded in depriving the bourgeoisie of its peasant reserves, because it was able to win over these reserves to the side of the proletariat, because in that revolution the proletariat proved to be the only guiding force for the millions of toiling masses in town and country….
The dictatorship of the proletariat is a class alliance between the proletariat and the toiling masses of the peasantry, for the purpose of overthrowing capital, for bringing about the final victory of socialism, an alliance based on the condition that its leading force is the proletariat.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 41

Where does the danger of the "Left" (Trotskyist) deviation in our Party lie? In the fact that it over-estimates the strength of our enemies, the strength of capitalism; that it can see only the possibility of the restoration of capitalism, but cannot see the possibility of constructing socialism with the resources of our country; that it gives way to despair and is obliged to console itself with nonsensical talk about Thermidorism in our Party. From the words of Lenin "as long as we live in a petty -peasant country there will be a more solid basis in Russia for capitalism than for communism," the "Left" deviation draws the false conclusion that it is impossible to construct socialism in the USSR at all; that nothing can be done with the peasantry; that the idea of a union between the working-class and the peasantry is

antiquated; that unless aid is forthcoming in the shape of the triumph of the revolution in the West, the dictatorship of the proletariat in the USSR is doomed to failure, or to degeneration, and that unless we adopt the fantastic plan of super-industrialization, even at the cost of a rupture with the peasantry, the cause of socialism in the USSR must be regarded as lost.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 147

STALIN'S PATIENCE WITH TROTSKY WAS TREMENDOUS

Stalin has never been a man to shoot first and argue afterwards. In fact, I venture to assert that at no time in the political history of any country has there been so lengthy a warfare of words, and only words, between leading members of a political party; and I would add that no leader with such power in his hands as that possessed by Stalin, ever showed such patience with an opponent. I write as one who was a witness on the spot, and even a not infrequent participant in the long controversy extending from December 1923 to January 1929 when Trotsky was banished from the Soviet Union.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 153

Trotsky too, was never in doubt: he did not believe it possible to advance to socialism without a European Revolution…. But let it be clearly understood that Trotsky's position, however it might be decorated with revolutionary phrases, meant a return to capitalism.
Of course Trotsky had others with him besides Zinoviev and Kamenev and Radek. There were Rakovsky, Pyatakov, and a number of other able men. I knew these leaders and many of their supporters personally. I had listened to their arguments in commissions, in conferences, in public and private conversations. I had heard them time and again declare that they were wrong and Stalin right. I had seen Stalin agree to their reinstatement in leading positions, only to witness them renew their attacks on him and his policy. On the Tenth Anniversary of the Revolution I saw and heard Radek, from the balcony of the Bristol hotel, harangue the crowd as it marched to the Red Square. I watched Trotsky attempting the same thing further along Mockavia. And still after four years of public debating nothing more serious had happened to them than their expulsion from the ranks of Bolshevism.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 160

Stalin has been widely attacked by political adversaries, Russian and foreign, as a cruel and heartless man, but in point of fact he was remarkably long-suffering in his treatment of the various oppositions. This statement may sound surprising, but it is true, as the record shows. The Kremlin's struggle with the Oppositionists began before Lenin's death, and again and again one or another of the Opposition leaders admitted his faults and beat his breast and cried "Mea maxima culpa," and the Kremlin forgave him. I say this is all on the record, whatever the Trotskyists may claim. Until the murder of Kirov, which hardened Stalin's steel into knives for his enemies' throats.
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1941, p. 116

The reports of the meetings of the Party bear witness to the fact that it acted with a great deal of circumspection and of patience towards Trotsky. In 1923, during Lenin's illness, Trotsky was again the head of the Political Bureau, the supreme executive organization. The Party endeavored to influence Trotsky by every means in its power, whilst he himself was notoriously striving to turn to his own advantage the discontent which cropped up here and

there, to make a group of the discontents and to be their leader. This vague group hostile to the Party refused to criticize Trotskyism and adopted Trotsky's divergent line.
When, after Lenin's death, Stalin resumed the struggle, he began, in dealing with Lenin's old adversary, to employ the pedagogic method instead of taking repressive measures (Jaroslavsky). These attempts at persuasion came to nothing and the question arose as to whether Trotsky could still remain in the leadership of the Party, or even in the Party all.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 178-179

On the evening of December 8, at a meeting of party activists of the Krasnaya Presnya district in Moscow, a letter by Trotsky, addressed to party meetings and entitled "The New Course," was ready…. According to Trotsky, there were many in the party apparatus who gave a hostile reception to the "new course." He therefore called for a purge of all bureaucratic elements in the apparatus and their replacement by "fresh" cadres. Above all, Trotsky argued, the leading posts in the party "must be cleared of those who, at the first words of criticism, of objection, or of protest, brandish the thunderbolts of penalties at the critic. The 'new course' must begin by making everyone feel that from now on nobody will dare to terrorize the party." These hints were understood by everyone at the time.
Trotsky's letter received a hostile reception not only from the triumvirs but from the majority of the party apparatus as well. Nevertheless, it was published in Pravda on Dec. 11 with a number of additions and annotations by Trotsky himself…. In reply to reproaches by some activists Stalin stated:
"They say that the Central Committee should have banned publication of Trotsky's article. That is wrong, comrades. That would have been a very dangerous step on the part of the Central Committee….
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 123-124

STALIN SUPERIOR TO TROTSKY

Thus the ideological battle opened. Stalin was not only a debater of some power, but as an organizer and tactician he left Trotsky standing.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 158

…when I talked with leading Party members in Russia after Lenin's death they said to me, "Supposing we had a free election in Russia and the choice were between Stalin and Trotsky, how would any intelligently informed man vote? It is obvious that Stalin would build the Soviet state better, and would not stake everything on foreign revolutions. Furthermore, we can talk with Stalin. He will listen to reason, but if Trotsky once has an idea nothing can sway him."
…Behind the personal antagonism between Trotsky and Stalin there were many substantial theoretical differences. Trotsky believed that it was impossible to build socialism in Russia without world, or at least European, revolution. Stalin felt that socialism could be built in Russia alone and that dependence on outside help would be fatal.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 25

Certainly this autobiography [of Trotsky] is the work of a great writer and even, perhaps, of a tragic personality. But the self-portrait does not reflect a great statesman. The subject lacks

moderation, strength of character, and an eye for reality. Unparalleled arrogance constantly makes him blind to the bounds of possibility, and however much we are attracted by a writer straining after the impossible, his lack of moderation must be prejudicial to our conception of him as a statesman. The castles of Trotsky's logic seem built in the air instead of on the solid earth of that knowledge of the human soul and of human affairs which alone insures lasting political results. Trotsky's book is full of hatred, subjective from the first line to the last, passionately unjust. It is always a jumble of truth and fiction, which gives the book charm but betrays a mentality hardly likely to establish him as a politician.
To me one small but illuminating detail makes manifest Stalin's superiority over Trotsky: Stalin gave instructions that a portrait of Trotsky was to be included in the big official History of the Civil War, edited by Gorky; Trotsky's book, on the other hand, has only hatred and contempt for Stalin and maliciously perverts his merits.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 96

Stalin's pragmatic approach gave the impression of a sounder man, and in a sense this was a true impression. He was always capable of retreat–from the calling off of the disastrous collectivization wave in March 1930 to the ending of the Berlin Blockade in 1949. Stalin's skills in Soviet political methods make Trotsky look superficial, and the conclusion seems inevitable that he had far more to him than his rival. A mind may be intelligent, abilities may be brilliant; yet there are other qualities less apparent to the observer, without which such gifts have a certain slightness to them. Trotsky was a polished zircon; Stalin was a rough diamond.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 413

His judgment of men was profound. He early saw through the flamboyance and exhibitionism of Trotsky, who fooled the world, and especially America. The whole ill-bread and insulting attitude of liberals in the U.S. today began with our naive acceptance of Trotsky's magnificent lying propaganda, which he carried around the world. Against it, Stalin stood like a rock and moved neither right nor left, as he continued to advance toward a real socialism instead of the sham Trotsky offered.
Statement by W.E.B DuBois regarding COMRADE STALIN on March 16, 1953

In Lenin's time and under what was called the New Political Economy, the peasants were called upon to make the most of their opportunity and pile up their possessions. "Get rich quick," was the cry. After this had been enthusiastically responded to and the kulak had extended his holdings at the cost of the poorer peasant, Trotsky challenged Stalin and said: "We have not made a revolution in the towns for the purpose of creating a new kind of capitalist in the country. The Revolution is permanent. Who now holds back is a Thermidorian." Stalin replied that the ends of the Revolution could not be gained in a moment, that there had to be transitional solutions, that Lenin himself had to allow a temporary return to Free Trade and that Trotsky in his unreasonable hurry was like a foolish gardener who pulls up the root in his anxiety to see the budding plant.
As a matter of fact both men wanted the same thing; but impetuosity and patience, fire and foresight, can never go hand-in-hand with one another.
Ludwig, Emil. Leaders of Europe. London: I. Nicholson and Watson Ltd., 1934, p. 366

Stalin's capacity to learn was one of the advantages he had over Trotsky. It appears, for example…in the ability he showed, given time, to adsorb and internalize them [the boldness

of both Lenin's reversals of policy in April and July.] These were qualities Lenin could appreciate and use. They were enough to secure Stalin a place in the Council of People's Commissars….
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 57

Chosen originally because he [Stalin] was thought more stable in judgment than Trotsky, who might, it was felt, precipitate the state into war, Stalin is not universally considered to have justified his leadership by success; first in overcoming the very real difficulties of 1925; then in surmounting the obstacle of the peasant recalcitrance in 1930-1933; and finally in the successive triumphs of the Five-Year Plan. For him to be dismissed from office, or expelled from the Party, as Trotsky and so many others have been, could not be explained to the people. He will therefore remain in his great position of leadership so long as he wishes to do so.
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilization. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, p. 340

Stalin was willful, Trotsky was overbearing. Stalin was wily, Trotsky was unambiguous. Yet Stalin's line of conduct was consistently for the good of the revolution. This Lenin fully realized.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 190

We naturally spoke much of Trotsky. I shall quote two opinions. Elias Sokolovsky unsettled me by declaring that Stalin was a better man than Trotsky. "Stalin is a realist, Trotsky a fanatic. Stalin pursues his intentions until they lead him to the brink of a precipice; then he makes good his retreat. As to Trotsky, he goes on to the bitter end, though the whole world perish. He has too much vanity to take anything into account. I know him well; we are related."
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 196

TROTSKY DROVE ZINOVIEV AND KAMENEV TO STALIN

But one thing is certain — that Trotsky drove Zinoviev and Kamenev onto the side of Stalin by the publication of his book entitled the Lessons of October. When this appeared both men were infuriated by Trotsky's references to their opposition to the insurrection of 1917.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 159

Immediately after Lenin's death Trotsky went into clearly defined opposition, at least in articles in the press, to the majority of the Politbureau.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 130

… The idea of a military solution to the internal party conflict occurred to some members of the Trotskyist opposition. Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Stalin had some apprehensions in this regard, which explains the changes made on the Revolutionary Military Council as early as 1924 and the removal of Antonov-Ovseyenko as head of the Political Directorate of the Red Army and his replacement by Bubnov.
It must be said quite emphatically, however, that at the time of the discussion in the party there was never any real threat of a military coup, if only because the Red Army was never

just a “docile” instrument in Trotsky’s hands. Trotsky could rely fully on the soldiers of the Red Army when he gave the order to march on Warsaw, but he could not have raised the Red Army against the Central Committee and the Politburo.

Victor Serge, a well-known revolutionary internationalist who had taken part and left-wing movements in many countries, was working in the Soviet Union in the mid-20s. He joined the Trotskyists and… claimed that Trotsky could have easily defeated Stalin in 1924 if he had relied on the army.

But a military ouster of the triumvirate and the party apparatus loyal to it would have been an extremely difficult and uncertain undertaking–an adventure with very little chance of success. If Trotsky refrained from such a step, one can assume that what held him back was not concern over Bonapartism but uncertainty of his control over the Red Army.

The German edition of Serge’s memoirs contains a foreword by the prominent German revolutionary Wollenberg, who went to live in the Soviet Union after the failure of the German revolution…. Wollenberg convincingly disputes the version of events presented by Serge: “What a colossal mistake in assessing the concrete situation that had arisen in the land of the Soviets within a few months after Lenin’s death! I must add that at the time Lenin died I was still on military duty in Germany. As a specialist in civil war I held a prominent post in the German Communist Party. At that time I thought along more or less the same lines as Serge and as Trotsky apparently thought about all these matters for another decade or more.

But when I moved to Moscow, I saw my error. In Moscow I was forced to realize that the leading figures on the Red Army general staff, such as Tukhachevsky, with whom I became friends, admired Trotsky greatly as the organizer of the Red Army, as a man and a revolutionary, but at the same time they took a critical attitude toward his general political position…. There could be no doubt that the top military command had full confidence in the party leadership…. And in the entire party there was an unquestionable majority in favor of the triumvirate, that is, the leading threesome formed after Lenin’s death: Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Stalin.

If the Soviet constitution could have been changed for a plebiscite to be held, it is impossible to say which of Lenin’s successors would have gathered the most votes. But it can be said for certain that, given the hostility of the peasants and the middle class (which was reappearing in the first half of the 1920s) in relation to Trotsky, who was considered an “enemy of NEP,” the outcome would have been rather unfavorable for him.

It is necessary to state this with full clarity because to this day Trotskyists of all varieties, as well as Soviet experts in West Germany and other countries, continue to spread the tale in speech, in print, on radio and on television that after Lenin’s death Trotsky supposedly missed a “sure bet.”

Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 133-135

TROTSKY AND LEFT OPPOSITION ARE SUBVERSIVE

Trotsky, Bukharin, and Zinoviev held that it was impossible to build socialism in “backward Russia.” The Left Opposition wanted to convert the Russian Revolution into a reservoir of “world Revolution,” a world center from which to promote revolutions in other countries. Stripped of its “ultra-revolutionary verbiage,” as both Lenin and Stalin repeatedly pointed out, the Left Opposition really stood for a wild struggle for power, “bohemian anarchism,” and, inside Russia, military dictatorship under War Commissar Trotsky and his associates.

Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 193-94

By 1923, Trotsky's underground apparatus was already a potent and far-reaching organization. Special codes, ciphers, and passwords were devised by Trotsky and his adherents for purposes of illegal communication. Secret printing presses were set up throughout the country. Trotskyite cells were established in the Army, the diplomatic corps, and in the Soviet state and party institutions.
Years later, Trotsky revealed that his own son, Sedov, was involved at this time in the Trotskyite conspiracy which was already ceasing to be a mere political opposition within the Bolshevik party and was on the point of merging with the secret war against the Soviet regime.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 196

In the autumn of 1923 Trotsky issued a "Declaration of the 46 Oppositionists," criticizing the NEP, predicting a great economic crisis, and demanding full freedom for dissenting groups and factions.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 198

What I did not know until much later was that Trotsky's salvos had been followed by a regular broadside known as the "Statement of the 46," signed by 46 members of party, most of whom had taken part in former opposition movements.
Duranty, Walter. I Write as I Please. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1935, p. 213

Stalin, in answer to a delegation's question in November, 1927, as to the support of the Opposition, said:
"I think that the Opposition chiefly supports itself on non-proletarian circles…. The Opposition is the reflection of this dissatisfaction [of non-proletarian sections]."
I was in Russia in the months of 1927 when the issue was raging in the press and conversation. Seeing something of the former aristocrats, I got the impression of their interest in the conflict. Many of them welcomed the Trotsky Opposition as the hope of destroying the dictatorship.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 57

I sincerely believed at the time, and still believe now, that Zinoviev, Kamenev, Trotsky, and Bukharin were real enemies of Stalin;…
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 54

His [Trotsky] challenge to Stalin kept the Communist movement in turmoil and weakened our position in Western Europe and Germany in the 1930s.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 69

[Footnote 7] He [Kamenev] was twice expelled from the Communist Party but readmitted; then, in 1935, he was again expelled and jailed.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 54

It appears to anyone who casts a summary glance over the salient facts of the Russian revolutionary movement from the end of the 19th-century, that two basic tendencies, namely,

the reformist and revolutionary, which had brought about the schism between the Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, subsisted up to a certain degree in the very heart of the Bolshevik Party which had come into power. Some of the leaders, Kamenev, Zinoviev and, to a certain degree, Trotsky, were, as we have seen, in certain important connections, hostile to revolutionary methods. They would have liked to have prevented the October Revolution and, once this had been accomplished, to have avoided the dictatorship of proletariat.
In practice they would have preferred a constitutional-democratic regime to a socialist regime. They had no confidence in the strength or the durability of a truly Socialist state in the heart of a capitalist world; they did not believe that the better class peasants could be won over to this cause. In addition, they criticized the principle of State industry which they looked upon as an enterprise of a capitalist order. They were in favor of freedom for splits and groups in the heart of the Party, that is to say, of the heterogeneousness of the Party. These points, upon which Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Trotsky came together repeatedly, constitute the principal characteristics of the most important of the "Oppositions." It is the return to life of the Menshevik ferment.
So that, during Lenin's lifetime, the Opposition consisted of those who opposed Lenin's point of view, since Lenin actually ruled the Party which he "had forged with his own hands for 25 years," and which was his own creation. But after Lenin's death it [the Opposition] made, if one may say so, a pretext of Stalin to intensify its offensive and to attack the same theses with the same arguments, pretending all the while to be defending the purity of Leninism.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 163

Whether or to what extent Trotsky should be regarded as the direct sponsor of this coalition [the Forty-Six] is not certain…. Even many years after Trotsky's death those who had stood close to him claimed that he observed the rules of discipline so strictly that he could not have acted as the sponsor of this particular demonstration of protest. In the light of all that is known about Trotsky's conduct in such matters, this may be accepted as true. However, it is doubtful that he had, as is also claimed, no foreknowledge of the action of the Forty-Six or that he was surprised by it. Preobrazhensky, Muralov, or Antonov-Ovseenko undoubtedly kept him informed about what they were doing, and would not have done what they were doing without some encouragement from him. And so even if Trotsky was not formally responsible for their action, he must be regarded as its actual prompter.
… As to Trotsky, it [the Central Committee] did not charge him plainly with organizing the faction but held him morally responsible for the offense of which it found the Forty-Six guilty.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 114

Take, for example, the Trotskyite Counter-Revolutionary Fourth International, two- thirds of which is made up of spies and subversive agents.
Stalin, Joseph. Mastering Bolshevism. San Francisco: Proletarian Publishers, 1972, p. 25

TROTSKY OPPOSED STALIN IN THE 1920S FROM WITHIN

Back in Moscow after his trip to Germany, Trotsky launched an all-out campaign against the Soviet leadership…. With the threat of war hanging over Russia in the summer of 1927, Trotsky renewed his attacks on the Soviet government. Trotsky publicly declared: "We must

restore the tactics of Clemenseau, who, as is well-known, rose against the French Government at a time when the Germans were 80 kilometers from Paris!"
Stalin denounced Trotsky statement as treasonable.
Once again, a vote was taken on the subject of Trotsky and his Opposition. In a general referendum of all Bolshevik party members the overwhelming majority, by a vote of 740,000 to 4000, repudiated the Trotskyite Opposition and declared themselves in favor of Stalin's administration.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 203

Speaking as one nomenklatura member to another, he [Trotsky] issued the ultimate threat: if the Stalinists refused to deal with him, he would feel free to agitate for his views among rank-and-file party members.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 63

Trotsky's adherents met secretly to make a program of their own and start a party within the Party.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 101

STALIN TRIED TO GET ALONG WITH TROTSKY BUT NOT VICE VERSA

The reader of the reports, subsequently published, from Stalin to Lenin and party headquarters will note that Stalin never ventured on any direct attack on Trotsky or criticism of him. Trotsky's name never appears in Stalin's reports. Such implicit criticism of Trotsky as it is to be found in the reports can only be read–and that by no means clearly–between the lines, in the form of attacks on certain army commanders and staff officers who had been appointed by Trotsky, and in criticism of their action. Trotsky's outstanding position at that time may be seen from the simple fact that he imposes no such reserve on himself. In his short telegrams he mentions Stalin by name, attacks him, and criticizes him as a superior may a subordinate.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 90

Stalin had, indeed, made repeated attempts to improve their relations. Observers of the first meeting between the two, at the party congress at Stockholm, said that Stalin, then delegate of the Caucasian organization, did all he could to make up to Trotsky….
Trotsky spoke pretty openly of Stalin as a limited petty bourgeois, showing plainly thta he regarded him as far below himself.
Until sometime after the February-March revolution of 1917 Stalin continued to regard Trotsky without animus. It was, indeed, Stalin who officially moved that Trotsky should be admitted into the party, and into the party leadership. Their enmity began later, and no small part of their enmity was due to the great, the vast difference between them. The continual condescension and the social and intellectual arrogance with which Trotsky treated Stalin was bound before long to produce in the latter… hatred. Stalin's steadily growing opposition to Trotsky's military measures, and his hostility to him, at first concealed and then open, during the execution of the tasks entrusted to him, were partly products of that feeling. Trotsky's whole style and manner, his preference for ex-Tsarist officers or for intellectuals received in society over people like Stalin, his way of letting it be seen that he regarded himself, consciously or subconsciously, as belonging after all to those classes, got on

Stalin's nerves. But Stalin remained long under the influence of the social inhibitions due to his upbringing, and he did not venture on open opposition to Trotsky. It was Trotsky, after all, who after the civil war, when his official duties no longer required that he should come into personal touch with Stalin, broke off all relations with him.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 127-128

The political duel with Trotsky was not started by Stalin, and it was a later invention that those who began the conflict had been induced to do so by Stalin.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 128

Perhaps earlier than most, Stalin spotted Trotsky's strong and weak sides. Taking Trotsky's enormous popularity into account, Stalin at first tried to establish if not friendly, then at least stable relations with him. On one occasion, Stalin turned up unannounced at Trotsky's place in Archangelskoe outside Moscow to congratulate him on his birthday. The meeting was not a warm one. Each sensed the other's dislike. On another occasion, with Lenin's assistance, Stalin tried to establish better relations. This emerged in a telegram from Lenin to Trotsky dated October 23, 1918, in which Lenin gave an account of his conversation with Stalin. As a member of the Defense Council, Stalin gave his assessment of the position in Tsaritsyn and expressed the desire to work more closely with the revvoensoviet of the Republic. Lenin added:
"In conveying Stalin's statements to you, Lev Davidovitch, I request that you think about them and say, first, whether you agree to discuss them personally with Stalin, for which purpose he would come here, and secondly, whether you consider it possible, in certain concrete circumstances, to set aside the existing friction and work together, which Stalin wants so much to do. As for myself, I believe it is necessary to make every effort to work well together with Stalin."
Nothing came of it, however. Trotsky could not hide his superior attitude.
Stalin even spoke highly of Trotsky's role in the revolution and Civil War in some of his speeches, but that did not improve Trotsky's aloof attitude towards him.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 56

Soon after Stalin's arrival back in Moscow, he wrote a celebrated article in the issue of Pravda of November 6, 1918, celebrating the first anniversary of the seizure of power, in which he warmly praised Trotsky! It contains such phrases as:
'All the practical work of organizing the insurrection was done under the immediate direction of Trotsky, the Chairman of the Petrograd Soviet. It can be safely asserted that for the rapid desertion of the garrison to the side of the Soviet and for the clever organization of the Military Revolutionary Committee, the party is above all, and primarily, indebted to Comrade Trotsky.'
It seems that, as with his approach for a reconciliation a little earlier, Stalin was now, whatever his motives, really trying to effect a detente with Trotsky. Plainly, in the years that followed, an alliance with Trotsky might have been a possible maneuver, one of the available political configurations. Trotsky was never to be won over; but for the moment he seems to have been somewhat appeased. He does not appear to have opposed Stalin's nomination to the Revolutionary Military Soviet.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 83

A few descriptions of scenes in the Politburo give a vivid glimpse of Stalin, the good soul:

“When I attended a session of the Politburo for the first time [writes Bazhanov] the struggle between the triumvirs and Trotsky was in full swing. Trotsky was the first to arrive for the session. The others were late, they were still plotting…. Next entered Zinoviev. He passed by Trotsky; and both behaved as if they had not noticed one another. When Kamenev entered, he greeted Trotsky with a slight nod. At last Stalin came in. he approached the table at which Trotsky was seated, greeted him in a most friendly manner and vigorously shook hands with him across the table.”
During another session, in the summer of 1923, one of the triumvirs proposed that Stalin be brought in as a controller into the Commissariat of War, of which Trotsky was still the head. Trotsky, irritated by the proposal, declared that he was resigning from the office and asked to be relieved from all posts and honors in Russia and allowed to go to Germany, which then seemed to be on the brink of a Communist upheaval, to take part in the revolution there. Zinoviev countered the move by asking the same for himself. Stalin put an end to the scene˜, declaring that ‘the party could not possibly dispense with the services of two such important and beloved leaders’.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 274

He [Stalin] repeatedly stated that the only condition for peace was that Trotsky should stop his attacks. The repeatedly made the gesture that looked like he stretching out of his hand to his opponent.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 278

Lenin appealed to both Trotsky and Stalin to set aside the friction between them and work together. Stalin made an effort and in a number of speeches spoke highly of Trotsky’s role; but Trotsky could not hide his sense of superiority.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 100

TROTSKY MERELY ATTACKED BUT HAD NO PRACTICAL PROGRAM

Among the outstanding political issues of the time, there was no clear Trotskyist policy. In his articles Trotsky merely criticized whatever was the policy of the majority. Such positive proposals as he did make were impracticable.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 132

TROTSKY’S REASONS AND TACTICS FOR OPPOSING STALIN

There is no psychological problem underlying the other trials, against the organization of the Trotskyists and against Bukharin’s Right Opposition group. These trials and the psychology of the defendants offered no difficulty. This does not mean that the course of justice was impeccable. Especially in the trial of the Trotskyists, everything is quite clear; in this trial Trotsky’s ideas and plans found vivid and quite lucid expression. To Trotsky, Stalin was the man who had carried out a counter-revolution; Stalin and his followers were called by Trotsky, by analogy with the French Revolution, ‘Thermidorians’. In his political passion he looked upon Stalin just as in the past revolutionaries had looked upon the Tsar, and accordingly he considered every means of combat permissible. To him it was obvious that Stalin was leading the Soviet Union to disaster; it was bound, he thought, inevitably to be involved in a great war, a war on two fronts, to be waged simultaneously against the

Germans and the Japanese. Trotsky was convinced that Stalin would lose that war. From this he drew two conclusions: that the war might bring down Stalin and his regime; and that it was his, Trotsky's, duty to prevent Russia's total destruction. He intended to assume power, in order to maintain the dictatorship of the proletariat and the achievements of the revolution at least in part of the Soviet Union…. There had been repeated cases in history of revolutionaries coming to terms with the enemies of their country; they regard their own people's worst evil as its own government, and not the external enemy. Similarly in 1904 the Russian revolutionary parties of all shades of opinion entered into relations with Japan during the war with Russia, in order to obtain from Japan weapons with which to combat Tsarism….
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 291

STALIN DID NOT CAUSE TROTSKY'S FALL

The decline and fall of Trotsky, however, are not at all explicable in terms of a selfishly ambitious scheme developed by Stalin to thwart Lenin's purposes.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 200

In fact, however, Trotsky was alone on the Politburo, and in the decisive slots of the party apparatus he had few supporters. This greatly weakened his position and made it impossible for him to automatically become the party's new top leader.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 111

HAVING BEEN RUTHLESS TROTSKY DECIDED TO BE SO AGAIN

"We were never concerned," wrote Trotsky, "with the Kantian-priestly and vegetarian-Quaker prattle about the "sacredness of human life.' We were revolutionaries in opposition, and have remained revolutionaries in power. To make the individual sacred we must destroy the social order which crucifies him. And this problem can be solved only by blood and iron." Under the conditions of the 1930's the Oppositionists having no other effective weapons at their disposal, concluded that assassination might prove effective.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 267

At the Central Committee's plenum of November 1927, where Stalin eventually proposed his [Trotsky] expulsion from the party, Trotsky said, inter alia, addressing the Stalin group (I'm giving the gist of his words), "You are a bunch of bureaucrats without talent. If one day the country should be threatened, if war breaks out, you will be totally incapable of organizing the defense of the country and of achieving victory. Then, when the enemy is 100 kilometers from Moscow, we will do what Clemenceau did in his time: we will overthrow this incompetent government. There will be one difference in that whereas Clemenceau was content to take power, we, in addition, will shoot this band of contemptible bureaucrats who have betrayed the Revolution. Yes, we'll do it. You too, you'd like to shoot us, but you dare not. We dare to do it because it will be an absolutely indispensable condition for winning."
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 114

SOME TROTS WERE GOOD AND HAD TO BE USED

Trotskyists were good people. It is unfortunate there were differences of opinion. Some corrected themselves, others were for the time being irreplaceable. We had to use everyone. If Trotsky said something good, then Kuibyshev thought Trotsky himself was good. That was his fundamental weakness.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 115

TROTSKYISM IS COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY

The struggle against Trotskyism is the struggle against a muddled, meddling, and cowardly lower middle-class–in a word, counter-revolutionary in the heart of the Party.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 175

Stalin's contribution [to the attack on Trotsky in late 1924] was a reasoned and destructive attack….
Examining Trotsky's main heresies, he demonstrated by quotations from Lenin's writings that Trotsky had been in direct conflict with the master at all stages…. The most damaging part of Stalin's attack came in quotations from Trotsky's correspondence in 1913 with Chkhiedze in which Trotsky had written that Lenin was "the professional exploiter of everything that is backward in the Russian workers' movement." He had also written that "the whole foundation of Leninism at the present time is built on lying and falsification." Stalin closed his speech with the statement that "Trotsky has come forward now with the purpose of dethroning Bolshevism and undermining its foundations. The task of the party is to bury Trotskyism as an ideology."
The speech sent a shock of horror through the party. It seemed impossible that any member, least of all a leading Bolshevik like Trotsky, could have written in such terms of Lenin. But Stalin's evidence was irrefutable. The charge that Trotsky had been all long a vicious enemy of Lenin and Leninism was accepted as proven.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 203-204

Some Bolsheviks think that Trotskyism is a faction of Communism, which has made mistakes, it is true, which has done many foolish things, which has sometimes even been anti-Soviet, but which is nevertheless a faction of Communism. Hence a certain liberalism in dealing with Trotskyists and people who think like Trotsky. It is scarcely necessary to prove that such a view of Trotskyism is profoundly wrong and pernicious. As a matter-of-fact, Trotskyism has long since ceased to be a fraction of Communism. As a matter-of-fact, Trotskyism is the vanguard of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, which is carrying on the struggle against Communism, against the Soviet government, against the building of socialism in the USSR.
That is why liberalism towards Trotskyism, even when the latter is shattered and concealed, is stupidity bordering on crime, bordering on treason to the working class.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 263

It is sufficient for our purposes merely to indicate the few salient new ideas which gradually crystallized in the course of the polemics between the Stalinist machine and the Opposition and acquired decisive significance insofar as they provided ideological leverage for the initiators of the struggle against Trotskyism. It was around these ideas that the political

forces rallied. They were three in number. In time they partly supplemented and partly replaced each other.
The first had to do with industrialization. The triumvirate again by coming out against the program of industrialization proposed by me, and in the interest of polemics branded it super-industrialization. This position was even deepened after the triumvirate fell apart and Stalin established his bloc with Bukharin and the Right Wing. The general trend of the official argument against so-called super-industrialization was that rapid industrialization is possible only at the expense of the peasantry….
At the second stage, in the course of 1924, the struggle was launched against the theory of permanent revolution. The political content of this struggle was reduced to the thesis that we are not interested in international revolution but in our own safety, in order to develop our economy. The bureaucracy feared more and more that it was jeopardizing its position by the risk of involvement implicit in an international revolutionary policy. The campaign against the theory of permanent revolution, devoid in itself of any theoretical value whatsoever, served as an expression of a conservative nationalistic deviation from Bolshevism. Out of this struggle emerged the theory of socialism in a separate country….
The third idea of the bureaucracy in its campaign against Trotskyism had to do with the struggle against leveling, against equality. The theoretical side of this struggle was in the nature of a curiosity. In Marx's letter concerning the Gotha Program of the German Social Democracy, Stalin found a phrase to the effect that during the first period of socialism inequality will still be preserved, or, as he expressed it, the bourgeois prerogative in the sphere of distribution. Marx did not mean by this the creation of a new inequality but merely a gradual rather than a sudden elimination of the old inequality in the sphere of wages.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 395-396

TROTSKY USES THE ARGUMENT THAT OLD BOLSHEVIKS COULD NOT HAVE CHANGED SIDES

Trotsky used the age-old bourgeois argument: `he is an old revolutionary, how could he have changed sides?' Khrushchev would take up this slogan in his Secret Report.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 139 [p. 121 on the NET]

YET, MANY OLD BOLSHEVIKS HAD CHANGED EARLIER

However, Kautsky, once hailed as the spiritual child of Marx and Engels, became, after the death of the founders of scientific socialism, the main Marxist renegade. Martov was one of the Marxist pioneers in Russia and participated in the creation of the first revolutionary organizations; nevertheless, he became a Menshevik leader and fought against socialist revolution right from October 1917. And what about the `Old Bolsheviks' Khrushchev and Mikoyan, who effectively set the Soviet Union on the path of capitalist restoration.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 141 [p. 121 on the NET]

TROTSKY SAYS THE PARTY IS ALWAYS RIGHT AND MUST ALWAYS BE SUPPORTED

Trotsky did take part in the work of the Thirteenth Congress. His appearance on the speaker's platform was greeted with applause almost as lengthy as it had been at the Twelfth Congress. Trotsky's speech was conciliatory rather than aggressive. He defended himself and the Opposition as a whole rather weakly. It was in this speech that he uttered his famous remark that "the party is always right," a statement hardly consistent with his actual activity and with the positions he had previously taken. In particular he said:

"None of us wants to be or can be right against his own party. The party in the last analysis is always right, because the party is the only historical instrument given to the proletariat to resolve its fundamental tasks…. I know that it is impossible to be right against the party. One can be right only with the party and through the party, for history has not created any other way of determining what is right. The English have a saying: My country, right or wrong. With much more historical justification we can say: Right or wrong on any particular, specific question at any particular moment, this is still my party."

This was empty rhetoric, and Trotsky's opponents did not consider it satisfactory. Even Krupskaya, who had sent Trotsky a warm letter when he was in Sukhumi a short time before, saying that Lenin had remembered him during the last days of his life, said in her speech at the congress that if the party is always right, Trotsky should not have started the discussion. Zinoviev remarked rather passively that "the party has no need of bitter-sweet compliments." Stalin rejected Trotsky's rhetoric even more emphatically. He said that in the given instance Trotsky had once again made an assertion that was incorrect in principle:

"The party often makes mistakes. Lenin taught us to teach the party the art of correct leadership on the basis of its own mistakes. If the party made no mistakes, there would be nothing with which to teach the party. Our task is to catch these errors, reveal their roots, and show the party and the working class how we erred and how we are going to correct these errors in the future. Without this, progress would be impossible for the party. Without this, the forming of party leaders and cadres would be impossible, because they are formed and trained through the struggle against their own errors, by overcoming those errors. I think that a statement like Trotsky's is somewhat of a compliment with somewhat of an attempt at mockery–an attempt, of course, that failed."
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 127

TROTSKY WAS UNPOPULAR BUT WAS ALLOWED FREEDOM TO PUBLISH

A heated discussion again erupted in the fall of 1924 in connection with certain questions of party history. Despite the struggle against "Trotskyism" that had been proclaimed, the State Publishing House was issuing the collected works of Trotsky as well as those of Lenin. The volume of Trotsky's works being prepared for publication in the fall of 1924 contained his writings and speeches of 1917.

The Central Committee voted to withdraw Trotsky's pamphlet [Lessons of October] from circulation, although publication of his Works continued [17 volumes of Trotsky's works appeared before publication was discontinued in 1927]. Resolutions against Trotsky and the Left Opposition were adopted by virtually all party organizations. The Leningrad province

committee, headed by Zinoviev, proposed that Trotsky be expelled from the party. Many party cells, including cells in the army and navy, urged that Trotsky be removed from his position as commissar of war….
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 131-132

TROTSKY WAS RELIEVED OF MANY POSITIONS BUT REMAINED ON THE POLITBURO

Without waiting for the plenum, Trotsky sent a long statement to the Central Committee asking to be relieved of his duties as commissar of war and chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic….

Trotsky was allowed to remain on the Politburo, however. After a short time he was given new assignments as a member of the Presidium of the Supreme Economic Council, chairman of the scientific and technical division of the Supreme Economic Council, head of the electrical engineering board, and chairman of a Chief Concessions Committee.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 133

TROTSKY DID NOT UNDERSTAND THE SU OR WHAT WAS GOING ON

… Trotsky remained in his own mind a revolutionary and not “a counter-revolutionary heading toward fascism,” as Stalin declared. However, because of his inherent dogmatism, his tendentiousness, and his lack of information Trotsky could not understand or properly evaluate the complex processes taking place in the Soviet Union and the world Communist movement in the ’30s. As a result, he was not able to formulate an alternative Marxist program. He was unable even to understand correctly the reasons for his own defeat.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 179

TROTSKY’S ARGUMENT THAT PARTY LEADERS CAN’T BE REMOVED IS FALSE

Now on what basis can we describe the categories of people mentioned by Trotsky as being privileged and irremovable? Let us start with the Communist leadership. It can hardly be pretended that this leadership is irremovable. Indeed in another context, Trotsky will tell you that a considerable number of leaders have been removed–including himself. Nor can it be seriously contended that Trotsky was removed bureaucratically. On the contrary, he was removed for violating Party discipline after debates which lasted from 1923 to 1927, and after the Party had declared against the line taken by him, by 724,000 votes to 4000. But perhaps the present Party officials are irremovable? On the contrary, the present Party officials are elected by secret ballots of the Party members. Do those Party members occupy a privileged position with regard to the workers? On the contrary, at the periodical cleansings of the Party, the non-Party workers are given the fullest opportunity of criticizing Party members and demanding their expulsion from the Party.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 155

TROTSKY OPPOSED THE PARTY FROM LENIN’S DEATH TILL 1927

From 1923 (just prior to the death of Lenin), until his expulsion from the Party in 1927, Trotsky's struggle against the policy and leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet government was continuous. He not only refused to accept the decisions of the majority of the Party, but worked actively against them.
Shepherd, W. G. The Moscow Trial. London: Communist Party of Great Britain, 1936, p. 14

TROTSKY SHOWED NO INTEREST IN TAKING OVER WHEN THE TRIUMVIRS SPLIT

The exchanges between Bukharinists and Zinovievists had gone on for many months now and the conflict between the triumvirs had been simmering for nearly a year. This, it might have seemed, was the realignment for which Trotsky had waited, the opportunity to act. Yet throughout all this time he was aloof, silent about the issues over which the party divided, and as if unaware of them. Thirteen years later, when he stood before the Dewey Commission in Mexico, he confessed that at the 14th Congress he was astonished to see Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Stalin clashing as enemies. "The explosion was absolutely unexpected by me," he said. "During the congress I waited in uncertainty, because the whole situation changed. It appeared absolutely unclear to me."
This recollection, so many years after the event, may seem quite incredible; but it is fully borne out by what its author wrote in unpublished diary notes during the congress itself. To the Dewey Commission he explained that he was taken by surprise because, although he was a member of the Politburo, the triumvirs had carefully concealed their dissensions from him and had thrashed out their differences in his absence, within the secret caucus that acted as the real Politburo. The explanation, although true, explains little. For one thing, the crucial controversy over socialism in a single country had already been conducted in public. Trotsky could not have missed its significance if he had followed it. He evidently failed to do so. For another, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Krupskaya, and Sokolnikov had raised the demand for an open debate not within a secret caucus but at the plenary session of the Central Committee, in October. But even if they had not done so, and even if the public controversy over socialism in a single country had given no indication of the new cleavage, it would still be something of a puzzle how an observer as close, as interested, and as acute as Trotsky could have remained unaware of the trend and blind to the many omens. How could he have been deaf to the rumblings that had for months been coming from Leningrad?
His surprise, we must conclude, resulted from a failure of observation, intuition, and analysis. Moreover, it is implausible that Radek, Preobrazhensky, Smirnov, and his other friends should not have noticed what was happening and that none of them tried to bring matters to Trotsky's attention. Evidently his mind remained closed. He lived as if in another world, wrapped up in himself and his ideas. He was up to his eyes in his scientific and industrial preoccupations and literary work, which protected him to some extent from the frustration to which he was exposed. He shunned inner-party affairs. Full of the sense of his superiority and contempt for his opponents, and disgusted with the polemical methods and tricks, he was not interested in their doings. He submitted to the discipline by which they had shackled him, but he held up his head and ignored them. A few years later his biographer was told in Moscow that he used to appear dutifully at the sessions of the Central Committee, take his seat, open a book–most often a French novel–and become so engrossed as to take no notice of the deliberations.

Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 248-249

The eyes of the whole assembly [the 14th Congress of 18 December 1925] were now on Trotsky: had the great and eloquent man nothing to say? His lips were sealed. He remained silent even when Andreev asked that new prerogatives be voted for the Central Committee to enable it to deal more effectively with dissenters–to enable it, that is, to break the back of the new Opposition. The latter had been heavily outvoted; but before its close the congress received with uproar and anger reports that in Leningrad turbulent demonstrations against its decisions were in progress:… And to the end not a word escaped from Trotsky's mouth. [Footnote]: He [Trotsky] made only one Zwischenruf in the debate. When Zinoviev explained that the year before he had asked for Trotsky's exclusion from the Politburo because after all the accusations they had hurled at Trotsky, it was incongruous to Re-elect Him to the Politburo, Trotsky Interjected: "Correct!"
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 254

TROTSKY ACTED LIKE HE WAS ON THE MASSES SIDE BUT SIDED WITH THE PARTY LEADERS

The ruling factions played on popular weariness and craving for security and frightened people with the bogy of permanent revolution. Speaking for the record, Trotsky usually dwelt on the antagonism between the ruling group and the rank-and-file. Off the record he admitted that the ideas and slogans of the ruling group met an emotional need in the rank-and-file, that this overlaid their antagonism, and that the Opposition was at variance with the popular temper.
What then was to be done? It is not the business of the Marxist revolutionary, Trotsky reflected, to bow to the reactionary mood of the masses. At times when their class consciousness is dimmed, he must be prepared to become isolated from them.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 309

ON SOME CRUCIAL SOVIET LEADERSHIP ISSUES TROTSKY SIDES WITH STALIN

…how can anyone think or believe that power could pass from the hands of the Russian proletariat into those of the bourgeoisie peacefully, by way of a quiet, imperceptible bureaucratic change? Such a conception of the Thermidor is nothing but reformism. "The means of production," he went on, "which once prolonged to the capitalists remain in the hands of the Soviet state till this day. The land is nationalized. Social elements that live on the exploitation of labor continue to be debarred from the Soviets and the Army." The Thermidorian danger was real enough, but the struggle was not yet resolved. And just as Stalin's left course and attack on the NEP-man and the kulak had not effaced the Thermidorian danger, so his, Trotsky's, banishment had not obliterated the October Revolution. A sense of proportion was needed in the evaluation of facts and in theorizing. The concept of Soviet state capitalism was meaningless where no capitalists existed; and if those who spoke of it denounced state ownership of industry, they renounced an essential

prerequisite of socialism. Nor was the bureaucracy a new exploiting class in any Marxist sense, but a “morbid growth on the body of the working class”–a new exploiting class could not form itself in exercising merely managerial functions, without having any property in the means of production.

The implications of this dispute became apparent when a conflict flared up, in the summer of 1929, between the Soviet Union and China over the possession of the Manchurian Railway. China claimed the railway which the Soviet Government held as a concessionaire. The question arose whose side the Opposition ought to take. The French syndicalists, the Leninbund, and some Belgian Trotskyists held that the Soviet government should give up the railway (which had been built by Russia in the course of the Tsarist expansion to Manchuria); and in Stalin’s refusal to do so they saw evidence of the imperialist character of his policy. To their surprise Trotsky declared that Stalin was right in holding on to the railway and that it was the Opposition’s duty to side with the Soviet Union against China. This was, in the first year of his exile, Trotsky’s first great controversy with his own followers–we shall see him again, in his last year, during the Soviet-Finnish war of 1939-40, engaged in another, his last, dispute with his own followers, a dispute again centering on the Opposition’s attitude towards the Soviet Union; and in that dispute he would again adopt essentially the same view as in 1929.

He saw no reason, he argued, why the workers’ state should yield a vital economic and strategic position to Chiang Kai-shek’s Government (which had recognized the Soviet concession in Manchuria). He criticized severely Stalin’s manner of dealing with the Chinese, his disregard of their susceptibilities, and his failure to appeal to the people in Manchuria–a more considerate and thoughtful policy might have averted the conflict. But once the conflict had broken out, he asserted, communists had no choice but to back the Soviet Union. If Stalin gave up the railway to the Kuomintang he would have yielded it not to the Chinese people but to their oppressors. Chiang Kai-shek was not even an independent agent. If he obtained control of the railway, he would not be able to maintain it but would sooner or later lose it to Japan (or else allow American capital to bring the Manchurian economy under its influence). Only the Soviet Union was strong enough to keep this Manchurian position out of Japan’s hands. China’s national rights, invoked by the critics, were, in Trotsky’s view, not relevant to this case, which was an incident in a complex and many -sided contest between the various forces of world imperialism and the workers’ state. He concluded that the time for the Soviet Union to do historic justice and return the Manchurian outpost to China would come when a revolutionary government was established in Peking; and this forecast was to come true after the Chinese revolution. In the meantime, the Soviet government was obliged to act as the trustee of revolutionary China and keep for it the Manchurian assets.

One may imagine the consternation which Trotsky caused among the zealots of the Opposition. They were puzzled by his “inconsistency,” thinking that he was missing a great opportunity to strike at Stalin. He was, indeed, not out to score points; but his behavior was consistent with what he was saying about the Soviet Union as the workers’ state. For that state he felt, as an outcast, the same responsibility that he had felt as a member of the Politburo and of Lenin’s government. He found the displays of self-righteous indignation over Soviet policy, in which some of his pupils indulged, wrong-headed and cheap; and he told them bluntly that he had nothing in common with “Trotskyists” who refused to give the workers’ state unshakable, if critical, allegiance.

Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 55-57

TROTSKY ATTACKS AND STALIN DEFENDS THE OLD GUARD AGAINST BUREAUCRACY CHARGE

[In Pravda on December 15,1923 Stalin stated] After referring to bureaucracy in the Party apparatus and the danger of degeneration of the old guard i.e., the Leninists, the main core of our party, Trotsky writes:
"The degeneration of the 'old guard' has been observed in history more than once…."
It is impossible to understand how opportunists and Mensheviks like Bernstein, Adler, Kautsky, Guesde, and the others, can be put on a par with the Bolshevik old guard, which has always fought, and I hope will continue to fight with honor, against opportunism, the Mensheviks and the Second International…. How is one to interpret these insinuations about opportunism in relation to the old Bolsheviks, who matured in the struggle against opportunism?…
I do not by any means think that the old Bolsheviks are absolutely guaranteed against the danger of degeneration any more than I have grounds for asserting that we are absolutely guaranteed against, say, an earthquake. As a possibility, such a danger can and should be assumed. But does this mean that such a danger is real, that it exists? I think that it does not. Trotsky himself has adduced no evidence to show that the danger of degeneration is a real danger.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 5, p. 393-395

STALIN ATTACKS TROTSKY AT A 1927 JOINT MEETING

…It was significant that Stalin was the only speaker at the 15th Party Congress to receive a standing ovation, both for his report and for the closing speech. He cannot be accused of having 'stage-managed' or 'scripted' the proceedings; most of the delegates simply saw him as the true emergent leader of the party, an impression strengthened by the unconvincing speeches of the opposition whose nerve had failed….
A combined plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission of October 23, 1927 was convened to discuss the agenda of the forthcoming 15th Congress. When the plenum agreed that congress should debate the Trotskyist opposition, shouts came from the floor and notes were handed to the platform to the effect that the Central Committee had concealed Lenin's testament and not carried out his will. Stalin could no longer remain silent on this matter. His hour-long speech was full of anger and undisguised hatred of Trotsky. Once again he rehearsed all the sins of the rejected leader, going back to 1904. Knowing that Trotsky's main weapon against him was Lenin's warning about his personal shortcomings, Stalin countered along the same lines:
"The opposition thinks it can 'explain' its defeat on the personal grounds of Stalin's rudeness, the obduracy of Bukharin and Rykov, and so on. That's too easy. Its mumbo-jumbo, not an explanation…. In the period between 1904 and the February revolution Trotsky was hobnobbing with the Mensheviks the whole time and carrying on a desperate struggle against Lenin's party. In that time Trotsky was defeated again and again by Lenin's party. Why? Perhaps Stalin's rudeness was to blame? But Stalin was not then Secretary of the Central Committee, he was passing his time in those days far from foreign exile, he was carrying on the struggle in the underground, against tzarism, while the struggle between

Trotsky and Lenin was being played out abroad, so what has Trotsky's rudeness got to do with it?"
Stalin launched his attack under the banner of defending Lenin, whom Trotsky in the early days had called– among other things– 'Maximilien Lenin', an allusion to the dictatorial ways of Robespierre. He dealt Trotsky a telling blow by noting that his early pamphlet, 'Our Political Tasks', had been dedicated to the Menshevik Axelrod. Triumphantly, and to the accompaniment of the audience's jeers, Stalin read out the dedication: 'To my dear teacher, Pavel Borisovich Axelrod'….
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 137

OPPOSITION NEVER HAS ANY SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT

4,000 votes was the most that the Opposition forces polled at any one time in the entire course of their agitation. Despite the party band on "factions" and the official insistence on "revolutionary unity" as the cornerstone of Soviet domestic politics, an astounding measure a freedom of debate, criticism, and assembly was granted to the Trotskyite oppositionists by the Soviet government.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 204

To speak of it, however, as a victory of Stalin over Trotsky is incorrect. They only personified the issues. Both represented policies with wide support. Trotsky's immense personal popularity– (his picture, with Lenin's, adorned more office walls at the time of my visit than any other)–gave his policies prestige. But Trotsky's disruptive tactics finally alienated all but a small support.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 58

A combined plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission in October 1923 condemned Trotsky. He was supported by only two out of the 114 participants in the meeting. In effect, even before the meeting, Trotsky was isolated in the struggle for leadership of the party. He had been utterly defeated. He then tried to rely on the army, where he still had considerable authority. With the help of his old ally, Antonov-Ovseyenko who was head of the Political Administration of the Revvoensoviet, he proposed to use the armed forces to demonstrate against the Central Committee's line. But, with few exceptions, the Communists in the army and navy would not support him, either. The 13th Party Conference of January 1924, which debated the issue, not only condemned Trotsky, it also passed a number of measures in the field of economic policy. As a result, Trotsky admitted that his attacks on the Central Committee, and the discussion he had initiated, were undertaken with the aim of his becoming leader of the party. One cannot help noticing, however, that Trotsky started up every discussion at a time least favorable to himself, and virtually knowing in advance that he would be defeated.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 87

In June 1926 Stalin launched an open offensive against the new grouping. Trotsky & Zinoviev in the Politburo, and Kamenev in its non-voting membership, had no support except for a handful of Central Committee members, and a few thousand individual Communists.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 136

Of course, in the 1930s there still remained oppositional elements in the Soviet Union whose inclinations bore an anti-communist character and who were prepared at the appropriate moment to wage a battle against Stalinism “from the right,” even at the cost of collaborating with fascist interventionists. The continued existence of such elements was clearly seen during the years of World War II.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 143

I did not believe our victory [Victor Serge recollects] and at heart I was even sure that we would be defeated. When I was sent to Moscow with our group’s messages for Trotsky, I told him so. We talked in the spacious office of the Concessions Committee… he was suffering from a fit of malaria; his skin was yellow, his lips were almost livid. I told him that we were extremely weak, that we, in Leningrad, had not rallied more than a few hundred members, that our debates left the mass of workers cold. I felt that he knew all this better than I did.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 310

The opposition represents an insignificant minority in our party…. Whether we will have unity with that insignificant group in the Party known as the opposition, depends on them. We want to work in harmony with the opposition. Last year, at the height of the discussion, we said that joint work with the opposition was necessary. We’ve re-affirm this here today…. The majority wants united activity. Whether the minority sincerely wants it, I do not know. That depends entirely on the comrades of the opposition.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 6, p. 244

TROTSKY TRIED TO TAKE OVER IN 1927

Trotsky was feverishly preparing for the coming showdown. By the end of October, his plans were made. An uprising was to take place on November 7, 1927, the tenth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. Trotsky’s most resolute followers, former members of the Red Army Guard, were to head the insurrection. Detachments were posted to take over strategic points throughout the country. The signal for the rising was to be a political demonstration against the Soviet government during the mass workers parade in Moscow on the morning of November 7th.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 205

TROTSKY’S ATTEMPTED TAKEOVER COLLAPSES

…The majority of the Politburo gained the day. Trotsky was expelled from the Politburo and the Central Committee, and deprived of both his offices. His supporters, too, were dismissed from the principal offices in the State…. While Trotsky’s supporters were removed from direct political influence, only those who took active steps against the party were later exiled. Trotsky, now no longer in the Politburo or the Central Committee, went on with his activities. Now that it was really too late to do anything, he became energetic. He went really to work at building up an illegal organization to overthrow the party and the Government. Suddenly there appeared in Moscow, though in no great numbers, illegal leaflets, addressed not to the mass of the people but as a rule only to party members….

It was November 7, 1927; the Soviet Union was celebrating the 10th anniversary of the victory of Bolshevism in Russia….
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 136

No worse day could have been chosen for an appeal to opposition sentiment…. Here there assembled on this day a few supporters of Trotsky, including Karl Radek. From an open window in this corner building, they tried to address the marching columns in support of the Opposition. Trotsky showed himself, but attracted no attention from the crowds. The Opposition had conceived this as an important demonstration, and had hoped for great results from it. The few speakers at the window were noticed, however, only by the State police. The demonstration was a failure.
This attempted demonstration against the Government gave the signal for the penultimate move in the dramatic conflict. A great purge began. Now the party organization had ample evidence that there was a Trotskyist opposition organization within the party. It had proof also of illegal activity on the part of that opposition, aiming at the overthrow of the party majority and even of the Government. Everyone suspected of supporting Trotsky was expelled from the party; very many were exiled.
Trotsky's banishment was then resolved on in that dramatic atmosphere. He was exiled to Alma Ata, a town in Russian Central Asia,….
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 137-138

Trotsky's insurrection collapsed almost as soon as it started. On the morning of November 7th, as the workers marched through the Moscow streets, Trotskyite propaganda leaflets were showered down on them from high buildings announcing the advent of the "new leadership." Small bands of Trotskyite's suddenly appeared in the streets, waving banners and placards. They were swept away by irate workers.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 205

… Having taken his earlier defeat to heart, Trotsky was now convinced that, if necessary, a new party must be created to oppose the official body. To gather recruits for this objective, he distributed his supporters among the local Soviets and factory committees, with instructions to express the Opposition viewpoint wherever possible.
This final maneuver more than anything else goaded Stalin to sudden action. Wordy criticism he would permit, but an Opposition which sought to undermine the very roots of Leninism must be smashed once and for all….
Faced by such a show of force and frightened by the implications contained in Trotsky's suggestion to set up a new party, Zinoviev and his group again surrendered and again made public and servile apologies to Stalin, who once more forgave them.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 69

Stimulated by the ill-luck which dogged Stalin's policy in China, the Opposition decided to come into the open for a final attempt to oust the General Secretary. Preparations began for the Congress of 1927.
If he had received a setback in China, Stalin was by no means beaten. This time he decided to destroy the Opposition altogether and to except no more sham capitulations. On November 15, 1927, the Central Committee of the Party decided to expel Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev from its sittings. On December 18th the assembled Congress confirmed the earlier decision and expelled all the leading dissenters of the Party.

For all its bellicose phrases, this was more than the Opposition expected. Expulsion from the party meant the loss of good jobs, the loss of citizen rights, possibly even Siberian exile would follow. Only Trotsky and a few others were sufficiently steadfast to endure this. First Zinoviev and Kamenev, then Rakovsky, Sokolnikov and others, asked forgiveness of Stalin. In the most servile turns, they begged to be allowed to re-enter the fold, forswearing all future connections with Trotsky and the intransigeants.
For the last time, with surprising lack of animosity, Stalin granted their request, allotting them subordinate positions but removing them from leadership of the Moscow and Leningrad Soviets.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 70

The party leadership was rather slow in applying extreme disciplinary measures to the opposition leaders. There were plenty of warnings and resolutions of censure by the leading Party organs, and Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev were gradually stripped of their more important Party and Soviet posts.
On the 10th anniversary of the Revolution, on November 7, 1927, groups of oppositionists organized counter-demonstrations under their own banners and slogans. Although this effort was very unsuccessful because of the small number of the participants, it gave the Party leadership an excuse for proceeding much more vigorously. Trotsky and Zinoviev were promptly expelled from the Party. The Party Congress, meeting at the end of the year, formally expelled all the other oppositionists of any prominence and laid down the rule that adherence to the views of the Trotskyist opposition was inconsistent with membership in the Communist Party.
With expulsion and exile hanging over their heads Zinoviev and Kamenev weakened and left Trotsky alone in the role of a martyr to his principles. Together with most of their associates, they recanted and after a period of probation were readmitted to the Party. Trotsky remained unyielding, and early in 1928 he and a number of his chief associates were banished to various remote parts of the Soviet Union….
Trotsky's place of banishment was Alma Ata in the eastern part of Russian Turkestan, not far from the Chinese frontier. He was not placed under actual restraint, but was kept under close observation. Notwithstanding this, he and his associates, all of them old revolutionists, well versed in the tricks of eluding guards and spies, kept up a lively clandestine correspondence between themselves and with the remnants of their underground organization throughout the country. Most of this correspondence, to be sure, ultimately fell into the hands of the GPU and the Party authorities.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 74-75

Trotsky's two chief associates in opposition, Zinoviev and Kamenev of whom the former was for a long time President of the Communist International and the latter Vice Premier and President of the Moscow Soviet, have gone to Canossa, confessed their mistakes, and received minor posts in the Party and Social service.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 104

…At any rate, on November 7th, 1927, [the Tenth] anniversary of the Revolution, they [The Opposition] ventured a direct appeal to the public in Moscow, Leningrad, and other great cities from balconies or improvised platforms in parks and squares. This forlorn hope was an utter failure; the masses refused to be stirred. The Opposition orators were greeted with some booing and cat-calls, and a few rotten apples were thrown, but there was no

excitement or disorder. Nevertheless the gesture was flagrant, and by Soviet law tantamount to open rebellion. The Fifteenth Party Congress, which met in December, expelled Trotsky, Kamenev, Zinoviev, and 75 of their principal adherence from the Communist Party.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 115

TROTSKY WAS NOT DEFEATED BECAUSE STALIN UNDERMINED HIM

Trotsky was not defeated because of Stalin's growing power. As the Russian historians Valerii Nadtocheev and Dimitri Volkogonov have pointed out, the reverse is true: Stalin gained power because he was able to provide leadership in the Politburo's effort to neutralize Trotsky.
… (with Zinoviev taking a harder line against Trotsky than Stalin did).
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 23

TROTSKY THINKS HE CAN TAKE OVER

In a June 15, 1926, letter to Molotov Stalin stated, "If Trotsky tells Bukharin that he soon hopes to have a majority in the party, that means he hopes to intimidate and blackmail Buharin. How little he knows and how much he underestimates Bukharin! But I think pretty soon the party will punch the mugs of Trotsky and Zinoviev along with Kamenev and turn them into isolated splitters, like Shliapnikov."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 114

In a September 23, 1926, letter to Molotov Stalin said, "If Trotsky 'is in a rage' and thinks of 'openly going for broke,' that's all the worse for him. It's quite possible that he'll be bounced out of the Politburo now–that depends on his behavior. The issue is as follows: either they must submit to the party, or the party must submit to them. It's clear that the party will cease to exist as a party if it allows the latter (second) possibility."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 129

OPPOSITION REFUSES TO ACCEPT THE MAJORITY VOTE AND BECOMES A FACTION

One may also assert that certain individual tendencies of mind and of character are apt to identify themselves with certain political tendencies. Narrowness of mind and short-sighted aggressiveness may manifest themselves by prejudice and opposition–intellectual and moral cowardice by lower middle-class opportunism and lapsing towards Reformism and Menshevism.
It is this which gives the Opposition its great importance and its formidable scope, because it is the divergence of tendencies in question which brings about wide divergence in the interpretation of communist doctrine. Divergence from the practical interpretation of the doctrine, that is–to say from Marxism, a different assessment of the "peculiar requirements of the moment," may have quite unforseen consequences, or may give a different meaning to the whole policy. A mistake about an isolated fact may be corrected like a mistake in an

arithmetical sum. But an error in tendency is a general deformation, beginning at the bottom and, increasing by geometrical progression, bringing with it an enormous number of modifications of detail susceptible of changing the whole face of national history–to say nothing of resulting in terrible disaster. It is a modification of the “line” of the great Party which is the motive force of the State.

In its origin, the Opposition is a tendential malady.

But it is a particular kind of tendential malady of the gravest possible kind, whose main symptom is lack of discipline, definite separation and drifting apart from the majority of the leaders. The opposing tendency to that of the majority is no longer a subject for discussion, but an object for war.

It is in this way that the functions of the Opposition differ radically from those of self-criticism. The name of self-criticism is to bring all the tendencies back into a common path. Nothing is more natural than that different tendencies should exist; nothing is more healthy than clear and open discussion on any points at issue. Self-criticism ensures this maximum freedom of expression of opinion, which is the privilege of the Bolshevik Party.

But the Opposition does not follow the lines of self-criticism. It’s essential and most pernicious characteristics are that it forms itself into a separate body, refuses to identify itself with the decision of the majority– the majority vote being the only democratic method and, indeed, the only sensible method of settling a disagreement until the facts can be thoroughly co-ordinated. In this case, something remains over after the vote is taken. The Opposition seizes this something and consolidates around it in a solid body. Instead of accepting the decision more or less openly, it fights it, “The Opposition View” becomes indurated and overgrown, and the State organism is attacked by a parasitic growth in its interior. In this way, the Opposition brings about what is called a split, the prelude to a definite schism. Self-criticism always remains open, but the Opposition closes itself up. The self-critic remains inside the community. With the Opposition, the figure “2” makes its appearance. And so, in this way, we see “liberty of opinion” pathologically creating a group in the bosom of the Party which takes the form of a Party itself and constitutes a permanent conspiracy. When this Opposition group considers itself to be sufficiently strong (and outside the Party it relies, like all oppositions, on the support of the various adversaries of the State policy), it goes to war and tries to seize the reins of power in order to change its heterodoxy into orthodoxy.

Lenin had very explicitly fought this particularism, by which the disease starts, at the Tenth Congress, and he had caused the following resolution to be adopted: “Each organization of the Party must keep a strict watch to insure that the freedom of necessary criticism of the mistakes of the Party, of analyzing the fundamental policy of the Party, of taking notice of all its practical experience, of applying its decisions, of considering the remedies for any errors that may be made, and everything that follows from these things, should not become the prerogatives of certain men or of certain groups collected around a definite platform but should be quite open to all the members of the Party.”

On what questions was the Opposition most active? According to what has just been said, and when it becomes a question of unreasonable persistence, in the Party mechanism, of general tendencies running contrary to those of the majority, and of the consolidating of those tendencies–it is easy to understand that the Opposition showed itself in all the great administrative problems of the USSR and of the Communist International. It always attempted to approach all these problems from an angle different to the one from which the administrative majority envisioned them and approached them.

Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 160-162

Now according to the party rules adopted at the 10th Congress, with Trotsky's approval, the actions in which he engaged, in particular consultations with the group of Forty-Six, indisputably constituted "factionalism." The crime was compounded by the leakage of his two letters–accidental or deliberate, no one could tell–to the public. The Party Conference that convened in January 1924, therefore, was entirely within its rights in condemning Trotsky and "Trotskyism" as a "petty-bourgeois" deviation.
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 485

The crisis I referred to occurred in September 1923. An acute economic depression was causing discontent among the workers and peasants, in some cities even giving rise to strikes– a phenomenon as portentous as it is rare in Soviet Russia. And at the same time two secret societies were discovered within the Communist Party, called the "Workers' Group" and "Workers' Truth"–the one Menshevik in tendency, and the other Anarcho-syndicalist.
Eastman, Max. Since Lenin Died. Westport, Connecticutt: Hyperion Press. 1973, p. 33

OPPOSITION UNITES AROUND TROTSKY

The whole Opposition gravitated around the personality of Trotsky.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 164

This Opposition, gathered around Trotsky, issued a memorandum of their grievances, a "platform."
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 180

In reality, the USSR and the international Communist movement faced multiple threats from multiple enemies and potential enemies. But to those who felt endangered, Trotskyism came to embody those threats; multiple threats emanated from one "enemy" who acted as the agent of all enemies, who used the language and logic of Bolshevism to destroy it. A host of perceived dangers had one name.
Chase, William J., Enemies Within the Gates?, translated by Vadim A. Staklo, New Haven: Yale University Press, c2001, p. 227.

THE OPPOSITION'S FIGURES ARE INACCURATE & ITS PROGRAM IMPRACTICAL

In the first place, many of the precise details (statistics) upon which the Opposition relies in framing its accusations of deviation and its predictions of headlong disaster are indisputably inaccurate, either because the figures given are incorrect, or because they are misleading owing to all the elements of a particular question not having been taken into consideration. For instance: the so-called increase in industrial and transport shortage in relation to demand (this was the main complaint); the delay in the increase of wages in proportion to the work done; the shortening of the working day; the increase in the difference between the wages of men and women; the lowering of the wages of youths; the increase of unemployment; the amount allocated to the unemployed; etc.…

In the second place, many of the charges are brought without a proof, while in other cases they are in direct contradiction to earlier decisions of the Party and to results already achieved. For instance: the disguising of the progress made by the kulaks; the suppression of democracy within the Party; the abandonment of the idea of industrialization (in the shadow of the NEP); the attempt to oppose co-operation in electrification (also in connection with the NEP).

In the third place, a great number of the proposals of the Opposition are quite obviously dangerous, clumsy and likely to produce disastrous results. All this category of definite proposals shows a lack of appreciation of realities, and possesses a character of bluff and demagogism, either because the proposals are bad in themselves, or because they are inopportune and premature.

For instance (apart from the two obvious criticisms of the disadvantages of the NEP, the exploitation of that temporary state of affairs brought about by immediate necessities, and the demand that it should be put an end to immediately): That support should be given to the nationalist deviations to the Right, which might have the affect a breaking up the Soviet Federation. That wholesale prices should be increased (the 15th Congress pointed out the formidable repercussions that would eventually result from such a measure, which the Opposition adopted without considering the mechanism of Socialism as a whole, but solely in order to secure the goodwill and support of the peasants). That restrictions should be placed on production (the closing down of factories and over-organization). That measures, equally demagogic, of mass exemption from contributions of the poor peasants and the withdrawal of State capital from co-operative schemes should be adopted (which would mean the reinforcement of private capital). That a surtax should be levied upon the rich, tantamount to confiscation, and that private capital should be suddenly abolished and the NEP liquidated before it had entirely done its work. That supplementary requisitions of wheat should be made (infallibly provoking the crash of the whole struggling credit policy of the USSR).

It is clearly a great temptation for anyone who wishes to play to the gallery to suggest such measures, but all they could achieve would be a reckless adjustment, on paper only, of problems which in actual practice can only be solved gradually and not without a certain delay.

It is obviously easy to brandish evidence like the kulak danger, the growth of unemployment, the shortage of housing for the workers, and the fatty degeneration of the bureaucracy. It is also easy to say in nearly every case: “Things ought to move more quickly.” But the question is whether it is possible to move more quickly and whether the relative, not actual, slowness of progress is or is not the fault of the Party leadership, and in any case whether this is a sufficient reason to make radical alterations in its whole policy.

Is the Party to be blamed, for instance, because it is unable to procure the vast sums of money necessary for the complete reconstruction of the workers’ dwellings? And in the great major drama of the industrialization of land (which is known to be necessary but which is being retarded both voluntarily and involuntarily), is it not putting the cart before the horse in the most ridiculous way to stifle the co-operative system of commodity distribution, which is actually in existing working order, by potential electrification?… The question at issue is whether one ought to abandon an objective that is half reached for another–a greater one–which is not yet attainable. The alternative one has to decide is: either to do something concrete, or to begin at the end.

It is, in any case, notorious that many of the measures of salvation feverishly put forward by the Opposition are the very ones which the Party itself recommends and applies. In these

cases the Opposition is merely discovering America. It is playing the part of the fly on the coach-wheel (and a tsetse fly at that!).
Invest 500 million rubles in industry, enjoins the Opposition. But the curve of investment in industry, continuously mounting, was already 460 million rubles in 1927 when this injunction was launched. Some of the proposals of the Opposition–as, for instance, those relating to a better distribution of agricultural produce, to the assistance of poor presents and small contractors, to the charter of adolescent workers–are copied from resolutions already passed and put into force.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 182-185

BUKHARIN THE RIGHTIST UNITES WITH KAMENEV AND ZINOVIEV THE LEFTISTS

During this struggle, former `Left Opposition' members made unprincipled alliances with Bukharin in order to overthrow Stalin and the Marxist-Leninist leadership. On July 11, 1928, during the violent debates that took place before the collectivization, Bukharin held a clandestine meeting with Kamenev. He stated that he was ready to `give up Stalin for Kamenev and Zinoviev', and hoped for `a bloc to remove Stalin'.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 135 [p. 116 on the NET]

OPPOSITION HAS NO MASS SUPPORT BECAUSE IT HAS NO PROGRAM

My old friend Belinsky, the acknowledged leader and thinker of our group in Moscow at this time, summed up the position as follows:… Not one oppositionist group had proved capable of preparing in good time, as an alternative to the party's general line, a program sufficiently revolutionary to capture the sympathy of the masses….
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 74

OPPOSITIONISTS COMMITTED MANY DIFFERENT TYPES OF CRIMES

These professional wreckers set themselves the task of destroying what the Soviet people were building…. And in strict adherence to Trotsky's instructions "to strike the most palpable blows at the most sensitive spots", these 'heroes' blow up bridges, cause explosions in factories and gas mines, kill workers, wreck power stations, cause train accidents, destroy horses and kill cattle, sabotage agricultural plans, weaken the defense industry, sabotage the country's finances and foreign trade, create an artificial shortage of essential supplies, put nails and glass in butter! No crime is too monstrous for this gang.
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 245

UNITED OPPOSITION IS REJECTED BY THE PARTY'S MAJORITY

It is true that in the spring and early summer of 1926 the opposition leaders campaigned quite energetically, using conspiratorial methods for the most part. Representatives of the bloc were sent to dozens of cities to acquaint their supporters with the platform of the opposition, while illegal meetings of Opposition supporters were held in many local areas,

with new members being recruited to the opposition faction. One such illegal meeting, at which Lashevich spoke, was held secretly in the woods outside Moscow.

The first open confrontation between the Opposition and majority of the Central Committee took place at a joint plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission in July 1926. Trotsky spoke for the Opposition bloc. Now the party saw Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev on the same platform but hardly anyone said “Here is our true Central Committee.” The overwhelming majority of the Central Committee condemned the opposition. Zinoviev was removed from the Politburo, on which Trotsky remained as the sole oppositionist.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 163

OPPOSITION LIED WHEN IT SAID IT WOULD END FACTIONALISM

Although the opposition statement of October 16, 1926, spoke of an end to all factional activity, the Opposition was unable to refrain from renewed factionalism….

On June 9, 1927, a gathering to bid farewell to Smilga developed into an Opposition demonstration of sorts…. Stalin and the Politburo judged the demonstration at the Yaroslavl Station to be a factional move and a violation of the promises made in the opposition’s statement of October 16, 1926.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 169-170

It must be admitted, that from the point of view of political morals, the conduct of the majority of the Oppositionists was by no means of high quality…. We are all obliged to lie; it is impossible to manage otherwise. Nevertheless, there are limits that should not be exceeded even in lying. Unfortunately, the Oppositionists, and particularly their leaders, often went beyond these limits.
Nicolaevsky, Boris. Power and the Soviet Elite; “The letter of an Old Bolshevik.” New York: Praeger, 1965, p. 54

In former times we “politicals” [unknown author representing the Old Bolsheviks] used to observe a definite moral code in our relations with the rulers. It was regarded as a crime to petition for clemency. Anyone who did this was finished politically. When we were in jail or in exile, we refrained from giving the authorities any promise not to attempt to escape. We always adhered to this rule, even in instances where to have given such a pledge would have meant alleviation of our lot. We were their prisoners. It was their business to guard us, ours to try to escape….

There is quite a different psychology nowadays. To plead for pardon has become a common phenomenon, on the assumption that since the party in power was “my party,” the rules which applied in the Czarist days are no longer valid. One hears this argument everywhere. At the same time, it is considered quite proper to consistently deceive “my party,”… This has given rise to a special type of morality, which allows one to accept any conditions, to sign any undertakings, with the premeditated intention not to observe them. This morality is particularly widespread among the representatives of the older generation of Party comrades….

This new morality has had a very demoralizing effect inside the ranks of the Oppositionists. The borderline between what is and what is not admissible has become completely obliterated, and many have fallen to downright treachery and disloyalty. At the same time, the new morality has furnished a convincing argument to those opposed to any rapprochement with the former Oppositionists, the argument being that it is impossible to believe them because they recognize in principle the permissibility of telling lies. How is one to determine when they speak the truth and when they lie?
Nicolaevsky, Boris. Power and the Soviet Elite; “The letter of an Old Bolshevik.” New York: Praeger, 1965, p. 55

1927 TROTSKY DEMONSTRATIONS FAILED BADLY

In reply to the decision to expel Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev from the Central Committee, the opposition attempted to organize its own demonstration to mark the 10th anniversary of the October Revolution. This proved, however, to be not so much a demonstration of strength as of weakness. There were hardly any workers in this “parallel” demonstration; student youth and office workers from various institutions predominated….

During this demonstration of the opposition leaders gave speeches from the balcony of a house on the corner of Vozdvizhenka and Mokhovaya streets, but compared with the official demonstration of Moscow workers, the Opposition demonstration was a sorry spectacle. It was easily dispersed by the workers vigilante groups and militia units quickly organized for this purpose. The first arrests were made on the streets at that time. Posters with Opposition slogans and portraits of Trotsky were torn out of demonstrators hands and ripped to pieces. Many students were beaten up. The attempt to organize an Opposition demonstration in Leningrad was even less successful. Zinoviev, who obviously had overestimated his influence in that city, came close to being beaten up during the march celebrating the 10th anniversary of the revolution.

On November 14 a plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission expelled Trotsky and Zinoviev from the party….

Yakubovich, an eyewitness to the funeral [of Joffe] describes it in his memoirs:

“… It must have been obvious for those watching this scene that Trotsky’s cause was hopelessly lost. The new generation of Red Army soldiers did not know him, had not taken part in the civil war, were raised in a new spirit. The name of Trotsky meant little or nothing to them. The composition of the funeral demonstration also made one stop and think, for there were no workers in it. The United Opposition had no proletarian support.”

In December 1927 the 15th Congress confirmed the expulsion of Trotsky and Zinoviev and resolved to expel 75 additional members of the opposition, including Kamenev, Pyatakov, Radek, Rakovsky, Smilga, Lashevich, Safarov, and Smirnov.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 173-174

Rykov, chairman of the Council of People’s Commissars, even said:

“Despite the situation the opposition has tried to create, there are only a few in prison. I do not think I can give assurances that the prison population won’t have to be increased somewhat in the near future. (Voices from the floor: “Right!”)
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 175

Trotsky gave his last speech as a party figure at the plenum of October 1927. It was confused but passionate…. he provided no convincing arguments or clear socialist ideas. His hatred of the Central Committee and of Stalin were plain to see, but this was not echoed among the participants of the plenum, nor among Communists who would read the speech in the documents of the 15th Congress.

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the October Revolution, Trotsky’s followers decided they would join the celebrations as a procession, forming their own columns and carrying banners with such unexceptional slogans as ‘Down with the kulak, the Nepman, and the bureaucrat!’…. Zinoviev, who had gone to Leningrad for the occasion, and Trotsky, who was touring the streets and squares of Moscow in his car, discovered that they had only minimal support. Perhaps Trotsky was remembering the occasion of the Second Congress of Soviets, 10 years earlier, when he had dismissed the departing figure of Martov with the words: ‘Go to the dustbin of history, where you belong!’ The same words were being cast at him now, as he tried to appeal to the crowds on Revolution Square, making their way into Red Square. Stones were thrown at him and the windows of his car were smashed.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 140

The Leningrad demonstration took place in October, 1927. It was repeated shortly afterwards in Moscow on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution. There was rough handling of the crowds. Trotsky’s automobile was shot at. Someone with an axe jumped on the step of the car and shattered the windshield. It seemed to Trotsky that a bloody end was being prepared for himself and his sympathizers. It is possible he was right in his judgment at this point. Had he decided to lead a militant party of revolt he would have been beaten just the same…. In December, 1927, at the 15th Congress of the Party, Stalin obtained the exclusion of the whole of the Trotsky faction en bloc,…
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 103

TROTSKY CONTENDS THE OPPOSITION IS STRONG AND GROWING WHEN IT ISN’T

In 1929 a decision was made to deport Trotsky… A few months later Trotsky continued to assert that the Left Opposition was growing stronger and increasing its numbers. He stated,

“In spite of all the lies of the official press, the Left Opposition is growing and fortifying itself ideologically throughout the world. Progress has been especially great during this past year.”

These were illusions, and they were very soon dispelled.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 177

STALIN SUPPORTS SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY

At the same time it is true to say that had Stalin's statement [that the SU will lead the road to socialism and not Europe] been broadcast to the world, the whole Socialist and Labor movement would have laughed it out of court. All the "Marxist" schools of Western Socialism, as well as the other schools of Socialist thought, held the view that socialism must come first in the most highly developed capitalist countries; and the majority of them held the view that it would come through parliamentary democracy. The Bolshevik Party was comparatively unknown to the Western Socialists.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 103

When Stalin made his statement concerning socialism in one country it never entered his head that this was a denial of the international significance and character of the Russian Revolution. Nor was he accused of such a denial. it was only later, when Trotsky took his stand on the principal that at least a European revolution must precede the possibility of socialism in Russia that Stalin's statement was turned into a denial of world revolution.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 103

This was precisely the basis of his disagreement with Trotsky at this time. Trotsky insisted that the revolution must reach to the boundaries of Western Europe or perish, and question of accomplishing this task governed all his views of policy within Russia.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 114

June 17, 1931–the essential feature of Stalinism…is that it frankly aims at the successful establishment of socialism in one country without waiting for world Revolution.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 195

Pravda's expressions of opinion are carefully prepared and fully authoritative. The earlier editorial for the first time enunciated clearly what has become known as the Stalinist doctrine–that a successful socialist state can be established in the USSR irrespective of what happens abroad, with the important corollary that Soviet example–but not interference in the affairs of other countries–shall be true to the ultimate ideal of universal socialism. In other words, the results in Russia shall count more than propaganda abroad.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 367

Lenin shared the view that a simultaneous Revolution in a number of countries was unlikely.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 113

However, for reasons which have never been altogether cleared up, Trotsky in the early summer of 1926 entered into a bloc with Zinoviev and Kamenev. Common jealousy of Stalin's predominant position and belief that their combined efforts might shake it probably influenced the formation of this alliance. Then Trotsky, as far back as 1905, had proclaimed his so-called theory of permanent revolution, which fitted in easily with the line of criticism adopted by Zinoviev and Kamenev….
Throughout 1926 and 1927 a furious theoretical controversy between the Stalinite majority and the opposition, headed by Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev raged around the questions whether socialism could be successfully built up in a single country, whether the Soviet economic system could properly be called socialist or state-capitalist, and how far the Russian Revolution was dependent upon the international revolutionary movement for permanent survival. Conflicting texts from Lenin were hurled back and forth; and sometimes

different meanings were extracted from the same text. The balance of quotations from Lenin during the period of the War, when he was convinced that the day of general socialist revolution was not far off, would tend to establish a close connection between the success of the Bolshevik Revolution Russia and similar upheavals in other countries. But one of the last things which Lenin wrote, a pamphlet on Cooperation, contains the statement that “we have all the means for the establishment of a socialist society.” (Collected works, Volume 33, page 468)

[The actual quote is as follows:]

“Indeed, the power of the state over all large-scale means of production, political power in the hands of the proletariat, the alliance of this proletariat with the many millions of small and very small peasants, the assured proletarian leadership of the peasantry, etc.–is this not all that is necessary to build a complete socialist society out of co-operatives, out of cooperatives alone, which we formerly ridiculed as huckstering and which from a certain aspect we have the right to treat as such now, under NEP? Is this not all that is necessary to build a complete socialist society? It is still not the building of socialist society, but it is al that is necessary and sufficient for it.”

To further destroy Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution Stalin could also have quoted Lenin’s Collected Works, Volume 21, page 342 (August 23, 1915) wherein Lenin states:

“Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence, the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country alone. After expropriating the capitalists and organizing their own socialist production, the victorious proletariat of that country will arise against the rest of the world–the capitalist world–attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, stirring uprisings in those countries against the capitalists and in case of need using even armed force against the exploiting classes and their states.”

And Stalin could have quoted Lenin’s Collected Works, Volume 23. page 79 (written in September 1916) which states:

“Thirdly, the victory of socialism in one country does not at one stroke eliminate all war in general. On the contrary, it presupposes wars. The development of capitalism proceeds extremely unevenly in different countries. It cannot be otherwise under commodity production. From this it follows irrefutably that socialism cannot achieve victory simultaneously in all countries. It will achieve victory first in one or several countries, while the others will for some time remain bourgeois or pre-bourgeois. This is bound to create not only friction, but a direct attempt on the part of the bourgeoisie of other countries to crush the socialist state’s victorious proletariat. In such cases a war on our part would be a legitimate and just war. It would be a war for socialism, for the liberation of other nations from the bourgeoisie. Engels was perfectly right when, in his letter to Kautsky of September 12, 1882 he clearly stated that it was possible for already victorious socialism to wage “defensive wars.” What he had in mind was defense of the victorious proletariat against the bourgeoisie of other countries.

Only after we have overthrown, finally vanquished and expropriated the bourgeoisie of the whole world, and not merely of one country, will wars become impossible.”

This citation was a powerful weapon for the Stalinites in their contention that it was possible to build up socialism in a single country.

Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 72

On larger issues, too, Stalin proved to be in the right as against Lenin and Trotsky. He did not subscribe to their faith in an impending world revolution, and planned the defense of Russia without reference to any such illusory hopes.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 63

For five long years Stalin nowhere achieved independence. In the war he was officially Trotsky's subordinate; in the state he was one among the 19 members of the Central Committee, and one among the five members of the Politburo; in both he was always overshadowed by Lenin and Trotsky. But in one respect he always had a clearer vision than those two leaders. For years both of them believed in the imminence of the world revolution, particularly in Germany. Stalin denied this, and therefore demanded action of Draconian severity in Russia. Long after the triumph of the Bolsheviks, Lenin declared that his own revolution was lost if Russia was to remain the only socialist country. We may call this error heroic.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 73

Fundamentally Stalin and Trotsky both wanted the same things, namely, to build up the industrial state and to carry on the fight against the rich peasant, the kulak, who had survived in the middle position between the land-owning nobility and the un-liberated peasant. But they wanted these things in different tempos, and the tempo was in each case related to the man's temperament. Looking back today (1942) on what Stalin later achieved, we are inclined to admit that the spirit of history has vindicated him…. Furthermore, Stalin kept one eye fixed on Asia, the place of his origin, derived thence his standards and his tempo, and did not believe Europeans capable of the social revolution, whereas he already saw this dawning in China.
On this decisive point Stalin proved to be in the right. Trotsky, every inch the western European, had, with all his knowledge of peoples and languages, erred in the matter of Europe's revolutionary tempo. What he called the permanent, meaning the world, revolution came neither in his day nor in ours, at least not in revolutionary forms; in spite of which Stalin did build up this individual state.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 93

Stalin who, in contrast to Lenin and Trotsky, never believed the world revolution imminent, really understood the utterly antirevolutionary character of the Germans.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 124

After the death of Lenin in 1924, a struggle developed among the leaders for the succession…. Stalin apparently, even in those days, was disposed to a program of the development of the communistic idea in Russia as "the first thing to do first," leaving the world revolution to take care of itself, whereas Trotsky was then and is now the ardent proponent of the idea that the world revolution was foremost.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 34

Stalin gave a severe rebuff to the enemies of the proletarian revolution–Bukharin and Preobrazhensky. These opportunists asserted at the Congress that Russia could not be the first country to achieve a successful Socialist revolution. To this assertion Comrade Stalin replied: "We must abandon the antiquated idea that only Europe can show us the way. There

is dogmatic Marxism and creative Marxism. I stand by the latter." ("Reply to Preobrazhensky on Point 9 of the Resolution on the Political Situation," Lenin and Stalin, 1917.)
Yaroslavsky, Emelian. Landmarks in the Life of Stalin. Moscow: FLPH, 1940, p. 90

Stalin stated, "There is such a thing as dogmatic Marxism and creative Marxism. I stand on the latter ground."
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 132

Lenin also made mistakes and admitted to them. At the 18th Congress Stalin declared communism could be built in one country. That conclusion certainly runs counter to Marxism-Leninism. At that time I didn't agree, but I didn't speak out.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 284

Stalin whole-heartedly supported Lenin. At the Sixth (illegal) Congress of the Party, in August, 1917, Stalin reported upon the political situation. He strongly opposed the addition to the ninth point of the Resolution on the political situation, of an amendment, inspired by Trotsky and proposed by Preobrazhensky, making the construction of the Socialist State dependent on the outbreak of proletarian revolution in the West (this question of "establishing Socialism in one country only" is one of those around which the Opposition and the majority of the Party have fought one another most bitterly–even until quite recent years).
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 52

…Nevertheless, this discussion seems to us to be strange enough, even for its time. For to what other methods could the Russian Revolution have recourse, since it was evidently incapable of immediately imposing the proletarian Revolution upon the other countries of the world, than to build up socialism to the best of its ability in the only territory occupied by it? What else could it do? Leave the conquered territory to stagnate whilst it devoted itself to the future conquest of the rest of the world?
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 174

Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev and those other gentlemen who later became spies and agents of fascism, denied that it was possible to build socialism in our country unless the victory of the socialist revolution was first achieved in other countries, in the capitalist countries. As a matter of fact, these gentlemen wanted to turn our country back to the path of bourgeois development, and they concealed their apostasy by hypocritically talking about the "victory of the revolution" in other countries. This was precisely the point of controversy between our Party and these gentlemen. Our country's subsequent course of development proved that the Party was right and that Trotsky and Company were wrong. For during this period we succeeded in liquidating our bourgeoisie, in establishing fraternal collaboration with our peasantry, and in building, in the main, a socialist society, notwithstanding the fact that the socialist revolution has not yet been victorious in other countries.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 158

What Stalin told the party was, roughly, this: Of course we are looking forward to international revolution. Of course we have been brought up in the school of Marxism; and we know that contemporary social and political struggles are, by their very nature, international. Of course we still believe the victory of the proletariat in the West to be near; and we are bound in honor to do what we can to speed it up. But–and this was a very big, a

highly suggestive ‘but’–do not worry so much about all that international revolution. Even if it were to be delayed indefinitely, even if it were never to occur, we in this country are capable of developing into a full-fledged, classless society. Let us then concentrate on our great constructive task. Those who tell you that this is Utopia, that I’m preaching national narrow-mindedness, are themselves either adventurers or pusillanimous Social Democrats. We, with our much despised muzhiks, have already done more for socialism than the proletariat of all other countries taken together; and, left alone with our muzhiks, we shall do the rest of the job.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 290

(Sinclair’s comments only)
I think it was the part of wisdom for him [Stalin] to withdraw from the effort to make a Bolshevik revolution throughout the rest of the world, according to the formula to which Trotsky is still adhering.
Sinclair and Lyons. Terror in Russia?: Two Views. New York : Rand School Press, 1938, p. 53

… Was it possible or impossible to build Socialism in one country, particularly Russia? Stalin answered this question by declaring: “Yes, it is possible, and it is not only possible, but necessary and inevitable.”
Zinoviev and Kamenev disputed this answer, and by July of 1926 had openly joined Trotsky in one united opposition bloc against the policy of Stalin and the Central Committee of the Communist Party.
When this opposition to the Central Committee’s policy had been rebuffed and rejected by the overwhelming majority of the Communist Party, Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev resorted to secret factional activities on a large scale. For this Zinoviev and others were brought to book by the Party. Following the 1926 July meeting of the Central Committee, Zinoviev was expelled from the Party.
Shepherd, W. G. The Moscow Trial. London: Communist Party of Great Britain, 1936, p. 11

The central “ideological” issue between them [Stalin and Trotsky] had been socialism in one country–the question whether the Soviet Union would or could achieve socialism in isolation, on the basis of national self-sufficiency, or whether socialism was conceivable only as an international order of society.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 515

Stalin, while insisting that revolutions were about to break out in Europe, continued to stipulate that the Russian Communist Party should concentrate on building “socialism in one country.” There was no fundamental paradox in Stalin’s change of policy. His controversial commitment to socialism in one country did not imply a basic disregard for the necessity of international revolution. Stalin had never ceased to accept that the USSR would face problems of security until such time as one or more of the globe’s great powers underwent a revolution of the Soviet kind. This did not mean, however, that he was willing to risk direct intervention in Europe; he still feared provoking a crusade against the USSR. But he no longer sought to restrain the communist parties in Germany, France, and Italy which had made no secret of their frustration with the Comintern’s insistence that they should collaborate with social-democratic and labor parties in their countries.

Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 262

STALIN SELECTED THE BEST PEOPLE FOR THE JOB

Stalin brought to the front such men as Frunze, Voroshilov, Budienny, Timoshenko, and many others,….
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 129

Voroshilov states, “Comrade Stalin was extremely strict on the question of the selection of personnel. Regardless of position, and genuinely being ‘no respecter of persons,’ he swept away in the roughest way all useless experts, commissars, Party and Soviet workers. But at the same time, Stalin, more than anyone, always supported and defended those who, in his opinion, justified the revolutionary confidence in them. Comrade Stalin acted in this way with well-known Red Army commanders who were known to him personally. When one of the true proletarian heroes of the Civil War, afterwards Commander of the 14th Cavalry Division, Comrade Parhomenko, killed in the struggle against the Makhno bandits, was at beginning of 1920, sentenced through a misunderstanding to capital punishment, Comrade Stalin, hearing of it, demanded his immediate, unconditional release. Similar cases could be given in numbers. Comrade Stalin, better than any of the other big leaders, knew how to appreciate deeply workers who had devoted their lives to the proletarian revolution; and the commanders knew this, as everyone else knew it who at any time under his leadership had carried on the struggle for our cause.
Life of Stalin, A Symposium. New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1930, p. 82

But, above all, Stalin is a consummate political strategist, with an almost uncanny knack for selecting the right man for the right job. He studies those who work with him until he knows their strong points and weaknesses better than they do themselves. His subordinates respond with a deep loyalty to their chief. During the recent war he seldom made a mistake in appointing leaders, and if unsuspected weaknesses cropped up the man was speedily recalled. His real flair for military strategy aided him in working with the generals and selecting the right man to lead campaigns.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 12

But the degree to which Stalin’s personal sagacity affected Russia’s military success is, after all, not the most important thing. What mattered was that he had the wisdom to pick capable marshals and to give them very great authority, and that he knew how to pool their advice and coordinate it in the mobilization of all the broad political and economic and moral means at his disposal, in order to win victory.
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 160

At first Tsiurupa was Lenin’s only deputy, the vice-chairman of the Council of People’s Commissars. But he was not a member of the Central Committee. Stalin brought him in later. Krzhizhanovsky was chairman of Gosplan and Lenin’s personal friend…but he was not on the Central Committee. Only Stalin let him into the Central Committee. Take the third figure–Krasin, also an old friend and comrade of Lenin. He played a large part in the 2nd

party congress, where Bolshevism was formed. He was the people's commissar of foreign trade under Lenin. But Lenin didn't let him, a party worker, into the Central Committee…. Chicherin was Commissar of foreign affairs under Lenin. Lenin quite often praised him as an outstanding figure of Soviet power, and yet he didn't admit him to the Central Committee. But Stalin let him in. It was a different time. Stalin knew how to choose people; he even advanced those whom Lenin did not allow inside.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 139

Stalin had carried out sweeping purges, especially in the higher commanding echelons, but these had had less effect than is sometimes believed, for he did not hesitate at the same time to elevate younger and talented men;… The speed and determination with which he carried out the transformation of the top command in the midst of the war confirmed his adaptability and willingness to open careers to men of talent. He acted in two directions simultaneously: he introduced into the army absolute obedience to the government and to the Party…and he spared nothing to achieve military preparedness, a higher standard of living for the army, and quick promotions for the best men.
Djilas, Milovan. Conversations with Stalin. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962, p. 49

Shrewd, observant, and honest, he knew the qualities he wanted in his officers. They included modesty, humility, and discipline, which, speaking soon after Lenin's death, he had impressed on the cadets of the Kremlin Military Academy. But he wanted also manners and breeding.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 423

Thus he [Stalin] went on, day after day, throughout four years of hostilities–a prodigy of patience, tenacity, and vigilance, almost omnipresent, almost omniscient.
…In October Hitler formally opened the battle of Moscow, 'the greatest offensive ever known'. Leningrad had been cut off and blockaded. Nearly the whole of the Ukraine and the coast of the Azov Sea had been conquered by the Wehrmacht. Budienny's armies had been routed–the Germans took half a million prisoners on the Dnieper. Stalin dismissed both Voroshilov and Budienny from the command–the men of Tsaritsyn, the 'NCO's', as Trotsky used to call them, were not equal to this motorized warfare. New commanders, Zhukov, Vasilevsky, Rokossovsky, were soon to replace them.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 467

As General Secretary of the Party, he [Stalin] was in a position to pick out men for preferment and service. He proved to be a good judge of character. He knew exactly on what human elements in the Communist Party he could build.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 81

Still again, one must mention his ability to handle men. He is a good political tactician, a party boss and organizer par excellence. Friends told me in Moscow in 1935 that Stalin possessed great magnetism, that you felt his antenna as soon as he entered a room. His personal as well as political intuition is considerable…he chooses men with great perspicacity.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 518

Lenin used to say that selection of personnel is one of the cardinal problems in the building of socialism.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 11, p. 61

PERMANENT REVOLUTION THEORY IS BOGUS AND OPPOSED BY STALIN

In what respect does this “theory of the permanent Revolution” differ from the well-known theory of Menshevism which repudiates the concept: dictatorship of a proletariat? In substance there is no difference.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 158

The Russian Mensheviks said: ” Russia is a backward country, and therefore the sole possibility is a bourgeois revolution which will give an impetus to the development of capitalism in Russia.” Trotsky said: “No. A. proletarian revolution is possible, but unless this is speedily followed by a proletarian revolution in Europe, it is doomed to collapse.” The basic agreement in these two standpoints is clear. Russia cannot on the basis of its own resources build up a Socialist order of society.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 46

One of the most remarkable of the Trotskyists myths–which has found ready acceptance among capitalist and Right-Wing Socialist publicists–is that the essence of the controversy between Trotsky and the Bolshevik Party was around the question of whether the world revolution should be abandoned or not–the world revolution being in the estimation of these people a kind of missionary enterprise to which one gives or withholds donations. A reference to the documents of the controversy will show that no such question was ever under discussion. The Russian workers and their Communist Party have always recognized the need for rendering fraternal assistance to the workers of other countries engaged in decisive struggles. It is true that with regard to events in England and China in the years 1927-28, the Trotskyists propounded policies of incredible naivete. Later, they were to propound policies of warlike adventurism, but discussions on international affairs were subordinate to the main controversy, as to the possibility of building Socialism; and even as far as they were concerned, it was two conceptions as to what international policy should be that were in conflict, and not an internationalist conception in conflict with a nationalist conception.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 49

There was no controversy therefore as to whether the Soviet proletariat should aid the revolutionary struggle of the workers in other countries. There was no controversy as to the danger of capitalist restoration arising from a successful intervention. The controversy was: could the Soviet Union, by its own unaided resources, establish a fully Socialist society in its own territory? That was the essence of the dispute between Trotsky and the Bolshevik Party, and from this dispute there arose two different policies within the Soviet Union–a Bolshevik policy of Socialist construction, and a Trotsky policy of surrender and fright in face of the capitalist elements– varied from time to time by the advocacy of adventurist leaps in the dark.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 50

The crucial point of Trotsky's argument is never proved. It is merely asserted.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 153

Where did Stalin stand in this dramatic controversy? He was unmoved by the exhortations of the left Communists and by their preachings on revolutionary morality. The idea that the Russian revolution should sacrifice itself for the sake of European revolution was completely alien to him, even though Lenin, for all his realism, was chary of dismissing it lightly. To the man who had spent most of his active career in Baku and Tiflis, European revolution was a concept too hazy and remote to influence his thinking on matters which might determine the life and death of the Soviet Republic, that same republic whose still feeble but tangible reality he himself had helped to create…. He voted with Lenin and his tiny fraction for peace.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 186

Stalin was not prominent in the debates which raged for the next two months in the Central Committee, the Government, at the fourth Congress of the Soviets, and at the seventh Congress of the party. (He was, incidentally, rather inconspicuous at any of the great debates, the true trumpets of ideas, which the party periodically indulged during Lenin's lifetime.) But he said enough at a session of the Central Committee to show which way his mind worked: 'In accepting the slogan of revolutionary war we play into the hands of imperialism. Trotsky's attitude is no attitude at all. There is no revolutionary movement in the west, there are no facts [indicating the existence] of a revolutionary movement, there is only a potentiality; and we in our work cannot base ourselves on a mere potentiality….' Though he voted with Lenin there was a subtle difference in the emphasis of their arguments. Lenin, as usual, kept his eye on the facts and the potentialities of the situation and spoke about the delay in the development of the revolutionary movement in the west. Stalin grasped the facts and dismissed the potentialities–'there is no revolutionary movement in the west'.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 189

Trotsky was much more clever and had read many more books, but, unlike Stalin, he failed to understand certain simple truths–for example, the fact that once the world revolution had not come, building socialism in Russia was the only possible alternative.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 13

Almost alone, Stalin doubted all this [the necessity of permanent revolution]. He doubted it before the Revolution, and he doubted it more sardonically afterwards. He didn't know Western Europe as well as the others; his visits, added together, amounted to only a few weeks: but all his hard suspiciousness was at work. He was also, as usual, more harshly realistic than his colleagues. He understood better than they did the power concentrated in the authorities of a highly organized state…. He didn't believe that the German proletariat would ever fight against that power. He knew Russia as the emigres didn't: he had no illusions: he knew how backward it was.
Snow, Charles Percy. Variety of Men. New York: Scribner, 1966, p. 252

TROTSKY PROPOUNDS PERMANENT REVOLUTION THEORY

Later there arose another difference in theory. It concerned the question whether Russia could set up a Socialist economic order without waiting for a world revolution. Stalin held that it could; Trotsky denied it,…. He [Trotsky] coined the phrase ‘permanent revolution’. He was unable, however, to show just how the permanent revolution should be carried out. Such men as Bukharin and Rykov vigorously combated Trotsky’s anti-peasant attitude. Later, however, they came over to Trotsky’s idea that it was impossible to introduce Socialism into Russia until the revolution had gained the victory in the greater part of a world, and that the attempt to introduce it prematurely must lead to disaster. This explains the later alliance between Trotsky and the Right-wing opposition, diametrically opposed to it, in the party.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 133

…This idea of revolution in one country, versus Trotsky’s internationalism, advocating revolution of all working classes simultaneously, was the heart of the ideological struggle between Stalin and Trotsky.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 67

The idea that new impulses for revolution would come from the West but not from the Soviet Union was the leitmotif of Trotsky’s advocacy of the Fourth International. Again and again he asserted that, while in the Soviet Union Stalinism continued to play a dual role, at once progressive and retrograde, it exercised internationally only a counter-revolutionary influence. Here his grasp of reality failed him. Stalinism was to go on acting its dual role internationally as well as nationally: it was to stimulate as well as to obstruct the class struggle outside the Soviet Union. In any case, it was not from the West that the revolutionary impulses were to come in the next three or four decades. Thus the major premise on which Trotsky set out to create the Fourth International was unreal.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 212

LENIN AND TROTSKY CLASH OVER THE IDEA OF SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY

The Opposition naturally applied itself first of all to the most important problem of the Russian Revolution: the possibility of building up a Socialist System in a single country. Lenin had taken up his position with regard to this problem even before the Revolution. At that time he wrote: “The development of Capitalism differs entirely in each country. From which we arrive at the incontestable conclusion that Socialism cannot conquer in every country simultaneously. It will start by conquering one or more countries…and this will not only arouse irritation, but also a direct tendency on the part of the middle classes of other countries to crush the victorious proletariat of the socialist State.”
The victory of the October Revolution brought the victors face-to-face with two tasks: the socialization of the world and the solid construction of Socialism in one place. Which was the one by which to begin or, rather, from what side should this dual task be approached. Lenin considered that the more important task was clearly that of building up a socialist society where it was possible to build it up, namely, in Russia.
Trotsky was afraid that this would lead the Revolution to a dead end. This advance over a single sector on the whole capitalist front seemed to him to be doomed to failure. He was afraid and the Menshevik in him was resurrected, or, rather, aroused. Under those conditions, he said, the Russian Revolution must be considered as a provisional one only.

It will be recalled that during the Sixth Congress of the Party, in the middle of 1917, Preobrazhensky had attempted to have it laid down that the socialization of Russia should be dependent upon the establishment of Socialism in every other country. And it is because Stalin had risen vigorously against this that no vote was taken upon the amendment, inspired by Trotsky, making the possibility of founding a Socialist society in disaffected tsarist Russia depend upon the success, in the first instance, of the World Revolution.
Karl Radek, whose opinion in the circumstances is all the more interesting because he allied himself–for a time– to Trotsky's outlook, says in this connection: "Trotsky returned to the point of view of the Second International, which he had himself formulated at the Second Congress of the Russian Party, before the split–namely that the 'Dictatorship of the Proletariat' should mean the power of an organized proletariat representing the majority of the nation."
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 169-170

Trotsky's point of view did not then coincide with the opinion of Lenin, who in 1915 and 1916 argued that not only could a revolution be made and power taken in one separate capitalist country but that "socialist production could be organized" and proletarian power defended against encroachment by other countries.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 129

REGARDING SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY TROTSKY ALIGNS WITH THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS

So that, unless the proletarian Revolution could command half the votes plus one, there was nothing to be done. For Trotsky, not only the victory of the proletariat in a single country, but even its victory in this single country unsupported by an absolute majority, reduced itself to an "historic episode." Trotsky, then, became clearly a partisan of this "civilized European Socialism" which the Second International opposed to Leninism. The Social-Democrats placed no confidence in the Revolution. The Social-Democratic leaders thought that socialist-revolution was only possible in a country of highly developed Capitalism, not in Russia, because of lack of a solid foundation of labor.
Trotsky's general theory consisted in establishing the doctrine that the socialist economic system in process of construction is completely dependent upon the world capitalist system, from whence follows a gradual fatal capitalist degeneration of the Soviet economic system, in the midst of a capitalist world. Radek also said–at that time: "We have no power in the face of World Capitalism." These, and others, were afraid. One can detect the breath of apprehension, the access of panic which gathered this Opposition group into its eddy.
Lenin never lost sight of the world organization of socialist policy. Lenin never lost sight of anything.
…Dependence on foreign capitalism you say? Comrade Trotsky has said in the course of his speech: "That in reality we find ourselves constantly under the control of world economics." Is this right, asks Stalin? No. That is the dream of capitalist sharks, but it is not the truth. And Stalin goes on to show that the supposed control is not exercised from the financial point of view, either on the nationalized Soviet banks, or upon industry, or upon foreign commerce, which are also nationalized. Neither is this control exercised from the political point of view. So that it is not exercised in any of the practical meanings of the word "control." All these

people keep parading a bogey of control. On the other hand, “to broaden our relations with the capitalist world does not mean making ourselves dependent upon it.”
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 171-173

STALIN SAYS THE REVOLUTION CAN BEGIN IN LESS RATHER THAN MORE DEVELOPED NATIONS

Where will the revolution begin? Where, in what country, can the front of capital be pierced first?

Formerly, the reply used to be– where industry is more developed, where the proletariat forms the majority, where culture is more advanced, where there is more democracy.

The Leninist theory of the revolution says: No, not necessarily where industry is most developed, and so forth; it will be broken where the chain of imperialism is weakest, for the proletarian revolution is the result of the breaking of the chain of the imperialist world front at its weakest link. The country which begins the revolution, which makes a breach in the capitalist front, may prove to be less developed in a capitalist sense than others which are more developed but have remained, nevertheless, within the framework of capitalism.

To put it briefly, the chain of the imperialist front should break, as a rule, where the links are most fragile and, in any event, not necessarily where capitalism is most developed, or where there is a certain percentage of proletarians and a certain percentage of peasants, and so on….
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 283-284

STALIN DENOUNCED FOR RECRUITING

Stalin’s enemies angrily refer to this recruitment [Stalin’s bringing in 200,000 new Party members] as the “mobilization of the mob” into the “Party of yes-men.” In politics, when people in the mass do things of which we disapprove or support someone whom we dislike, they become automatically “the mob,” generally the “hysterical mob.” When the same mass of people do what we approve, we refer to the “voice of the awakened people “or” the dignified expression of democracy at its best.”
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 158

STALIN TRIED FOR YEARS TO WIN OVER TROTSKYISTS RATHER THAN ELIMINATE THEM

He [Stalin] is supposed to be ruthless, but for many years he has been striving to win over competent Trotskyists rather than destroy them, and it is in a way affecting to see how doggedly he is endeavoring to use them for his work.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 111

DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM AND THE POLITBURO

The Bolshevik Party is built up on what are called the principles of democratic centralism, whereby authority for direction is vested by the membership and the members voluntarily accept the discipline of their chosen leader to ensure unity in action…. All lower organs of the party carry out the decisions of the higher. The Political Bureau is therefore the most important body, carrying the authority of the Congress, and in short actually leads the Party.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 169

I knew that the Bolsheviks allowed themselves freedom of argument about measures and policies prior to their adoption; it was only when a decision had been reached and a majority vote cast that the rigid discipline of the party compelled the defeated minority to accept that decision without reserve or qualification.
Duranty, Walter. I Write as I Please. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1935, p. 215

As a first step in this tremendous programme Lenin laid down certain rules which were to govern the internal affairs of the party, the system which he was later to describe as "Democratic Centralism." In preliminary discussions on policy, complete freedom and expression was to be permitted, but when once a course of action had been decided by a majority every member of the organization must obey that decision without question.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 25

On new issues, and, in fact, in all matters not yet authoritatively decided on, there is, even for the Party member, complete freedom of thought and full liberty of discussion and controversy, private or public, which may continue, as in the series of Trotsky debates in 1925-1927, even for years. But once any issue is authoritatively decided by the Party, in the All-Union Party Congress or its Central Committee, all argument and all public criticism, as well as all opposition, must cease; and the Party decision must be loyally accepted and acted upon without obstruction or resistance, on pain of expulsion; and, if made necessary by action punishable by law, also of prosecution, deportation, or exile.
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilization. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, p. 268

STALIN SAYS IRON DISCIPLINE AND UNITY DOES NOT EXCLUDE CRITICISM

Stalin says, it is impossible to win and maintain the dictatorship of proletariat without a party made strong by its cohesion and discipline. But iron discipline cannot be thought out without unity of will and absolutely united action on the part of the members of the party. This does not mean that the possibility of a conflict of opinion within the party is excluded. Discipline, indeed, far from excluding criticism and conflict of opinion, presupposes their existence. But this most certainly does not imply that there should be "blind" discipline. Discipline does not exclude, but presupposes understanding, voluntary submission, for only a conscious discipline can be iron discipline.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 170

Stalin encouraged outspokenness in other ways. In May 1935, as a replacement for the old slogan "Technology Decides Everything," he offered "Cadres Decide Everything." In this context, cadres meant almost anyone, for, he continued, this policy "demands that our

leaders display the most careful attitude toward our workers, toward the ‘small’ and the ‘big,’ no matter what area they work in.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 187

STALIN’S AIDES ARE NOT YES MEN

Someday it will dawn on the mass of non-Russian people that Stalin’s Lieutenant’s are not political children or yes men, but leaders who are in fundamental accord in principles, outlook, and aims and not a collection of men of dissimilar philosophies and interests.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 213

Stalin has been reproached, by Trotsky and others, with the desire to surround himself with mediocrities. I am certain he would say, “Better a dull man I can trust than a bright man I’m not sure of,”…
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 172

Yet with all the hard work and the sicknesses of impending old age, Stalin was a most considerate boss; according to Rybin, he never raised his voice…. According to the same source, Stalin did not want to be surrounded by yes-men. About those who told him, “Whatever you command will be done,” he said: “I do not need advisers of this kind.” According to Orlov, he liked people to insist on their point of view if they were convinced that they were right.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 150

Stalin did not like people who did not stand up for their convictions with truthful comments and arguments or people who always agreed: ‘As you say, I will do it.’ He always referred to such helpers, saying: ‘Such consultants I do not need or people do not need to consult.’ Having found this out, I often debated and disagreed with him. Stalin always said after the exchange: ‘Fine, I will think about this.’ He never liked it when people ran to him, or if he heard their hesitant steps, with cap in hand. You should always go to him boldly, any time. His office was never closed.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 37

Now Second Secretary after Stalin himself, Molotov admired Koba but did not worship him. He often disagreed with, and criticized, Stalin right up until the end.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 39

Voroshilov, Mikoyan and a Molotov frequently disagreed with Stalin….
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 48

STALIN’S ANALYSES ARE BETTER THAN HIS OPPONENTS

On the whole Stalin’s judgments, both at home and abroad, as to which evils were greater and which lesser were vindicated by the course of ends.

The various intra-party oppositionists, both left and right, were almost invariably wrong in their estimates of the changing situation within the USSR and in the outside world. They would not have won the support of a majority of the membership even under a regime permitting complete freedom of speech, press, propaganda, and political action. Many of them were guilty from the outset of gross infractions of party discipline. None of them, however, had any original desire to “restore capitalism” or cooperate with foreign enemies of the Soviet Union. But after 1930, when their failures and frustrations begot irresistible aggressions against Stalin’s leadership, some of them resorted to sabotage, assassination, and conspiracy with foreign agents in the hope of disrupting the Soviet state and thereby creating an opportunity for their own return to power.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 197

The October Revolution saddled this small organization with a stupendous task, and it is remarkable that Lenin could find even a bare minimum of comrades capable of doing the job at all. That the regime survived owes much to people like Stalin, in whom previously untapped qualities were discovered, most especially an aptitude for exercising power. Stalin’s affinity for authority began with a zest for it. This sounds obvious enough, but there are serious grounds to doubt that many of the leading Bolsheviks, Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Bukharin among them, fully shared this quality. Certainly none of them displayed in the five years of Lenin’s rule the capacity for politics and administration that Stalin revealed in this time.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 48

STALIN IS INDISPENSABLE AND HE KNOWS IT

January 18, 1931 — because his legend has grown too great, too real, he has become flesh and bone of the living organism; the horse and writer are transformed into Centaur; he is indispensable and they cannot remove him without a risk they dare not take. That, today, is the last secret of Stalin’s power; should opposition grow strong and noisy, he can meet it in the final instance, as Lenin once met it in the days of Brest-Litovsk, by the threat to retire and leave them to their own devices. Which they cannot bring themselves to accept. And he knows it, as Lenin knew it, and they know it,….
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 166

STALIN’S SUPPORTERS TOOK THE OPPOSITION TOO LIGHTLY

All the hostile elements outside the party, all the old parties, thinking that their opportunity had come [with the Rightist defeat], now took up the struggle again from abroad; and in Russia, especially among the remote national minorities and among the intellectuals, secret groups were formed to work to bring down the regime. It was remarkable thing that in spite of this the Stalinist group did not consider that the defeated opposition in the party–with the exception, perhaps of the open Trotskyists–would attempt a conspiracy. Actually it was precisely in these years that the conspiracy started. There had already been opposition, discussion in the party, personal conflicts, and attempts to bring down one person or another. But Stalin and his supporters had no idea that the opposition now defeated would actually proceed to a new and real struggle and to a conspiracy, an attempt to bring down the regime.

Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 184

…[Stalin also said]… we Bolsheviks must always keep our powder dry.
Naturally, these survivals cannot but be a favorable ground for a revival of the ideology of the defeated anti-Leninist groups in the minds of individual members of our party. Add to this the not very high theoretical level of the majority of our party members, the inadequate ideological work of the party bodies, and the fact that our party functionaries are overburdened with purely practical work, which deprives them of the opportunity of augmenting their theoretical knowledge, and you will understand the origins of the confusion on a number of questions of Leninism that exists in the minds of individual party members, a confusion which not infrequently penetrates into our press and helps to revive the survivals of the ideology of the defeated anti-Leninist groups.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 131

STALIN LOSES VOTES AT TIMES

In 1932 events seemed to be coming to a climax, with Stalin's most loyal supporters at their wits' ends. There was a dramatic meeting in the Politburo that must have taken place about the end of 1932. The actual date is not known, but there's no question that at that meeting Stalin suffered a painful reverse. The most credible account of the meeting is as follows:
The situation at the moment was under discussion. A dramatic speech was made by Voroshilov, who was then Commander-in-Chief in the army…. Voroshilov is said to have given, in the utmost agitation, a report of a disastrous state of feeling in the Army; he is said to have thrown whole packets of soldiers' letters on the table and demanded that something should at once be done. Stalin's proposals– their nature is not known–were rejected,….
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 188

In a letter of June 8, 1929, Voroshilov said to Ordzhonikidze, "…But in reality Bukharin begged everyone not to appoint him to the Commissariat of Education and proposed and then insisted on the job as administrator of science and technology. I supported him in that, as did several other people, and because we were a united majority we pushed it through (against Koba)."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 149

In a September 9th 1929 letter to Molotov Stalin stated, "Poliudov absolutely must be removed from the Commissariat of Transport. This is the same nut-case that kept confusing the Central Committee and Transport with new railroad constructions and has nothing communist about him (nothing left). Now he's sitting at Transport as head of (new) construction. Come on, what kind of builder is he? He's the reason construction of the new tracks between Siberia and European Russia hasn't moved an inch forward. Get that anti-party man out of Transport. He's been systematically violating the Central Committee's resolutions and also systematically mocking the Politburo."
[Footnote]: on December 30, 1929, the Orgburo relieved Poliudov of his work in the Commissariat of Transport and confirmed him as a member of the Soviet trade delegation in Berlin. On January 5, 1930, approximately a week later, the Politburo reversed this decision and kept Poliudov at Transport. On March 5, 1930, he was given editorial work in connection

with the training of executives and in September, he was appointed director of the Belorussian-Baltic Railway.
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 179

In a September 1930 letter to Molotov Stalin stated, "I propose Kaganovich from the Worker-Peasant Inspection as the candidate for head of civil aviation."
[Footnote] On October 15, 1930, Goltsman was confirmed by the Politburo as head of the Civil Aviation Association.
[Stalin lost out. Some dictator–ED.]
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 208

…Until the spring of 1937 no Central Committee member had ever been arrested; until 1938 no Politburo member had fallen…. In one of the very few glimpses we have of actual discussions in the Politburo, Stalin in 1930 had been outvoted by a Politburo majority that took a more aggressive stance than he did on punishment of oppositionists. It may have been about this time, as Kaganovich later recalled, that younger members of the Central Committee asked Stalin why he was not tougher on the opposition.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 582

Within a few weeks after the 13th Congress Pravda published Stalin's report…. Stalin's report also contained an attack on Zinoviev, though without naming him:
"It is often said that we have the dictatorship of the party. I recall that in one of our resolutions, even, it seems, a resolution of the 12th Congress, such an expression was allowed to pass, through an oversight of course. Apparently some comrades think that we have a dictatorship of the party and not of the working class. But that is nonsense, comrades."
Of course Stalin knew perfectly well that Zinoviev in his political report to the 12th Congress had put forward the concept of the dictatorship of the party and had sought to substantiate it. It was not at all through an oversight that the phrase was included in the unanimously adopted resolution of the Congress.
Zinoviev and Kamenev, reacting quite sharply to Stalin's thrust, insisted that a conference of the core leadership of the party be convened. The result was a gathering of 25 Central Committee members, including all members of the Politburo. Stalin's arguments against the "dictatorship of the party" were rejected by a majority vote, and an article by Zinoviev reaffirming the concept was approved for publication in the Aug. 23, 1924 issue of Pravda as a statement by the editors. At this point Stalin demonstratively offered to resign, but the offer was refused.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 144

(R. W. Davies)
In my own work on the early 1930s, it has become increasingly clear that members of the Politburo argued with "Koba" (Stalin), particularly on issues where they had a special competence. In economic affairs, there is strong evidence that opposition developed within the Politburo to the course of collectivization sanctioned by Stalin. At one meeting nearly all of the members may have opposed him.
Nove, Alec, Ed. The Stalin Phenomenon. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993, p. 43

However, there is now abundant evidence that Stalin's lieutenants represented and spoke for distinct policy alternatives. The policy positions are well documented in studies covering the years 1920-50. The studies frequently portray a Stalin who preferred not to decide important questions unless forced. His role seems to have been that of moderator or referee, choosing from among numerous policy possibilities, although R.W. Davies is right to emphasize the differences in this condition at different periods. Many things went on without him or despite his wishes and plans.
Nove, Alec, Ed. The Stalin Phenomenon. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993, p. 119

But I was glad to learn later, when I read Serebrovsky's [the Russian mining expert who hired Littlepage] book on the gold industry published in 1936, that Joseph Stalin also evaluated the importance of our prospectors correctly, and was probably undesirous of giving them up at this time. It will be recalled that Stalin said in 1927, according to this book, that prospectors must be retained in the gold industry and would be very useful.
Why, then, were they given up in 1929? I suspect that Stalin couldn't insist upon his own way in the matter at that time. He was not nearly so strong a figure then as he is now [1937], and was still battling with some of the Communist leaders about certain theories. It seemed logical to give up the prospectors if one also gave up the kulaks and similar groups. I judge from Serebrovsky's book that Stalin surrendered a point to his Communist opponents in this case.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 69

…Yezhov was attacked by other Politburo members despite Stalin's support of him and that Yezhov's replacement, Beria, was forced upon Stalin (whose candidate was Malenkov),…
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 5

Yezhov's primary crime, however, consisted in the fact that he had not informed Stalin of his actions.
In the fall of 1938, when the question arose of removing Yezhov from his position at NKVD, Stalin proposed the candidacy of Malenkov as the new Commissar of Internal Affairs. But the majority of the Politburo recommended Beria for the post.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 38

The Russian historian Boris Starkov has recently written that in Politburo meetings during August 1938 Zhdanov and Andreev stressed the poor quality of party cadres promoted during the mass repressions. Soon Kaganovich and Mikoyan joined them "against Yezhov." Then in the fall, according to Starkov, Stalin proposed replacing Yezhov with Malenkov. But the rest of the Politburo blocked the Gensec and insisted on Beria, though why is not clear.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 131

Stalin treated the 'Ryutin Platform' as the worst embodiment of everything hostile to his rule. Over the rest of the decade it was represented again and again as the great focus of opposition plotting and villainy. When Ryutin was rearrested Stalin made a strong personal effort to have him sentenced to death.

This was a crucial moment, the first serious dispute between Stalin and his closest personal clique on the one hand, and those members of the Politburo who had supported him out of conviction but were not ready to agree to intra-party killings. In Ryutin's case (and in several other lesser instances including that of Stalin's own personal secretary of Nazaretyan), Kirov, with Ordjonikidze, Kuibyshev, Kossior, Rudzutak and, apparently, Kalinin, formed a solid majority against execution. Ryutin was sentenced only to 10 years imprisonment. Another case, a few months later, involved the Old Bolshevik Smirnov and others who had never been associated with any opposition. Stalin commented: 'Of course, only enemies could say that to remove Stalin would not affect matters.' This time, again, his attempt to shoot the offenders was blocked by a Politburo majority.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 162

It [a Soviet article of the Khrushchev.] represents Stalin attempting at this time to purge the Armenian Communist Nazaretyan, but being unable to do so because Ordjonikidze defended him and Stalin knew that " Kirov & Kuibyshev would also speak out in the Politburo on the same lines." For the first time, in fact, Stalin was faced with powerful opposition from his own allies.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 25

[In 1931] Koba suggested to the Instantsia that Voroshilov should be given a three months' leave to rest and "cure his nerves"…. The Instantsia rejected Koba's suggestion with a majority of one. Kalinin voted with Voroshilov against the proposed leave…. It's said that Koba was much upset by the vote… but if so he didn't show it. His self-control is amazing. This, I think, is his strength and the secret of his victories….
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 158

Because there were often police agents among the oppositionists, the Ryutin initiative soon became known to Stalin. The case went first to the party control commission, which referred the case to the Politburo, where Stalin demanded Ryutin's head. But he was overruled by the majority.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 5. 74

It must be noted that the strength of the 'call to personality' by no means indicated that no major differences of opinion existed at the center of Soviet society, or that Stalin had absolute personal power.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 255

One of the readers of the Riutin Appeal was Stalin. It aroused him to such fury that the expulsions and Riutin's arrest could not appease him. He confronted the Politburo with the demand that it sanction Riutin's execution as a terrorist. Amid silence around the Politburo table, Kirov spoke up saying: "Can't do that. Riutin is not a lost man but an errant one. Devil only knows who had a hand in this letter. People won't understand us." Stalin, perhaps sensing the majority's opposition to his demand, let the matter rest, and Riutin got off with a 10-year term–for the present.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 212

However, Stalin realized that the Politburo could easily unite to dismiss him. Rykov, the Rightist Premiere, did not believe in his plans, and now, Kalinin too was wavering. Stalin

knew he could be outvoted, even overthrown. The new archives reveal how openly Kalinin argued with Stalin.
[Footnote]: They frequently disagreed with him, certainly on small matters such as a discussion about the Kremlin military school…. Having defeated Bukharin in 1929, Stalin wanted to appoint him Education Commissar but as Voroshilov told Sergo in a letter, "Because we were a united majority, we pushed it through (against Koba)."
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 55

He [Zinoviev] exaggerated the power of the General Secretary. A simple vote in the Politburo, chaired by Kamenev, could still restrain Stalin;
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 215

There were, it was said, grave dissensions within the Politburo when the penalties to be applied were discussed. Stalin had insisted on the execution of the principal prisoner, Ryutin; the majority of the Politburo were opposed to it, probably considering the charges insufficiently proved, and hesitating to open yet another chapter of bloody repression in the inside history of the Communist Party.
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 293

STALIN BEST REPRESENTED THE PARTY LOWER LEVEL LEADERS

Thus the original Bolshevik leaders not only came from the upper social classes, but included people who have long lived abroad….
Stalin was one of the few real men of the people who had succeeded in making their way into the party leadership before the revolution. It was thus no mere coincidence that he was dominated by the same instinct and so became the leader of the tacitly rebellious mass of the subordinate leaders and the representative in the party of their aspirations and aims. It was not surprising, therefore, that although at the beginning of his conflicts with his opponents Stalin was not yet in possession of power, he ended nevertheless with the majority on his side at all the party conferences and congresses.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 202

STEN'S ARTICLE CONTINUES TRADITION OF UNDERMINING PARTY DISCIPLINE

On July 29, 1929, Stalin wrote the following in a letter to Molotov, "I strongly protest publishing Sten's article in Komsomolskaia Pravda which is similar to Shatskin's article, several days after the Politburo's condemnation of Shatskin's article. This is either stupidity on the part of the editors of Komsomolskaia Pravda or a direct challenge to the Central Committee of the party. To call the subordination of Komsomols (and that means party members is well) to the general party line "careerism,' as Sten does, means to call for a review of the general party line, for the undermining of the iron discipline of the party, for the turning of the party into a discussion club. That is precisely how any opposition group has begun its anti-party work. Trotsky began his 'work' with this. Zinoviev got his start that way. Bukharin has chosen the same path for himself. The Shatskin-Averbakh-Sten-Lominadze group is embarking on his path, demanding (essentially) the freedom to review the general

party line, the freedom to weaken party discipline, the freedom to turn the party into a discussion club."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 162

STALIN ADMITS HIS MISTAKES AND SOMETIMES RETREATS

In a September 1, 1929, letter to Molotov Stalin stated, "From NKVD reports published in the press, it's obvious that my approach on the Chinese question was unfair. It turns out that I didn't read the fine print in the coded report. Well, what of it, I am glad I was mistaken and ready to apologize for the undeserved reproach. That, of course, doesn't mean that Litvinov, Bukharin, and Karakhan have ceased to be opportunists. Not a whit!"
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 176

To make so prodigious a change in such a country in so short a time required iron will, unflinching courage, and ruthlessness. Stalin possessed all three of these qualities, but he had learned from Lenin the rarer courage of daring to retreat, and the willingness to admit that he might not always be right. The world has grown accustomed to regard dictators as masters of tide and thunder, who can say, "Do this," or "Make that," and their orders must be obeyed. This was never the case in Soviet Russia, where even Lenin was only "first amongst equals," and despite his moral ascendancy was more than once forced to tell his followers, "All right, this is how I see it, and this is what we must do. If any of you can prove that I am wrong or show me good reason why we shouldn't do it, I am willing to listen. In the meantime I'm tired, so let me sleep."
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 163

Just as it seemed that the question of a customs union, that is, the Bulgarian-Rumanian agreement, had been settled, old Kolarov, as though recalling something important, began to expound. "I cannot see where Comrade Dimitrov erred, for we previously sent a draft of the treaty with Rumania to the Soviet government and the Soviet government made no comment regarding the customs union except with regard to the definition of the aggressor."
Stalin turned to Molotov: "Had they sent as a draft of the treaty?"
Molotov, without being confused, but also not without acrimony: "Well, yes."
Stalin, with angry resignation: "We, too, commit stupidities."
Djilas, Milovan. Conversations with Stalin. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962, p. 178

Someone mentioned the recent successes of the Chinese communists. But Stalin remained adamant: "Yes, the Chinese comrades have succeeded, but in Greece there is an entirely different situation. The United States is directly engaged there–the strongest state in the world. China is a different case; relations in the Far East are different. True, we, too, can make a mistake! Here, when the war with Japan ended, we invited the Chinese comrades to reach an agreement as to how a modus vivendi with Chang Kai-shek might be found. They agreed with us in word, but in deed they did it their own way when they got home: they mustered their forces and struck. It has been shown that they were right, and not we.
Djilas, Milovan. Conversations with Stalin. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962, p. 182

STALIN: “True, we (Stalin and his associates), too, can make a mistake! Here when the war with Japan ended, we invited the Chinese comrades to reach an agreement as to how a modus vivendi with Chiang Kai-shek might be found. They agreed with us in word, but in deed they did it their own way when they got home: they mustered their forces and struck. It has been shown that they were right, and not we.”
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 97

He [Stalin] always admitted his mistakes, no matter to whom.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 107

[In a speech delivered on August 5, 1927 at a joint plenum of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission of the CPSU Stalin stated] I have never regarded myself as being infallible, nor do I do so now. I have never concealed either my mistakes or my momentary vacillations. But one must not ignore also that I have never persisted in my mistakes, and that I have never drawn up a platform, or formed a separate group, and so forth, on the basis of my momentary vacillations.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 10, p. 64

STALIN SAYS HE IS NOT TOLERANT OF MEMBERS WHO HAVE DONE GRIEVOUS ERRORS

In a letter of September 6, 1929, Stalin stated, “You know that I’m not a supporter of the policy of “tolerance’ regarding comrades who have committed grievous errors from the perspective of the party’s interests.”
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin’s Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 177

STALIN ATTACKS HIS OWN FOREIGN MINISTER

In an October 7, 1929, letter to Molotov Stalin stated, “Things didn’t turn out so badly with England. Henderson was shown up. Rykov, along with Bukharin and Litvinov, was also shown up….”
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin’s Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 182

Litvinov was kept on as ambassador to be United States only because he was known worldwide. He turned out to be very rotten.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 67

THE PRESS IS TOO ALARMIST AND IGNORES THE REASONS FOR PROBLEMS

In a September 13, 1930, letter to Molotov Stalin stated, “For God’s sake, stop the presses squawking about “breakdowns right and left,’ “endless failures,’ “disruptions,’ and other such nonsense. This hysterical Trotskyist–right-deviationist tone is not justified by the facts and is unbecoming to Bolsheviks. Economic Life, and, to a certain extent, Izvestia are all being

particularly shrill. They screech about the “falling’ in [production] rates or the migration of workers but they don’t explain what’s behind it. Indeed, where did this “sudden” flow of workers to the countryside come from, this “disastrous’ turnover? What can account for it? Perhaps a poor food supply? But were people supplied any better last year compared to this year? Why wasn’t such a turnover, such a flight, observed last year? Isn’t it clear that the workers went to the countryside for the harvest? They want to ensure that the collective farm won’t short them when they distribute the harvest; they want to work for a few months in the collective farm in full view of everyone and thus guarantee their right to a full collective farm share. Why don’t the newspapers write about that, instead of just squeaking in panic?”
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin’s Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 215

Following the Shakhti trial and the detection of some scandals in local Party organizations, the Communist Party Central Committee in 1928 issued an appeal urging the Party and trade union members to subject to merciless criticism abuses in the state administration and management of industry. The result of this was a veritable flood of letters and articles in the press, revealing real or alleged abuses. For a vivid first-hand picture of the defects of the Soviet civil service and the socialist management of industry one has only to turn to the columns of the Soviet press. In some cases, with the Russian tendency toward exaggeration, the criticism was really overdone, and one had the curious spectacle of a press, published under the strictest control of a ruling party, representing some conditions as worse than they actually were.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 399

STALIN HAD FAR MORE SUPPORT THAN TROTSKY

That Stalin had the Party membership solidly behind him in this controversy with Trotsky and his group is shown by a 1927 Party referendum in which the Trotskyist program was defeated by 725,000 votes to 6,000. In view of Trotsky’s contentions, the vote is surprising in showing how tiny the “opposition” forces were in reality. They were but a small–although vehement–faction, disowned by the mass of the Party and fighting for a platform that was obviously impractical and objectively reactionary. To represent the struggle, in 1927 or before, as one between a sinister, maneuvering Stalin and a brilliant, idealistic Trotsky with roughly equal influence within the Party not only smacks more of melodrama than political reality but is a complete misrepresentation. Stalin had the Party membership solidly behind him, and he had it not through maneuvering but because his socialist-construction policies had gained him wide working-class and Party support. In essence, he won because he was right.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 48

By means of machinations, trickery, corruption, or else by secret service and crime, or by introducing spies into lobbies and armed forces into council chambers, or by killing one’s enemies in bed at night (two a time), one might become, and remain, king or emperor, or duce, or chancellor–one might even become Pope. But one could never become Secretary of the Communist Party by any such methods.
A man like Stalin has naturally been violently attacked and has defended himself with equal violence (indeed he has more often than not taken the offensive). Certainly, but all these

noisy, re-echoing discussions took place in the full light of day, in the full sight of everyone, every argument advanced in them being exhaustively examined in the most open manner like a great public trial before a jury of the whole nation as compared with palace intrigue. Actually, in the socialist Organization, each man takes his place naturally according to his own value and strength. He is automatically selected for his position by force of circumstances. His degree of power depends upon how much he understands and upon how far he can carry out the incontestable principles of Marxism. “It was simply,” says Knorin, “by his superiority as a theorist and his superiority as a practical man that Stalin became our leader.” He is leader for the same reason that he is successful: because he is right.
…I once said to Stalin: “Do you know that in France you are looked upon as a tyrant who acts merely according to his fancy, and is a bloody tyrant into the bargain?” He leaned back in his chair and burst out into his hearty working-man’s laugh.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 148-149

Through these acts and his writings, the opposition was thoroughly discredited and, during a vote, received only 6000 votes as against 725,000.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 128 [p. 116 on the NET]

In the party, as constituted at the time of Lenin’s death, Stalin had overwhelming political support for his style and his aims. There is no reason to dispute his subjective honesty when he proclaimed his undying loyalty to Lenin.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 255

STALIN WAS OFTEN MORE LENIENT THAN LENIN, ZINOVIEV, SECRET POLICE HEADS & OTHERS

In the Civil War he had borne heavy responsibilities and had faced dangers in the way that had brought him credit throughout the party. He had dispensed summary justice when necessary and had shown that he could be ruthless, but he had not shown the brutality for which Voroshilov, Budenny, and others were notorious. In his speeches he was moderate and reasonable. He handled criticisms with apparent good humor, and even when attacking the Opposition he was less savage than Lenin or Zinoviev. In Politburo meetings he sought to be agreeable.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 194

New evidence casts doubts on rumors and myths that have become prevalent. Thus the new documents provide no evidence for the existence of a bloc of Stalinist moderates who tried to restrain Stalin’s alleged careful plan for terror.

[Footnote]: This hypothetical bloc, variously said to consist of Ordjonikidze, Postyshev, and others was used to explain the zigs and zags of Stalin’s policy: supposedly he faced resistance from this group and frequently had to back down. But documents suggest that, for example, no one defended Bukharin and Rykov at the February 1937 plenum.
Nove, Alec, Ed. The Stalin Phenomenon. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1993, p. 141

But the sequence of events presented in the written evidence is also consistent with a second scenario… in which Yezhov pursued initiatives, prepared dossiers, and pushed certain investigations in order to promote his own agenda. Although that agenda was often the same as Stalin's, it may not have been identical. We know, for example, that although Stalin agreed to review a manuscript Yezhov was writing on how Opposition inevitably becomes terrorism, he never allowed publication…. Events seemed to show that in the cases of Pyatakov and Bukharin, Yezhov and others were possibly ahead of Stalin in pushing the need for severity.

[Footnote: Starkov writes in this volume that at the time of his fall, "Yezhov's primary crime, however, consisted in the fact that he had not informed Stalin of his actions." Stalin's relationship to Yezhov's predecessor Yagoda was equally complex. In March 1936, Yagoda proposed to Stalin that all Trotskyist everywhere–even those convicted already–should be re-sentenced to five additional years out of hand and that any of them involved in "terror" should quickly be shot. Stalin referred Yagoda's plan to Vyshinsky for a legal opinion, which came back positive in six days. Although Yagoda was ready to move immediately, it was nearly two months before Stalin issued an order to this effect.]
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 59

To be fair, on November 28, 1917 at a meeting of the Council of People's Commissars (Sovnarkom), he [Stalin] did stand alone against the rest, including Lenin, when he voted against handing over leading liberals to revolutionary tribunals as enemies of the people.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 30

…Some years later, in the 1930s and in the company of his cronies, hearing of Trotsky's most recent speech abroad, he [Stalin] snapped: 'We made two mistakes on that occasion. We should have left him for a time in Alma-Ata, but on no account should we have let him out of the country. And the other one was, how could we have let him take so many documents with him?'
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 143

I had a surprise telephone call from Yagoda. He demanded the immediate closure of the Narkomindel's hairdressing saloon and gave us 24 hours in which to do it. He said that he had proof that most important state secrets were being discussed there. He hinted that the staff of the saloon, especially women, were under suspicion and warned that unless we closed the shop within 24 hours they would all be arrested and transported to Siberia, or given "minus six."

I summoned the assistant manager of the hairdressing saloon…. The entire staff were indignant about the closure….

Yagoda came on the phone again. He informed me that the decision to close the hairdressing saloon had been rescinded. I had a short talk with him. He was obviously embarrassed… one would think that the closure was an important affair of state….

Mossina came to see me. It transpired that Koba had personally ordered Yagoda to leave our hairdressers alone.

Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 46-47

A telephone call from Koba. He asked me whether I had received Mekhlis's letter. He said: "You will greatly oblige me personally if you get him a visa. You understand that otherwise he will come to a bad end …. I do not want our revolution to devour its own children…."
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 83

Kamenev was the only one who saw Stalin. He stayed with him for more than an hour….
Stalin later told Mekhlis that Kamenev the only one deserving mercy….
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 239

At a meeting of the Sovnarkom on 28 November 1917, for instance, he [Lenin] proposed a decree on "the arrest of the most prominent members of the central committee of the party of the enemies of the people [i.e. the Constitutional Democrats], and their trial by Revolutionary tribunal." The only member of the government to oppose this measure was Stalin,…
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 166

[Footnote]: In a letter to Lyova (19 November 1937) Trotsky relates that, when the issue came before the Politburo, he was for attacking Kronstadt while Stalin was against it, saying that the rebels, if left to themselves, would surrender within two or three weeks. Curiously, in his public polemics against Stalin (and in his biography of Stalin) Trotsky never mentioned this fact, although he usually made the most of any instance of Stalin's political "softness" or deviation from Lenin's line. Is it that Trotsky somehow felt that in this case "softness" might redound to Stalin's credit?
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 437

The Central Committee met to discuss Zinoviev's and Kamenev's misdemeanor, and Trotsky demanded their expulsion from the Central Committee. Koba's proposal was quite different: these two comrades should be required to submit to the will of the Central Committee, but should be kept in it. Trotsky's proposal prevailed, whereupon Koba announced his own resignation from Worker's Path.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 114

The MGB thought Karpai's further value to the investigation was nil and recommended she be shot. Stalin thought otherwise.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 161

STALIN WAS VERY PATIENT, LENIENT, AND TOLERANT OF THE OPPOSITION

The [1927 British] war scare died away, but the ferment continued in the party. Stalin's patience with the opposition leaders was exhausted. He had always stood against their expulsion, at the 14th Congress in December 1925 he had explained why he had opposed the demand of Zinoviev and Kamenev for the expulsion of Trotsky. Now his view was different. The party would be at risk as long as the oppositionists were active within its ranks. Lenin would never have tolerated them. He had been determined in 1917 and later to smash the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, and he had insisted in 1921 on the

prohibition of factions within the Bolshevik party. Stalin himself had always shared his view that the party must be completely united. He had hoped that some genuine settlement might be reached. This hope was no longer tenable. The party and regime were facing immense problems and fighting to survive. The opposition exercised a debilitating influence, which was not permissible at this crucial time.

At the Plenum of the Central Committee at the end of July 1927 he moved a resolution for the expulsion of Trotsky and Zinoviev from the committee. He could be sure of a majority in the committee, whereas in the Politburo the right-wing members–Bukharin, Rykov, Tomsky, and Kalinin –were said to oppose such drastic action. The central committee approved the resolution, but then it was rescinded. Ordjonikidze, who was now chairman of the Central Control Commission, had mediated with the opposition, who once again had made a declaration of unconditional surrender. Stalin then agreed to the withdrawal of the resolution. It was clear, however, that time was running out for the opposition leaders.

In September 1927, as preparations were getting underway for the Fifteenth Party Congress, the opposition drew up the third statement of their aims and policies. Their chief purpose was to change the party leadership, eliminating the right-wing and Stalin in particular although the statement did not specify names….
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 218

It is further significant that many people who had been close to Lenin were not arrested, though they were out of Stalin's favor and had been close friends with those already condemned as enemies. These individuals were merely demoted. Stalin did not arrest Podvoisky, Kon, Petrovsky, Stasova, Tskhakaya, Makharadze, or many other once prominent leaders whose names were mentioned in slanderous denunciations and confessions.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 545

… In the fabricated depositions of arrested artists, writers, and film workers there were allegations against hundreds who were not arrested. For example, Boris Pasternak and Yuri Olesha were named as accomplices of Babel and Meyerhold in the so-called diversionary organization of literary people. But Stalin did not order the arrest of Pasternak and 0lesha. Another remarkable writer who was spared arrest was Mikhail Bulgakov, although many denunciations of his "anti-Soviet attitudes" reached the NKVD. Stalin angrily walked out of a performance of Shostakovich's Lady Mcbeth of the Mtsensk District, and the talented young composer found himself out of favor for a long time. His friendship with Meyerhold and connections with Tukhachevsky were also well known. Every night Shostakovich waited to be arrested; he had a "prison suitcase" packed and ready and could hardly ever sleep. But Stalin did not authorize his arrest, or that of Zoshchenko or Akhmatova. Just as inexplicably Boris Pasternak and Andrei Platonov were allowed to remain free. Nor did Stalin permit the arrest of many leading film directors, although the NKVD prepared more than one case against them.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 546

I have already mentioned the arrest of Kalinin's wife in 1937 and of Molotov's after the war. Similarly arrested were two of Mikoyan's sons, Ordjonikidze's brother, the wife of Poskrebyshev, Khrushchev's daughter-in-law, and others….

Kalinin ‘s wife, for example, was released in a few weeks…. The case of Poskrebyshev, Stalin’s personal secretary, is instructive. His wife was the sister of Sedov’s wife, and Sedov was Trotsky’s son . But that did not prevent Poskrebyshev from being one of the people closest to Stalin. Stalin did finally order the arrest of Poskrebyshev’s wife but kept him as his secretary.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 547

It was very hard to guess how Stalin would decide the fate of certain people who had been close to him. Consider, for example, Stalin’s strange behavior toward his old Comrade Kavtaradze, who had done Stalin many favors during the underground years. Kavtaradze had risked his own safety on one occasion to help Stalin hide from detectives in St. Petersburg. In the ’20s Kavtaradze joined the Trotskyist Opposition and left it only when the Opposition leadership called on its supporters to stop oppositional activity. After Kirov’s murder Kavtaradze, exiled to Kazan as an ex-Trotskyist, wrote a letter to Stalin saying that he was not working against the party. Stalin immediately brought Kavtaradze back from exile. Soon many central newspapers carried an article by Kavtaradze recounting an incident of his underground work with Stalin. Stalin liked the article, but Kavtaradze did not write any more on this subject. He did not even rejoin the party and lived by doing very modest editorial work. At the end of 1936 he and his wife were suddenly arrested and after torture were sentenced to be shot. He was accused of planning with Mdivani, to murder Stalin. Soon after sentencing, Mdivani we shot. Kavtaradze, however, was kept in the death cell for a long time. Then he was suddenly taken to Beria’a office, where he met his wife, who had aged beyond recognition. Both were released. First he lived in a hotel; then he got two rooms in a communal apartment and started doing editorial work again. Stalin began to show him various signs of favor, inviting him to dinner and once even paying him a surprise visit along with Beria. (This visit caused great excitement in the communal apartment. One of Kavtaradze’s neighbor’s fainted when, in her words, “the portrait of Comrade Stalin” appeared on the threshold.) When he had Kavtaradze to dinner, Stalin himself would pour the soup, tell jokes, and reminisce. But during one of these dinners Stalin suddenly went up to his guest and said, “And still you wanted to kill me.”
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 548

Critics of the trials repeatedly make the mistake of not applying the historical method to their consideration of them. Thus, to call Radek, Pyatakov, Smirnov, Kamenev, and Zinoviev Old Bolsheviks is as essentially true as to call Mr. J. H. Thomas, Mussolini, and Sir Oswald Mosley Old Socialists. Marx himself would have been the first to recognize that the truth of such descriptions is relative to time.

Little is known generally in this country of the “Opposition” which functioned in the USSR from the days of Stalin’s triumph with his General Line to the period of the Moscow Trials, but an understanding of it is essential to an understanding of the trials. The defeat and exile of Trotsky did not mean the immediate defeat of his policy. Millions of his former supporters, it is true, accepted the Communist Party decisions and transferred their support to Stalin’s policy of obtaining Socialism in one country. On the other hand, a strong body of theorists maintained their ideological opposition to Stalin. Kamenev, Zinoviev, and Radek transferred their allegiance to Stalin, but the former two were numbered among the recalcitrants. They were on several occasions expelled from the Communist Party and several times, after

making public penance, were reinstated to high posts. There was, in fact, a strong movement among the Stalinists, led by Kirov in the Politburo and Gorky outside it, for reconciliation with the Opposition. There were Opposition groups in Leningrad and Moscow which were tolerated. Professorial posts were held by theorists who admittedly were opposed to the Stalin Line. But faith to Lenin's injunction to his comrades against mutual extermination, drastic measures were not used against such "Counter-Revolutionaries." In the case of Ryutin, for example, who circulated a memorandum imputing slanderous motives to the Stalin General Line, the penalty was administrative exile.
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 212

Stalin's private secretary Kanner has described this period:

"The leaders of the Opposition made a promise to submit to the decisions of the 15th Party Congress, and to observe the discipline of the statutes of the Party.

'I don't believe them,' said Stalin, 'but we must make the experiment of readmitting them to the Party. I feel that I am under a personal obligation to do so, and that I am loyal and impartial, even towards my personal enemies.'

Fishman and Hutton. The Private Life of Josif Stalin. London: W. H. Allen, 1962, p. 64

The Tenth Anniversary of the Bolshevist government was approaching. Stalin displayed extraordinary restraint and prudence.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 283

Comrade Lenin saw all things in a different light. You know that in 1921 Lenin proposed that Shlyapnikov be expelled from the Central Committee and from the Party not for organizing an anti-Party printing press, and not for allying himself with bourgeois intellectuals, but merely because, at a meeting of a Party unit, Shlyapnikov dared to criticize the decisions of the Supreme Council of National Economy. If you compare this attitude of Lenin's with what the party is now doing to the opposition, you will realize what license we have allowed the disorganizers and splitters….

You surely must know that in 1917 just before the October uprising, Lenin several times proposed that Kamenev and Zinoviev be expelled from the Party merely because they had criticized unpublished Party decisions in the semi-socialist, in the semi-bourgeois newspaper Novaya Zhizn. But how many secret decisions of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission are now being published by our opposition in the columns of Maslow's newspaper in Berlin, which is a bourgeois, anti-Soviet, counter-revolutionary newspaper! Yet we tolerate all this, tolerate it without end, and thereby give the splitters in the opposition the opportunity to wreck our Party. Such is the disgrace to which the opposition has brought us! But we cannot tolerate it forever, comrades.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 10, p. 195-196

It is said that such things are unprecedented in the history of our Party. That is not true. What about the Myasnikov group? What about the "Workers' Truth" group? Who does not know that the members of those groups were arrested with the full consent of Zinoviev, Trotsky, and Kamenev? Why was it permissible three or four years ago to arrest

disorganizers who had been expelled from the Party, but is impermissible now, when some of the former members of the Trotskyist opposition go to the length of directly linking up with counter-revolutionaries?

You heard Comrade Menzhinsky's statement. In that statement it is said that a certain Stepanov (an army-man), a member of the Party, a supporter of the opposition, is in direct contact with counter-revolutionaries, with Novikov, Kostrov, and others, which Stepanov himself does not deny in his depositions. What do you want us to do with this fellow, who is in the opposition to this day? Kiss him, or arrest him? Is it surprising that the OGPU arrests such fellows?

Lenin said that the Party can be completely wrecked if indulgence is shown to disorganizers and splitters. That is quite true. That is precisely why I think that it is high time to stop showing indulgence to the leaders of the opposition and to come to the conclusion that Trotsky and Zinoviev must be expelled from the Central Committee of our Party. That is the elementary conclusion in the elementary, minimum measure that must be taken in order to protect the Party from the disorganizers' splitting activities.

At the last plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission, held in August this year, some members of the plenum rebuked me for being too mild with Trotsky and Zinoviev, for advising the plenum against the immediate expulsion of Trotsky and Zinoviev from the Central Committee. Perhaps I was too kind then and made a mistake in proposing that the milder line be adopted toward Trotsky and Zinoviev. But now comrades, after what we have gone through during these three months, after the opposition has broken the promise to dissolve its faction that it made in its special "declaration" of August 8, thereby deceiving the Party once again, after all this, there can be no more room at all for mildness. We must now step into the front rank with those comrades who are demanding that Trotsky and Zinoviev be expelled from the Central Committee.

In expelling Trotsky and Zinoviev from the Central Committee we must submit for the consideration of the 15th Congress all the documents which have accumulated concerning the opposition's splitting activities, and on the basis of those documents the congress will be able to adopt an appropriate decision.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 10, p. 196-197

[In a speech delivered regarding the party and the opposition at the 16th Moscow Gubernia Party Conference on November 23, 1927 Stalin stated] The entire history of our disagreements during the past two years is a history of the efforts of the Central Committee of our Party to restrain the opposition from taking steps toward a split and to keep the opposition people within the Party.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 10, p. 267

[In a November 19, 1928 speech at the plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU Stalin stated] Already in 1924 our Party and the Fifth Congress of the Comintern passed a resolution on Trotskyism defining it as a petty-bourgeois deviation. Nevertheless, Trotsky continued to be a member of our Central Committee and Political Bureau. Is that a fact, or not? It is a fact. Consequently, we "tolerated" Trotsky and the Trotskyists on the Central Committee. Why did we allow them to remain in leading Party bodies? Because at that time

the Trotskyists, despite their disagreements with the Party, obeyed the decisions of the Central Committee and remained loyal. When did we begin to apply organizational penalties at all extensively? Only after the Trotskyists had organized themselves into a faction, set up their factional centre, turned their faction into a new party and began to summon people to anti-Soviet demonstrations.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 11, p. 298

Trotsky was sent away. Bukharin could also have been.

Those were difficult and complicated times. This only shows Stalin's patience, that he carried along with Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev up til 1927. Kamenev in those days had organised a parallel rally: 'Down with the Government, Down with Stalin!' Then he was dropped from the Politbureau, he was a member of the P.B. until 1927. How forbearing Stalin was! There were times when Kirov and Kamenev wanted to drop Trotsky from the Politbureau and Stalin was defending him.
THUS SPAKE KAGANOVICH by Feliks Chuyev, 1992

STALIN DENOUNCED OPPOSITIONISTS BUT THEY REMAINED IN HIGH POSITIONS

In this dispute [over collectivization], which Stalin won, he denounced Bukharin and Rykov as leaders of a "right deviation." But even after their political defeat Bukharin and Rykov continued to hold responsible positions and were still members of the party's Central Committee.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 14

Nevertheless, until the fall of1936 most of the former oppositionists remained free and even held responsible positions in the commissariats, in publishing, and in educational institutions. Bukharin, for example, was editor of Izvestia and was allowed to travel abroad to negotiate purchases from the archives of the German Social Democratic Party for the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute. Pyatakov was exerting himself intensely as first deputy people's commissar for heavy industry, and articles by Radek appeared almost daily in the central papers and magazines.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 349

But it is perfectly consistent with the fact that there was a widespread plot, the full extent of which was only gradually discovered. The people concerned were old revolutionaries who knew how to build an illegal organization and to conceal its workings from the authorities. They were people who had been in conflict with the Party but had publicly made their peace with it and were given responsible work. Pyatakov became vice-commissar for Heavy Industry; Zinoviev commenced to write articles for the leading Party organ, the Bolshevik (which incidentally bore the stigmata of his previously incorrect political attitude); Bukharin became active on scientific and cultural questions. The Party took their adherence to the Party line at its face value, welcomed them back to the ranks and gave them important and congenial work to do. And therefore when the shooting of Kirov took place and the Party called for increased vigilance it was still far from appreciating the depths of treachery to

which the opposition had sunk. It was only prolonged and careful investigation which led step-by-step to an unmasking of the main lines of the conspiracy.

The same applies to Bukharin and Rykov. They were mentioned by defendants in the first trial but denied complicity, and their denial was for the time being believed.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 246

Trotsky was sent into exile. At that time [1929], it was unthinkable that anyone should be killed. Several of Stalin's opponents were given good jobs and were close to the government.
Snow, Charles Percy. Variety of Men. New York: Scribner, 1966, p. 257

Given Bukharin's continuing access to higher circles through his work on the constitutional commission, his post as Izvestia editor, his Central Committee status, Kremlin apartment and many friends, he may have got wind of the coming trial period
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 361

[In the Introduction Stephen Cohen states]: As readers will learn, he [Bukharin] continued to play significant political roles, especially during a short-lived thaw in Stalin's policies from 1934 to mid-1936, as editor of the government newspaper Izvestiya, author of sections of a new Soviet constitution, and advocate of pro-Western alliances against the growing threat of Nazi Germany.
Larina, Anna. This I Cannot Forget. New York: W.W. Norton, 1993, p. 16

STALIN OFTEN STAYED ALOOF AND LET SUBORDINATES MAKE KEY DECISIONS

Even in the crucial realm of 1930s foreign policy, recent evidence suggests that Stalin "took only a sporadic interest," allowed it to drift, and entrusted it to subordinates: "… on the whole, Stalin abstained from direct intervention and contented himself with merely reviewing and approving…. Even the process of review was occasionally delegated to others. The same author speaks of the "ramshackled nature of foreign policy decision-making under Stalin. As Sergo Mikoyan's valuable insight also suggests, Stalin allowed his lieutenants to work generally unmolested as long as he was kept informed.
Nove, Alec, Ed. The Stalin Phenomenon. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993, p. 120

Stalin took special care to oversee army and air force films. On one occasion the head of the state film committee, Bolshakov, had the film Zhukovsky, about the Russian air pioneer, ready for release by Air Force Day. He could not find Stalin (then in the Caucasus) to get his formal approval. When he asked Molotov & Beria, he was told to make his own decision. He released the film. Stalin, on his return, called a meeting of the Politburo with Bolshakov in attendance. Stalin asked him on what authority he had released Zhukovsky. Bolshakov, white and trembling, said he had consulted and decided.
'You consulted and decided,' said Stalin quietly but ominously. 'You consulted and decided,' he repeated. He got up, went to the door, opened it, and once again said, 'You decided.' He went out and shut the door and there was a tense silence.

After a pause, Stalin opened the door, looked back into the room and said, ‘You decided correctly.’
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 295

STALIN WAS THE MEAN BETWEEN THE TWO EXTREMES

Yet, among the Bolshevik leaders of the ’20s, he was primarily the man of the golden mean. He instinctively abhorred the extreme viewpoints which then competed for the party’s recognition. His peculiar job was to produce the formulas in which the opposed extremes seemed reconciled. To the mass of hesitating members of the party his words sounded like common sense itself. They accepted his leadership in the hope that the party would be reliably steered along the ‘middle-of-the-road’ and that ‘safety first’ would be the guiding principle.
…But he lacked the suavity, the flair for persuasion, and the genuine interest in narrowing gaps between opposed views which make the political peacemaker. His temperament was altogether adverse to compromise; and the conflict between his mind and his temperament underlay much of his behavior. He appeared before the party with formulas, some parts of which he had borrowed from right-wing Bolsheviks and some from left-wing Bolsheviks. But these were strange compromise formulas: their purpose was not to bring the extremes together but to blow them up and to destroy them.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 295-296

STALIN REPLIES TO THOSE WHO CLAIM HE IS NOT DEMOCRATIC ENOUGH

Stalin himself did not hesitate to remind those who called for democracy of their own past. “In the ranks of the Opposition there are people like Beloborodov whose “democratism” is still remembered by the workers of Rostov; Rosengoltz, whose “democratism” was visited upon our water and rail transport workers; Pyatakov, whose “democratism” made the Donbass region not only yell but scream;… and Byk, whose “democratism” still makes Khorezm scream.”
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 184

STALIN OFFERED MANY INDUCEMENTS TO GET THE OPPOSITION TO RECANT

Stalin therefore re-doubled his efforts to break the spirit of the Opposition. His agents held out every possible hope and temptation to Radek, Preobrazhensky, and their friends, promising rehabilitation, invoking common purposes, and speaking of the great, fruitful, and honorable work they could still perform for the party and for socialism. All these efforts, however, met with a formidable obstacle in the influence which Trotsky exercised from Alma Ata and which had so far prevented the opposition in exile from disintegrating. Stalin was determined to remove this obstacle from his path.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 456

STALIN WAS MORE MODERATE THAN OTHERS IN THE 20'S.

The struggle in the Kremlin now began in earnest. It was a fight not merely for power, but for life. Each of the claimants knew out to make political enemies pay in blood. These were leaders molded by the Civil War and the Red Terror and in Lenin's academies. They thought of the country as a "fortress under siege," and in such conditions ruthlessness was a supreme virtue. Trotsky, neatly summing up their common creed, spoke of "priestly –or quackerish–driveling about the sanctity of human life." So each of them knew what the price of defeat might be. Stalin alone was extremely cautious in calling for blood. He seemed more moderate than the others. His record included no bloody words.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 203

POLITBURO FOLLOWED STALIN BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENT WAS BEST AND MOST CORRECT

Well, the fact was that "nature or fate" had endowed Stalin with such an ability to formulate problems and practical solutions that the majority of the Politburo followed his suggestions rather than anyone else's.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 255

STALIN WAS A GOOD PLODDING ADMINISTRATOR WHO KEPT AT THE JOB

In addition to such maneuvers, the General Secretary's principal lieutenants unraveled before the 14th Congress in Dec. 1925 the labyrinthine intrigues in which Zinoviev and Kamenev indulged, even when they outwardly collaborated with Stalin and depended on him to preserve their preeminence in the Party. There was a dramatic tale about Kislovodsk, a watering place where at the end of 1923 Zinoviev and some of his henchmen had taken counsel on how to limit the powers of the Secretariat. They had addressed a demand to Stalin which he answered "in a coarse but friendly" fashion, saying that other members of the Politburo should be introduced into the Secretariat. But the resolution of the conflict, as confirmed by Zinoviev himself, could not but reinforce the impression of a conciliatory and hard-working Stalin versus a scheming but lazy rival. The General Secretary agreed that three oligarchs be introduced into the Organizational Bureau, over which he presided. But what happened? Zinoviev, Trotsky, and Bukharin, who were thus given a chance to influence the composition of the Party apparatus, found all those discussions about who should be secretary in Stavropol, or what should be the qualifications for Party officials at the county level, etc., can be boring and unworthy of their attention. And so they seldom bothered to attend sessions of the Orgbureau.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 255

STALIN SAYS LEADING AND IMPLIMENTING SOCIALISM IS A ROUGH BUSINESS

[At the 14th Congress of the Party in December 1925 Stalin stated] …those people who think that it is possible to build socialism in white gloves are grievously mistaken.

Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 7, p. 349

STALIN SAYS PARTY WILL NOT TOLERATE STARTING FACTIONS BECAUSE PEOPLE LOSE VOTES

[In a reply to the discussion on the Social-Democratic Deviation on November 3, 1926 Stalin stated] The Party cannot and will not tolerate any longer that every time you find yourselves in the minority you go out into the street, proclaim a crisis in the Party, and set up a commotion in it. That the Party, will not tolerate any longer.
The Party cannot and will not tolerate that you, having lost hope of securing a majority in our Party, rake together and assemble all kinds of disgruntled elements as material for a new party. That the Party cannot and will not tolerate.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 8, p. 367

…the Party must not be split under any circumstances, either before the congress or during the congress. It would be suicidal for the Party to allow out-and-out splitter's,…to wreck the Party just because only a month remains before the congress.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 10, p. 195

TROTSKY IS EXILED IN COMFORT

Trotsky was exiled to Alma Ata, capital of the Kazakh Soviet Republic in Siberia, near the border of China. He was given a house for himself, his wife Natalie, and his son, Sedov. Trotsky was treated leniently by the Soviet government, which was as yet unaware of the real scope and significance of his conspiracy. He was permitted to retain some of his personal body guards, including the former Red Army officer Dreitzer. He was allowed to receive and send personal mail, to have his own library, and confidential "archives" and to be visited from time to time by friends and admirers. But Trotsky's exile by no means put an end to his conspiratorial activities….
Pyatakov, Radek, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and other exiled oppositionists began denouncing Trotsky, proclaiming the "tragic error" of their past opposition and pleading for readmission to the Bolshevik party.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 206

Congress 15 opened on December 2, 1927. The Congress expelled from the party Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Radek, Rakovsky, Preobrazhensky, Smirnov, Serebryakov and several hundred lesser oppositionists…. All the leading oppositionists except Trotsky recanted and were readmitted on probation in June 1928 on condition of denouncing Trotskyism and accepting unconditionally party decisions. Trotsky was exiled to Alma Alta.
Here he hunted, fished, lived comfortably,… And carried on an extensive correspondence with little interference. Between April of October by his own account he sent out 800 political letters…and 550 telegrams and received 1000 political letters and 700 telegrams. On December 16, 1928, an agent of the GPU arrived from Moscow with the demand that he cease leadership of the opposition. He refused.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 205

As for his sojourn in Turkey I can only say that two of my friends visited him on the Bosphorus Island and both of them remarked on his robust physical condition. In the spring of 1930 I went to Alma Alta in Central Asia, to which Trotsky had first been exiled. During his stay there Trotsky's sympathizers in Moscow wailed loudly that is health was being ruined by the extremes of heat and cold. He refers in his autobiography to the prevalence of malaria and leprosy. I saw the house where he lived in Alma Alta, which is far more comfortable and spacious than my own apartment in Moscow; I saw the pleasant villa in the mountains where he spent the summer; and I heard everyone, from the local GPU men to the man in the street, talk warmly of Trotsky's hunting trips and how hard he worked and how cheerful and friendly he was to one and all.
Duranty, Walter. I Write as I Please. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1935, p. 229

It was by no means an unpleasing place of exile…. At Alma Ata Trotsky lived as a grand seigneur. His library and his furniture had been dispatched to him, and he sent for countless other things, including elaborate hunting and angling equipment. He was not short of money; the State publishing office had paid him the sums due to him under his contract with it. His works were withdrawn, of course, from circulation, but there had been such sales already and such countless subscriptions paid that his royalties amounted to tens of thousands of gold rubles.
Up to that time Stalin could not be charged with active malevolence. It had been a political struggle. As the years had passed, Stalin's enmity toward Trotsky had certainly sharpened…; but he had never given full vent…and he did not even when Trotsky did not lie low in Alma Ata. Trotsky appears to have kept up an active correspondence with his secret supporters, and, in spite of the watchfulness of the secret police, he tried to continue building up an illegal party of his own. Now and then well printed leaflets made their appearance in Moscow. In 1929 Stalin moved that Trotsky should be sent into exile abroad.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 139

Trotsky and his family lived in Alma-Ata for a year. He maintained ties with his supporters, legally and illlegally, carrying on a vast correspondence.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 176

While he was in Alma-Ata, Trotsky continued his political activity. Every month he sent hundreds of letters and telegrams to various addresses. His elder son's notes show that the clandestine correspondence which Trotsky carried on in Alma-Ata between April and October 1928, amounted to some 800 political letters and 550 telegrams from him, and more than 1000 political letters and 700 telegrams received by him. In addition, letters and other items came and went by courier. He was trying to reactivate the opposition.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 143

…A curious incident. It is reported that the Instantia received a request from Trotsky. He asked for permission to buy a shotgun and another hunting rifle, because he intended to go lion-hunting–to hunt the celebrated Semirechensk lions…. His request was granted. Klim is reported to have said: "Let him hunt. Maybe the Semirechensk lions will eat up our Kherson Lev…."
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 83

Here are a few bits of statistical data from my son's notes: For the period of April to October, 1928, we sent out from Alma-Ata about 800 political letters, among them quite a few large works. The telegrams sent amounted to about 550. We received about 1000 political letters, both long and short, and about 700 telegrams, in most cases from groups of people. All this refers chiefly to the correspondence within the region of exile, but letters from exile filtered out into the country as well. Of the correspondence sent us, we received, in the best months, not more than half. In addition we received about eight or nine secret mails from Moscow, that is, secret material and letters forwarded by special courier. About the same number were sent by us in similar fashion to Moscow. The secret mails kept us informed of everything that was going on there and enabled us, though only after much delay, to respond with our comments on the most important events.
Trotsky, Leon. My Life. Gloucester, Massachusetts: P. Smith, 1970, p. 556

On December 16, a special representative of the GPU, coming from Moscow, in the name of that institution handed me an ultimatum: I must stop directing the opposition; if I did not, measures would be taken "to isolate me from political life."
I think it necessary to quote the main points of this letter here:
"The work of your political sympathizers throughout the country" (almost word for word) "has lately assumed a definitely counter-revolutionary character; the conditions in which you are placed at Alma-Ata give you full opportunity to direct this work; in view of this, the collegium of the GPU has decided to demand from you a categorical promise to discontinue your activity; failing this, the collegium will be obliged to alter the conditions of your existence to the extent of completely isolating you from political life. In this connection, the question of changing your place of residence will rise."
Trotsky, Leon. My Life. Gloucester, Massachusetts: P. Smith, 1970, p. 558

Between April and October [in 1928] we received approximately 1000 political letters and documents and about 700 telegrams. In this same period we sent out 550 telegrams and not fewer than 800 political letters, including a number of substantial works, such as the Criticism of the Draft Program of the Comintern, and others. Without my son I could not have accomplished even 1/2 of the work.
Trotsky, Leon. Leon Sedoff. New York City: Young People's Socialist League, (Fourth Internationalists), 1938, p. 10

Trotsky, unyielding, was forced to go into (comfortable) exile in Central Asia, and finally, at the beginning of 1929, was expelled from the country; he was allowed to take all his personal effects and papers with him. Throughout the mid-1930s, internal opposition within the Party, even of the most aggressive type, such is that of Trotsky, was treated with relative benevolence.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 212

Save for a few hunting trips, Trotsky spent most of his time in Alma-Ata at his desk. Between April and October 1928 he sent his supporters about 550 telegrams and 800 "political letters," some of them lengthy political tracts. During the same period he received 700 telegrams and 1000 letters from various parts of the Soviet Union, but believed that at least as many more had been confiscated en route.
Andrew and Mitrokhin. The Sword and the Shield (Pt 1). New York: Basic Books, c1999, p. 39

Here [at Alma Ata] Trotsky was to stay. Stalin was eager to keep him as far from Moscow as possible and to reduce him to his own resources…. Stalin appeared to have no further designs on his enemy; and the GPU still treated Trotsky with consideration that would have been unthinkable later. It took care that his enormous library and archives, containing important state and party documents, should reach him–a lorryful of these presently arrived at Alma Ata. Trotsky protested to Kalinin, Ordjonikidze, and Menzhinsky against the conditions in which he was placed, demanding better accommodation, the right to go on hunting trips, and even to have his pet dog sent to him from Moscow. He complained that he was kept at the inn at Gogol Street only to suit the GPU's convenience and that his punishment was virtual imprisonment. "You could just as well have jailed me in Moscow–there was no need to deport me 4000 versts away." The protest was effective. Three weeks after his arrival he was given a four-room flat in the center of the town, at 75 Krasin Street– the street was so named after his deceased friend. He was allowed to go on hunting trips. He showered further sarcastic telegrams on Moscow, making demands, some serious, others trivial, and mixing little quarrels with great controversy.

He appeared almost relaxed after so many years of ceaseless toil and tension. Thus, unexpectedly and oddly, there was a quasi-idyllic flavor about the first few months of his stay at Alma Ata. Steppe and mountain, river and lake lured him as never since his childhood. He relished hunting; and in his voluminous correspondence political argument and advice are often interspersed with poetic descriptions of landscape and humorous reports on hunting ventures. He was at first refused permission to go out of Alma Ata. Then he was allowed to go hunting but no further than 25 versts away. He telegraphed to Menzhinsky that he would disregard the restriction because there were no suitable hunting grounds within that distance and he was not going to be bothered with small game–he must be allowed to go at least 70 versts away; and let Moscow inform the local GPU about this so as to avoid trouble. He went; and there was no trouble. Then he protested to the chief of the local GPU against being pursued rudely and conspicuously by sleuths and declared that because of this he would "go on strike" and cease to hunt –unless this form of police supervision was prescribed directly by Moscow, in which case he understood the position of the local GPU and waived his objections. The supervision became milder and less conspicuous.

Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 397-398

The fees paid to him [Trotsky] by Ryazanov [for articles written] supplied the family's needs and covered most of Trotsky's huge correspondence.

…No doubt the censorship and the GPU kept a watchful eye on the correspondence. Most of it was with Rakovsky, who had been deported to Astrakhan, Radek, who was at Tobolsk, Preobrazhensky, exiled to Uralsk, Smilga who was at Narym, Beloborodov, banished as for north as Ust-Kylom in the Komi Republic, Serebryakov, who was at Semi-Palatinsk in Central Asia, Muralov at Tara, Ivan Smirnov at Novo-Bayazet in Armenia, and Mrachkovsky at Voronezh.

[Footnote]: Between April and October 1928 Trotsky mailed 800 political letters, many of essay length, and 550 telegrams; and he received 1000 letters and 700 telegrams, apart from private mail.

Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 401

TROTSKY WAS DEPORTED RATHER THAN IMPRISONED

On the morning of January 22, 1929, Trotsky was formally deported from Soviet Union.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 209

…On Jan. 18, 1929 he [Stalin] proposed to the Politburo that Trotsky be expelled from Russia. The proposal was passed, against Bukharin's protests….
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; a Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 316

STALIN OPPOSED EXPELLING TROTSKY FROM THE PARTY

The 14th Congress in December 1925. Zinoviev and Kamenev favored the expulsion of Trotsky from the Party. Stalin opposed them: "Today we cut off one, tomorrow another, the day after tomorrow a third. But, by then, what will be left of the Party?"
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 203

The result [of the Party rejecting Trotsky's proposals to suppress the kulaks and nepmen] was that the Communist Party Congress in December 1925 rejected Trotsky's proposals, and he was saved from expulsion from the party only by Stalin itself.
…The party Congress of December 1927 expelled the Trotskyist critics wholesale….
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 153

June 27, 1931–no excuse or evasion of party orders is permitted, and infractions of discipline are punished by a reprimand, or, if repeated, by expulsion from the party. Of this, Stalin himself, only five years ago, speaking in behalf of Trotsky, when Kamenev and Zinoviev urged his expulsion, said: "Expulsion is a final and fatal weapon to be employed only in a hopeless case."
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 217

Of this, Stalin himself, only five years ago, speaking in behalf of Leon Trotsky, when Kamenev and Zinoviev urged his expulsion, said:
"Expulsion is a final and fatal weapon to be employed only in a hopeless case."
Duranty, Walter. "Stalinism's Mark is Party Discipline," New York Times, June 27, 1931.

Far more damaging were Stalin's revelations of all the discreditable maneuvers of Zinoviev against Trotsky. Pravda gave details of a secret meeting between Stalin and his two late associates on the Troika, in which Zinoviev had descended so low as to suggest that Trotsky be removed by an assassin in such a way that the deed could be attributed to some counter revolutionary agent. Stalin's reply was characteristic: he did not deplore the moral aspect of the situation, which probably never occurred to him, but he would not be a party to such bad political tactics. "Why make a martyr out of Trotsky, who will certainly be defeated anyway?" he is alleged to have replied, adding the significant warning: "An amputation policy is full of dangers to the Party, the amputation method is dangerous and infectious; today one is amputated, another tomorrow, a third the day after. What will be left of the Party in the end?" Stalin had not forgotten the tragic history of the French Revolutionary leaders, who turned from mutual assistance to rend one another in a fight for power, only to elevate Napoleon Bonaparte to an Imperial throne.

Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 68

The year 1925 represented a new turn in the situation. Trotsky returned from the Caucasus in the spring and filled several minor posts, including that of head of the Concessions Committee. Meanwhile a breach had developed between Stalin and his associates, Zinoviev and Kamenev. The latter desired to apply much more drastic punitive measures against Trotsky, including even his expulsion from the party. Stalin opposed this and carried the majority of the Politburo and the Central Committee with him.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 71

And when defeatists like Kamenev and Zinoviev, after the 14th Party Conference of the CPSU, declared themselves against the possibility of building socialism, Trotsky, sharing their defeatism and skepticism, rushed to form an opportunist alliance with them–the same Zinoviev and Kamenev whom Trotsky had described in his Lessons of October as right-wingers and whose removal from the Party he had been seeking only recently; the same Zinoviev and Kamenev who in turn had been trying their utmost to secure the removal of Trotsky from the Party leadership, if not from the Party itself. In fact it was none other than Stalin (the same Stalin who, according to Trotskyite legend, was afraid of the “brilliance” of Trotsky and was therefore implacably hostile to him, seeking his removal from the Party at any cost) who opposed Zinoviev and Kamenev’s attempts to expel Trotsky from the Party leadership. Here is what Stalin said in this regard:
“We know that the policy of lopping off, the method of blood letting [it was blood letting that Kamenev and Zinoviev were demanding] is dangerous and infectious. Today, you lop off one limb, tomorrow another, the day after tomorrow a third-and what is left of the Party?”
All this, however, does not prevent the Trotskyites and other bourgeois elements from repeating the above-mentioned legend regarding the alleged implacable hostility of Stalin towards the “brilliant” Trotsky.
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 193

At the Central Committee meeting [January 17-20, 1925] Zinoviev and Kamenev showed eagerness to make the final kill. Supported by others, they demanded the expulsion of Trotsky not only from the committee and the Politburo but from the party itself. This, the final sentence of excommunication, was opposed by Stalin. Reporting later to the 14th Party Congress, he explained that “we, the majority of the Central Committee… did not agree with Comrades Zinoviev and Kamenev because we realized that the policy of cutting off heads is fought with major dangers for the party…. It is a method of blood-letting–and they want blood–dangerous and contagious; today you cutoff one head, tomorrow a second, and then a third: who would remain in the party?” It was a fateful pronouncement.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 204

Permit me now to pass to the history of our internal struggle within the majority of the Central Committee. What did our disaccord start from? It started from the question: “What is to be done with Trotsky?” That was at the end of 1924. The group of Leningrad comrades at first proposed that Trotsky be expelled from the Party. Here I have in mind the period of the discussion in 1924. The Leningrad Gubernia at Party Committee passed a resolution that Trotsky be expelled from the Party. We, i.e., the majority on the Central Committee, did not agree with this, we had some struggle with the Leningrad comrades and persuaded them to delete the point about expulsion from their resolution. Shortly after this, when the plenum of

the Central Committee met and the Leningrad comrades, together with Kamenev, demanded Trotsky's immediate expulsion from the Political Bureau, we also disagreed with this proposal of the opposition, we obtained a majority on the Central Committee and restricted ourselves to removing Trotsky from the post of People's Commissar of Military and Naval Affairs. We disagreed with Zinoviev and Kamenev because we knew that the policy of amputation was fraught with great dangers for the party, that the method of amputation, the method of blood-letting–and they demanded blood–was dangerous, infectious: today you amputate one limb, tomorrow another, the day after tomorrow a third–what will we have left in the Party?
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 7, p. 389

We are against amputation. We are against the policy of amputation. That does not mean that leaders will be permitted with impunity to give themselves airs and ride roughshod over the Party. No, excuse us from that. There will be no obeisances to leaders. We stand for unity, we are against amputation. The policy of amputation is abhorrent to us.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 7, p. 401

A more serious struggle ensued in the Central Committee over the fate of Trotsky, who had already been defeated politically. Zinoviev and Kamenev demanded the expulsion of Trotsky and his closet associates from the party. On this question Stalin opposed his recent allies, and a majority of the Central Committee agreed with Stalin. Trotsky was not expelled; indeed, he remained a member of the central committee and the Politburo. Foreseeing a clash with Zinoviev and Kamenev Stalin wished to neutralize Trotsky and the Trotskyists. He later said:
"We did not agree with comrades Zinoviev and Kamenev because we knew that a policy of cutting off members was fraught with great dangers for the party, that the method of cutting off, the method of bloodletting –and they are asking for blood–is dangerous and contagious. Today one person is cut off, tomorrow another, the next day a third–but what will remain of the party?"
Most party officials were impressed by this point of view.
Zinoviev and Kamenev tried to pressure the Politburo through the leadership of the Komsomol, the majority of which consisted of their supporters. The Komsomol Central Committee passed a surprise resolution demanding the removal of Trotsky from the Politburo. The Politburo gave a speedy reply: 15 members of the Komsomol Central Committee were removed. All these episodes marked the collapse of the triumvirate.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 145

Curiously enough their [Zinoviev and Kamenev] first point of disagreement with the Party Central Committee arose on the question of Trotsky. Zinoviev and Kamenev wanted to expel Trotsky from the Party. When this was rejected they returned to the charge and demanded at least his expulsion from the political leadership of the Party. The Trotskyist legend of the implacable hostility of Stalin to the "brilliant" Trotsky notwithstanding, Zinoviev and Kamenev found no stronger opponent amongst the Party leadership than Stalin. "We knew," explained Stalin, "that the policy of lopping off might entail grave dangers for the Party. The method of lopping off, the method of blood-letting (it was blood-letting they wanted) is dangerous and infectious. Today, you lop off one limb, tomorrow another. The day after tomorrow a third–and what is left of the Party?"
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 38

Trotsky was enormously popular with us. The campaign directed against him, conducted by Zinoviev, to whom Stalin, with great astuteness, had left all initiative in the business, reserving to himself the role of moderating influence, had resulted in the piling up of a great deal of resentment against both Zinoviev and Kamenev. Both men, realizing what had happened, made a sudden volte-face, and openly joined forces with their adversary of yesterday–Trotsky, the very incarnation of the spirit of opposition, who was developing in secret a scheme for the complete reformation of the regime.
Barmine, Alexandre. Memoirs of a Soviet Diplomat. London: L. Dickson limited, 1938, p. 217

At the 14th Congress [in late 1925], when the Central Committee limited itself to removing Trotsky from the post of Commissar for War, Stalin said:
We did not agree with Zinoviev and Kamenev because we know that a policy of severance is pregnant with dangers for the party, that the severance method, the blood-letting method–and they demanded blood–is dangerous and contagious: today we sever one person, tomorrow someone else, the next a third person–what will be left of the party?
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 61

Sensing the mood of the majority [at the 14th Congress in 1925], and sweeping aside Kamenev's proposal that the Secretariat be turned simply into a technical organization, he [Stalin] emphasized that he was against 'expelling' certain members of the leadership from the Central Committee. He calculated, given the atmosphere, that it was prudent once again to declare that, if the comrades insisted, he 'was ready to leave his place without a fuss.' 'Expulsion means bloodletting,' he declared to applause, 'and that is a dangerous and infectious way to proceed. Today one person is expelled, tomorrow another, the next they someone else–who will be left in the party?' He spoke like a practiced politician, again finding support among the delegates, demonstrating his disinterest and his concern for the party's future. As he mocked and criticized the opposition, he displayed his 'magnanimity by the use of such phrases as 'Well, good luck to them!' Although he had already decided it was time to part company with Zinoviev and Kamenev, he nevertheless demonstrated that he wanted peace: 'We are for unity, we are against expulsions. The policy of expulsion is repellent to us. The party wants unity and it will achieve it, with Kamenev and Zinoviev, if that is what they want, and without them, if they do not.'
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 115

In January 1925, Zinoviev and Kamenev urged in the Central Committee that Trotsky be expelled from the Politburo. Stalin made several alternative suggestions, including merely removing Trotsky as War Commissar (from which post he had in fact just offered his resignation). This was carried. As Stalin was to say later:
'We did not agree with Zinoviev and Kamenev because we knew that a policy of decapitation is pregnant with great dangers for the party; we know that the method of axing and bloodletting–for blood is what they are demanding–is dangerous and infectious. Today you cut off one man, tomorrow another, the day after tomorrow a third… and what shall be left of the party then?'
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 123

Taking note of his [Trotsky] refusal to fall in step, the Plenum voted 102 against 2 (with 10 abstentions) to reprimand him for engaging in "factionalism." It also "completely approved"

the conduct of the Party's leadership. Kamenev and Zinoviev wanted Trotsky expelled from the party, but Stalin thought this not prudent: on his urging, the motion was rejected….
Pipes, Richard. Russia under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 485

After Trotsky had thus effaced himself, the only bond that kept the triumvirs together snapped. Up to last moment Zinoviev clamored for harsher reprisals against Trotsky, even for his arrest. Stalin countered his demands with a public statement to the effect that it was 'inconceivable' that Trotsky should be eliminated from the leadership of the party.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 297

From his [Stalin] position of vantage, he watched his divided opponents, their shy mutual overtures, their jealousies and resentments. He added to the confusion in their ranks by his own vague advances to Trotsky. Agents of the General Secretariat assiduously reminded Trotsky's followers that Zinoviev, not Stalin, had exhibited the worst virulence in the fight against them. Stalin himself in his book Problems of Leninism, which was published in January 1926, turned all his political zest against Zinoviev and Kamenev, and refrained from making a single unfriendly remark about Trotsky….
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 305

On formal grounds Stalin could not expel Trotsky from the party for his 'Clemenceau statement', even though it implied the threat of an overthrow of the Government.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 315

This is, for instance, how he countered Zinoviev's and Kamenev's demand for reprisals against Trotsky: "We have not agreed with Zinoviev and Kamenev, because we have known that a policy of lopping off [heads] is fraught with great dangers…. The method of chopping off and blood-letting–and they did demand blood–is dangerous and infectious. You chop off one head today, another one tomorrow, still another one the day after–what in the end will be left of the party?" The revolution of the 20th century, he seemed to say, may spurn its children but it need not devour them.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 347

It is amusing that at that time, in the Central Committee, Stalin slowed down the attacks against Trotsky by Zinoviev and Kamenev.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 97

Zinoviev, on the other hand, vociferously urged definitive elimination of Trotsky. During the January 1925 plenum of the Central Committee, Zinoviev and Kamenev proposed exclusion of Trotsky from the Party. Stalin opposed this, playing the role of conciliator. He persuaded the plenum not only to keep Trotsky in the Party, but to keep him in the Central Committee and the Politburo. It's true that the plenum condemned Trotsky's interventions and his political views, but the important point was that the moment had arrived to rid the Red Army of him. His replacement had been ready for a long time, in the person of his assistant, Frunze. The latter was not particularly Stalin's man, but Zinoviev and Kamenev liked him, and in the course of long Troika sessions on the subject Stalin accepted the nomination of Frunze to replace Trotsky as people's commissar for war and president of the Revolutionary War Council, with Voroshilov as assistant.

Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 98

And yet they not only did not exclude Trotsky from the party, but they did not even remove him from the Politburo! He remains a member of the ruling committee of seven, who exercise the sovereign power in a party, to whose whole essential nature, purpose, and philosophy he is declared to be opposed. This anomalous situation means, in the first place, that there is not the slightest breath of sincerity in that outrageous indictment of Trotsky. And it means, in the second place, that there is a bitter rivalry between Stalin and Zinoviev for the position of leadership. Zinoviev demanded Trotsky's exclusion from the Politburo, and he was supported in this by Kamenev. Stalin, for his own reasons, opposed this demand, and Zinoviev, in a huff, declaring that Stalin merely wanted to use Trotsky against him, tendered his own resignation.
Eastman, Max. Since Lenin Died. Westport, Connecticutt: Hyperion Press. 1973, p. 127

In the last week of May 1924 the 13th Congress assembled…. The Congress turned into an orgy of denunciation. Zinoviev fumed and fulminated: "It was now 1000 times more necessary than ever that the party should be monolithic." Months before he had urged his partners to order Trotsky's expulsion from the party and even arrest; but Stalin cool-headedly refused to comply and hastened to declare in Pravda that no action was contemplated against Trotsky, and that a party leadership without Trotsky was "unthinkable."
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 138

At the Politburo [in January 1925] Zinoviev and Kamenev proposed to ask the Central Committee to expel Trotsky from the Politburo and the Central Committee. Once again, to their irritation, Stalin refused to comply; and Zinoviev and Kamenev wondered whether he might not make peace with Trotsky at their expense.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 162

… Once the triumvirs had defeated Trotsky and removed him from the Commissariat of War, the bonds of their solidarity snapped. Molotov related afterwards that the discord began in January 1925 when Kamenev proposed that Stalin should take Trotsky's place at the Commissariat of War. According to Molotov, Kamenev and Zinoviev hoped in this way to oust Stalin from the General Secretariat. (Much earlier, as early as October 1923, Zinoviev and Kamenev had toyed with this idea and had even sounded Trotsky. He, however, saw no advantage then in joining hands with Zinoviev, whom he regarded as the most vicious of his adversaries). Stalin himself traces the beginning of this conflict to the end of the year 1924, when Zinoviev proposed Trotsky's expulsion from the party and Stalin replied that he was against "chopping off heads and blood letting." When Trotsky left the Commissariat, Zinoviev proposed that he should be assigned to a minor job in the management of the leather industry; and Stalin persuaded the Politburo to make a less humiliating appointment. In a pique, Zinoviev appealed to the Leningrad organization, charging Stalin and the other Politburo members with a leaning for Trotsky and with being "semi-Trotskyists" themselves.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 241

Zinoviev and Kamenev moved at a plenary meeting of the Central Committee that Trotsky should be expelled from the Party–only to be opposed by Stalin. To the amazement of his allies, who wanted blood, Stalin persuaded the Central Committee not to expel Trotsky, not even to remove him from the Politburo.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 217

[Stalin stated], “The method of lopping-off, the method of blood-letting (it was blood-letting they wanted) is dangerous and infectious. Today, you lop off one limb; tomorrow another; the day after tomorrow a third–and what is left of the party?”
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 242

[In a November 1925 letter to a comrade Stalin stated] I am emphatically opposed to the policy of kicking out all dissenting comrades. I am opposed to such a policy not because I am sorry for the dissenters, but because such a policy gives rise in the Party to a regime of intimidation, a regime of bullying, which kills the spirit of self-criticism and initiative. It is not good when leaders of the Party are feared but not respected. Party leaders can be real leaders only if they are not merely feared but respected in the Party, when their authority is recognized.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 7, p. 45

[In a letter to the Czechoslovak Commission on March 27, 1925 Stalin stated] Expulsion is not the decisive weapon in the struggle against the Rights. The main thing is to give the Right groups a drubbing, ideologically and morally, in the course of the struggle based on principal and to draw the mass of the Party membership into the struggle.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 7, p. 66

WHY TROTSKY WAS EXPELLED FROM THE PARTY

But there could be no mercy for Trotsky and his followers because they had broken two cardinal rules of Communist discipline.
First, although they had been within their rights in opposing the majority program until the decision was reached, they had committed the unpardonable breach of refusing to bow to that decision when the will of the majority was proclaimed and affirmed by vote.
Second, as if that disobedience were not sufficient, they had committed the flagrant sin of “appealing” against the party line to the popular masses by attempted public demonstrations and by the dissemination of secretly printed documents. This in the circumstances was sheer counter Revolution, and was punished as such.
The clash between Trotsky’s individualism and the rigid discipline of the Communist system could no longer be avoided.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 154

Trotsky, however, maintained his irreconcilable opposition to the Party and was expelled from the Soviet Union.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 135 [p. 116 on the NET]

The opposition presented their statement to the Central Committee with the demand that it be printed and circulated to all delegates to the Congress. Expecting that their demand would be rejected, as indeed it was, they had set up a secret printing press, intending to print the statement for mass circulation. The 0GPU knew in advance about their plans and seized the printing press. All who were directly involved were arrested and at once expelled from the party, but the leaders remained free for the time being. Desperate and frustrated in their efforts to publicize their views, they addressed meetings of workers. The Central Committee, meeting jointly with the Central Control Commission on Oct. 21-23, 1927, again severely reprimanded them, but they remained members and at liberty.
On Nov. 7, 1927, the 10th anniversary of the Revolution, Trotsky and Zinoviev promoted demonstrations in Moscow and Leningrad. The demonstrations were thinly attended and ineffectual, but they were a grave breach of party rules. Again the 0GPU was ready. The police and organized bands of thugs broke up the demonstrations and many were arrested.
A week later Trotsky and Zinoviev were expelled from the party. The Congress endorsed their expulsion and expelled in addition a further 75 oppositionists of the Trotsky-Zinoviev group, as well as 15 Democratic Centralists. The Congress demonstrated with enthusiasm in support of the party leaders.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 219

A few months later, however, on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Russian Revolution, there was an opposition attempt to stage counter-demonstrations to the official demonstrations in Moscow and Leningrad–short-lived attempts which were broken up by the workers.
The illegal printing press was discovered, as was also the fact that the opposition had entered into association with elements hostile to the Party, in order to get this press going. The limit of the Party's patience had been reached. In spite of warning from the Party, in breach of their most solemn promises, the opposition was seeking to form a new party. They had to be excluded from the Party and their organization broken up.
But before this step was taken there was a Party referendum on the question of the opposition policy– 724,000 members voted for the line of the Party, 4000 members voted for the Trotskyists and 2600 abstained from voting. If the trotskyists had only wanted a democratic expression they had got it with its hobnailed boots on.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 40

In the Party discussion of 1927, only 4000 people could be found to vote for Trotsky, as compared with the 724,000 who voted for the line of the Party. The young administrators drawn from the working class were equally hostile, as Trotsky regretfully admits (The Revolution Betrayed, the page 276).
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 233

[in 1927] the opposition prepared a platform for the next Party Congress. This was forbidden. They then printed it illegally, and this was represented as a plot–and indeed, it was a genuine underground operation.
The hearings against Trotsky & Zinoviev were resumed, without even a pretense of judicial decency. Trotsky's defense was met with curses, howls and the hurling of inkpots, books and glasses. Stalin alone spoke in a controlled manner, though in a tone of 'coarse and cold hatred'.

On Nov. 7, 1927 the 10th anniversary of the Revolution, the opposition made a last effort, joining the official demonstration groups but with their own slogans. They were attacked by police, ‘activists’ and others who had been mobilized especially for this operation. Then Trotsky and Zinoviev were expelled from the party, and Kamenev and the others from the Central Committee.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 139

0n Nov. 7, 1927, during the official celebration of the 10th anniversary of the October revolution, Trotsky and Zinoviev led their followers in separate processions through the streets of Moscow and Leningrad. Though the processions were of a peaceful character and the banners and slogans carried by the demonstrators were directed against the ruling group only by implication, the incident brought the struggle to a head. Trotsky and Zinoviev were immediately expelled from the party. On December 15th Congress declared ‘adherence to the opposition and propaganda of its views to be incompatible with membership of the party’…. The Congress demanded from the leaders of the opposition that they renounce and denounce their own views–this was to be the price for their continued membership of the party…. On Dec. 18 the Congress expelled 75 leading members of the opposition, in addition to many others already expelled or imprisoned.
A day later the opposition split. Its Trotskyist section refused to yield to the demands of the Congress. Trotsky was deported to Alma-Ata, Rakovsky to Astrakhan. Zinoviev, Kamenev, and their followers, however, issued a statement in which they renounced their views.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 311

In 1927, the Trotsky-Zinoviev bloc made one last effort. Defeated and isolated in the ruling councils of the Party, they thought to appeal to the “Party masses” and workers. (This was a measure of their lack of contact with reality: the masses were now wholly alienated.) In the autumn came the setting up of an illegal Trotskyite printing press, and illegal demonstrations in Moscow and Leningrad. Mrachkovsky, Preobrazhensky, and Serebryakov accepted responsibility for the print shop. They were all immediately expelled from the party, and Mrachkovsky was arrested…. Opposition demonstrations on Nov. 7 were a fiasco. The only result was that on November 14 Trotsky & Zinoviev were expelled from the Party, and Kamenev, Rakovsky, Smilga, and Evdokimov from the Central Committee. Their followers everywhere were also ejected. Zinoviev and his followers recanted; Trotsky’s, for the moment stood firm. The effective number of Trotskyites and Zinovievites is easy to deduce: 2500 oppositionists recanted after the 1927 Congress, and 1500 were expelled. The leading Trotskyites were sent into exile. In January 1928, Trotsky was deported to Alma-Ata. Rakovsky, Pyatakov, Preobrazhensky, and others of the Left followed him to other places in the Siberian and Asian periphery.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 11

For the moment it looked as if the Opposition would be able to participate in the 15th congress and there make another appeal to the party. The leaders prepared a full and systematic statement of policy, a Platform, such as they had never before been able to present.
…the Platform would then have to be produced and circulated clandestinely or semi-clandestinely. The Opposition resolved to take the risk. To protect itself against reprisals–to “spread the blow” once again–and also to impress the Congress, Trotsky & Zinoviev called on their adherents to sign the Platform en masse. The collection of

signatures was to reveal the size of the Opposition's following; and so the campaign was from the outset a trial of strength in a form the Opposition had not hitherto geared to undertake.
Stalin could not allow this to go on undisturbed. All the night of 12-13 September 1927 the GPU raided the Opposition's "printing shop," arrested several man engaged in producing the Platform, and announced with a flourish that it had discovered a conspiracy. The GPU maintained that they had caught the Oppositionists red-handed, working hand in glove with notorious counter-revolutionaries; and that a former officer of Wrangel's White Guards had set up the Opposition's printing shop. On the day of the raid Trotsky had left for the Caucasus; but several leaders of the Opposition, Preobrazhensky, Mrachkovsky, and Serebryakov, attempted to come forward with a refutation and declared that they assumed full responsibility for the "printing shop" and the publication of the Platform. All three were immediately expelled from the party and one of them, Mrachkovsky, was imprisoned. ___6
This was the first time that such punishment was inflicted on prominent men of the Opposition.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 356-357

The 15th congress of 1927 was in session for three weeks; and it was wholly preoccupied with the schism. The Opposition had not a single delegate with voting rights. Trotsky did not attend; he had not even asked to be admitted in order to make a personal appeal against his expulsion. Unanimously the congress declared that expression of the Opposition's views was incompatible with membership in the party.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 385

Within a few days the printing shop was raided by the GPU, and its alleged founder, Mrachkovsky a noted partisan leader of the Civil War, was expelled from the Party and arrested [in 1927].
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 283

In October 1927, that is, two months before the 15th Congress, the Central Committee of the Party announced a general Party discussion, and the fight began. Its result was truly lamentable for the bloc of Trotskyites and Zinovievites: 724,000 Party members voted for the policy of the Central Committee; 4000, or less than 1%, for the bloc of Trotskyites and Zinovievites. The anti-Party bloc was completely routed. The overwhelming majority of the Party members were unanimous in rejecting the platform of the bloc.
Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Ed. History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks): Short Course. Moscow: FLPH, 1939, p. 285

[In 1927] The united opposition did not waver. It advanced with a new load of ammunition…. From this it advanced to a new method of warfare. Its speakers would appear at various party meetings and without authority address the audiences. This was met by furious counter-blows. Reprisals, arrests followed. Bands of whistlers were organized to disrupt such gatherings. Strings of automobiles would suddenly appear and blow their sirens.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 258

[In an article entitled “They Have Sunk to the Depths” Stalin stated] The open demonstration of the Trotskyists in the streets on November 7, 1927, was a turning-point, when the Trotskyist organization showed that it was breaking not only with the Party, but also with the Soviet regime.
This demonstration was preceded by a whole series of anti-Party and anti-Soviet acts: the forcible seizure of a government building for a meeting (the Moscow Higher Technical School), the organization of underground printing plants, etc.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 11, p. 327

The Trotskyites, by themselves, were never a big force in our Party. Call to mind the last discussion on Trotskyism in our Party in 1927. This was a genuine party referendum. Out of 854,000 Party members, 730,000 members voted at that time. Among them 724,000 Party members voted for the Bolsheviks, for the Central Committee of the Party, against the Trotskyites, and 4000 Party members, or about one half of 1%, voted for the Trotskyites, while 2600 members of the Party refrained from voting.
Add to this the fact that many out of this number became disillusioned with Trotskyism and left it, and you get a conception of the insignificance of the Trotskyite forces.
Stalin, Joseph. Mastering Bolshevism. San Francisco: Proletarian Publishers, 1972, p. 46

TROTSKY WAS DEPOSED BY THE POLITBURO, NOT STALIN

It had been Zinoviev who originally proposed Stalin as general secretary…. In his memoirs Trotsky describes the circumstances of his deposition as if they were entirely Stalin’s work. That is not true to history. Trotsky was relieved of the supreme command over the Army by a majority decision of the Politbureau…. Bucharin was in the foreground of the public attacks on Trotsky.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 131

Trotsky was now dismissed from the commander-in-chief of the army. He remained a member of the Politburo, and he was also given two departments of State. He became chairman of the Central Concessions Committee. At the time this committee was one of great importance in the eyes of foreigners. It carried on negotiations for the granting of economic concessions to foreign enterprises. Lenin had introduced his policy….
The other post which Trotsky received was that of head of the electro-technical department in the Supreme Council for Economic Affairs…. Neither of his two offices gave him any opportunity of intervening in home policy or influencing it. He ignored both appointments….
As a member of the Politburo he kept his big personal secretariat. But at the sessions of the Politburo, which he regularly attended, he took up a strange attitude. He came in, sat down, and ostentatiously took no part in the discussions. He usually had a book, preferably a French novel, and read it throughout the session. Scarcely ever did he speak a word. Meanwhile he proceeded, rather carelessly, with the building up in some shape of his own organization. It all suggested a great master gathering his assistants round him to listen to him in ecstatic awe. What seemed more serious was his continual association with a number of leading Bolsheviks who were not in the Politburo but were nevertheless holders of influential posts
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 133-34

Stalin took no part in the effort to get rid of Trotsky. The articles and speeches attacking the latter came mainly from Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Bukharin. Trotsky had made preparations for the publication of his collected works–obviously as a fighting move. They were to be issued by the State publishing office…. The collection was not confined to Trotsky's past articles: each volume, containing a year's articles, was to have a newly-written introduction. An explosion was produced by the publication of the volume for 1917, the year of the Russian Revolution. In the introduction to that volume Trotsky gave a version of events that differed fundamentally from that of the party leadership. He not only tried to destroy the Lenin legend; he belittled the part played in the Revolution by the Bolshevik party. Needless to say, his own part received special attention. A public campaign against Trotsky began. Bukharin led the agitation in the press. The book was to be had in the shops, and every subscriber had received a copy. The question of his membership in the party was raised. In addition to controverting his argument, his opponents charged him with trying to form a 'faction' within the party, an organized group to oppose the majority of the party. He was denounced as a schismatic. In accordance with party practice at the time, the controversy was fought out in full publicity….
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 135

And there were several things which barred Trotsky from succeeding Lenin as Party Leader. There was the taint of heresy about him in the eyes of the older Bolsheviks, who could not forget that he had only joined the party in 1917; there were the many enemies whom he had made through his vitriolic pen and through his ruthless administrative measures as Soviet War Lord; there was a widespread feeling that, while Trotsky was an invaluable leader in the active, destructive period of revolution, he was too mercurial and unstable to be a reliable guide in the slower and more prosaic work of economic reconstruction.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 95

Trotsky was kept without a post until May, 1925 when he was tested to see whether he would be content with a much smaller part in the government. The army had been taken from him, how would he like to administer the department of Foreign Concessions? It was found that he had become much humbler. He accepted the chairmanship of the Concessions Board with readiness, and actually he obtained work which suited his abilities more than the control of the fighting forces.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 98

So in the final struggle he [Trotsky] was deprived of power by the vote of the party.
To me, however, there appears to be a deeper historical reason for this. By the year 1927 the Revolution had come to that stage wherein the new state founded by it had to be ruled by a conservative and very careful progressive leader. But Trotsky was a typical revolutionary and his fiery spirit was not what was wanted in the management of the consolidated Bolshevik state. He was declared a dangerous man and was exiled with his friends to Siberia.
Ludwig, Emil. Leaders of Europe. London: I. Nicholson and Watson Ltd., 1934, p. 367

However, more objective sources suggest that Stalin triumphed largely because what almost the entire Party leadership feared above all was the possibility of Trotsky coming to power. Stalin was the only real alternative to Trotsky and his plans for world revolution.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 269

EARLY ON THE PARTY TRIED NOT TO EXPEL TROTSKY

MOLOTOV: In 1924 discussion against Trotsky was proceeding full tilt. Suddenly a statement bearing all our signatures–Stalin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov, Bukharin, and mine too was published to the effect that we could not conceive of the Politburo without Trotsky! Everyone had signed. It was as if, despite our quarrels with him, he was such a figure that we could not imagine the Politburo without him. It was politics, the times, whatever you will. We were engaged in a very serious ideological struggle yet, at one and the same time, we valued Trotsky so highly!
The time was not yet ripe for an open break. It couldn't be done. Once the ideological fight was in the open, it was possible to consider how to get rid of Trotsky.
We sent him into exile. And even then we had a lot of trouble with him. While living abroad he actually called for terror…. As long as imperialism's alive, there will be many such swine.
IVANOVICH, SHOTA: "We shouldn't have any!"
What do you mean, we shouldn't have any? It's absolutely unavoidable, inescapable.
IVANOVICH, SHOTA: "Well then, we're fighting badly against them."
That's true…. We should be considered guilty insofar as we fought badly. You see, we didn't put an end to all these swine.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 136

SHORT SUMMARY OF EVENTS BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER TROTSKY'S EXPULSION

Their were sharp hostilities at the party meetings of April and July, 1926. The Rights, such as the shadow Premier, Rykov, were all for Stalin. The Opposition was branded as "a gang of European adventurers." In the heat of the debate, Dzerzhinsky, the head of the OGPU, delivered a most passionate speech on the threat to the Party, and died directly afterwards. Zinoviev was suspended from functioning as President of the Third International. In October 1926, Trotsky, at meetings of workers, openly poured his invective on the Government and was forbidden to speak in public. Zinoviev tried to recover his hold over Leningrad, but failed. The Opposition now half recanted to save the unity of the Party, but Trotsky was struck out of the Politburo and Zinoviev out of the Third International. In July, 1927, Trotsky returned to the attack with a violent denunciation of Stalin on the Central Committee of the Party. He was now actively engaged in intensive underground work of the kind which he had conducted against the Tsar. He organized groups of "fives," with a secret code and local branches. He and Zinoviev were now expelled from the Central Committee. He was allowed to put his case at a plenary meeting, but was boo'ed. In November, at the celebrations of the 10th anniversary of the Communist Revolution, he got up demonstrations in the streets. He was now formally expelled from the Party, and sent into exile on the Asiatic frontier at Alma Ata, probably in the hope that he would take this, the easiest, way out of Russia, and thus finally discredit himself as having joined the emigration. This he had no intention of doing. Kamenev and Zinoviev recanted humbly again and were exiled to various places. The Opposition carried the war outside Russia, publishing its case in the German Flag of Communism, and appealed to the Third International (the Comintern) for readmission. The Communist leaders still hesitated to go to all lengths, and finally, as Trotsky did not go and

was still active, he was taken to the western frontier and pushed over it, still demanding that it should be recorded that he went against his will.
He continued the fight with energy and acrimony from abroad, whether in Turkey, Sweden, or Mexico. He knew all the ruses of conspiracy. It was only like a resumption of the old fight against the Czar from outside. There is no need to doubt that widespread roots of his organization remained in Russia. After all, he had had an outstanding prestige among the elder Bolsheviks.
Pares, Bernard. Russia. Washington, New York: Infantry Journal, Penguin books, 1944, p. 142

That was in January, 1928. Trotsky kept up a large correspondence with his friends and adherents all the year. He still remained the head of the opposition faction in Russia, gave it advice and encouraged its development. Stalin's answer to that was to withhold all further mail addressed to him. In December an agent of the GPU visited him bearing an ultimatum: either he must stop directing the opposition or measures would be taken to isolate him from political life.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 104

WHEN EXILED TO TURKEY THE GPU TREATED TROTSKY LIKE ROYALTY

The sequel to the disembarkation was almost farcical. From the pier Trotsky and his family were taken straight to the Soviet Consulate in Constantinople. Although he had been branded as a political offender and counter-revolutionary, he was received with the honors due to the leader of October and the creator of the Red Army. A wing of the Consulate was reserved for him. The officials, some of whom had served under him in the civil war, seemed eager to make him feel at home. The GPU men behaved as if they meant to honor the pledge that they would protect his life. They met all his wishes. They went on errands for him. They accompanied Natalya [Trotsky's wife] and Lyova on trips to the city, while he stayed at the Consulate. They took care to unload and transport his bulky archives brought from Alma-Ata, without even trying to check their contents….
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 5

BUKHARIN DENOUNCES HIS PAST ACTS AND ALL FACTIONS

Bukharin stated at the Central Committee plenum of Jan. 7-12, 1933, "Both our internal and external situation is such that this iron discipline must not under any circumstances be relaxed…. That is why such factions must be hacked off without the slightest mercy, without being in the slightest troubled by any sentimental considerations concerning the past, concerning personal friendships, relationships, concerning respect for person as such, and so forth. These are all totally abstract formulations, which cannot serve the interests of an army that is storming the fortress of the enemy."
…He continues, "I do not want to hide in the bushes and I shall not. If one were to analyze the source of all those divergent views that have led to serious incidents within the party, and if one were to speak of the degree of guilt, then my guilt before the party, before its leaders, its Central Committee, before the working-class, and before the country–this guilt of mine is heavier than that of any of my former like-minded comrades, for I was to a large extent the

ideological purveyor of a host of formulations which gradually gave birth to a definite rightist-opportunistic conception. This responsibility, comrades, I shall not shirk. I shall not shift my responsibility onto someone else,…"
He concludes, "This is how the matter stands: we must march onward, shoulder to shoulder, in battle formation, sweeping aside all vacillations with the utmost Bolshevik ruthlessness, hacking off all factions, which can only serve to reflect vacillations within the country–because our party is one and indivisible….
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 96

STALIN PROCLAIMS VICTORY AT THE 1934 CONGRESS

At this Congress, however, there is nothing to prove and, it seems, no one to fight. Everyone sees that the line of the party has triumphed–Stalin, 1934.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 103

…Indeed, former oppositionists Bukharin, Rykov, Tomsky, and others were allowed to speak to the Congress of 1934 in order to demonstrate a new party unity that Stalin proclaimed.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 128

Stalin said in his speech to the 17th Party Congress on Jan. 28, 1934, "At this Congress, however, there is nothing to prove and, it seems, no one to fight. Everyone sees that the line of the party has triumphed.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 130

In consequence the 17th Congress of the Communist Party, held in January 1934 with 2000 delegates representing almost 3 million members and candidates, was an all-round triumph for Stalin. With the exception of Trotsky, impotent in exile, all the old Oppositionists had now returned to the Party fold, and to make the occasion complete, the later Opposition Troika–Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky– ate humble pie once more in the most abject terms. The Congress was informed that the gap between the First and Second Plans had been bridged, and that it was now proposed to make a capital investment of 133 billion rubles–as compared with 60 billion for the First Plan–in the Second Five-Year program. Small wonder that the Moscow press called this the "Congress of Victors" and proudly proclaimed that the Soviet ship of state had come at last to fair water after many perils and storms.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 208

The Congress that took place in February 1934 became known… as the "Congress of Victors"….
He [Stalin] laid special emphasis on the fact that, in the three years or so since the previous congress, industrial output had doubled. New branches of industry had been created: machine-tool construction, automobiles, tractors, chemicals. Engines, aircraft, combines, synthetic rubber, nitrate, artificial fibers were now being manufactured in the USSR. He announced proudly that thousands of new enterprises had been commissioned, including such to gigantic projects as the Dnieper Hydroelectric project, the Magnitogorsk and Kuznets sites, the Urals truck-building plant, the Chelyabinsk tractor plant, the Kramatorsk auto plant and so on. No previous report of his had ever contained so many facts and figures, tables and plans. He had something to tell the Congress.

Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 193

The 17th Party Congress is known in history as the “Congress of Victors.”
Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Ed. History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks): Short Course. Moscow: FLPH, 1939, p. 320

STALIN WAS NOT SIGNIFICANTLY OPPOSED AT THE 17TH PARTY CONGRESS

CHUEV: I have a question about the 17th Party Congress. Is it true that Stalin received fewer votes than Kirov at the elections to the Central Committee?
MOLOTOV: No. How can they say such things?…
…I am sure that at every election to the Central Committee, one our two votes went against Stalin. Enemies were always present…. Kirov was unsuitable as a speaker of the highest rank. He was one of several secretaries, a tremendous speaker at mass meetings, but that’s it. Kirov reported everything to Stalin, in detail. I believe that Kirov acted correctly.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 218

Similarly, the belief that 282 delegates (or sometimes 123 or 125 or 2-4 or 5-6 or 3, depending on the rumor) voted against Stalin at the 17th Party Congress in 1934 has been questioned by recent research. A special investigation by Central Committee staff in 1989 concluded that 166 ballots were indeed missing, but because the numbers of ballots printed and delegates voting are unknown, “it is impossible definitely to confirm” how many, if any, voted against Stalin. A 1960 investigation concluded that 166 delegates simply “did not take part in the voting.”
[Footnote]: The whole story about votes against Stalin comes from a single testimony, that of Verkhovykh in 1960. Other 1934 congress participants have contradicted his claim. Anastas Mikoyan’s “confirmation” of the rigged voting is hardly that; he reports rumors he heard in the 1950s, although he was present at the 1934 Congress.
…Continued release of documents from the 1930s may also weaken the tradition of writing history by anecdote.
Nove, Alec, Ed. The Stalin Phenomenon. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1993, p. 141

[Footnote]: The evidence on the number of ballots cast against Stalin in the election of the Central Committee is unsatisfactory. Both Medvedev and Antonov-Ovseenko make reference to the testimony of a supposed member of the election commission of the 17th Party Congress, Verkhovykh. At least it can be confirmed from the published record of the Congress that he was a delegate and hence eligible to serve on this commission. Depending on which account you prefer, he said that there were either 270 or 292 votes against Stalin. But Antonov-Ovseenko elaborates on this report in such a way as to undermine the credibility of whatever source leaked information to the dissident historians.
First, he maintains that Verkhovykh, in oral testimony, recalled that the correct number was not 292, but 289.
Second, and more important, he claims that Verkhovykh refused to give an official inquiry any written statement.
Finally, and most unsettling, Antonov-Ovseenko describes the alleged refusal of another supposed member of the electoral commission in 1934 to acknowledge that there were more

than ‘two or three’ votes against Stalin. Apart from these numbers, the trouble with this story is that the person in question, one Napoleon Andriasian, could not have served on the mandate commission of the Congress of 1934 because, according to the record of that event, he was not a delegate.
Another version of Stalin’s alleged troubles with this election maintains that he was elected only because the Central Committee was expanded at the last minute. This must be incorrect, because the size of the Committee was in fact unchanged with respect to full (not candidate) numbers.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 359

EVERYBODY SUPPORTED STALIN AT THE 17TH CONGRESS

The victory of the General Line at the 17th Congress was demonstrated by the return of defeated oppositionists to party life, provided they publicly accepted the Stalin line. Many of them, including Zinoviev, Kamenev, Preobrazhensky, Pyatakov, and Bukharin, addressed the congress itself. Although several of them were greeted with catcalls and interruptions from the floor, the fact that they spoke at the congress at all indicated a relatively “soft” attitude on the part of the regime toward the oppositionists, at least in early 1934.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 17

I can at least answer for myself. I spent two years in the Pioneers, six years in the Komsomol, 16 years in the Party. For 15 years I belonged to the Corps of Officers of the armed forces, for ten of them I was a leading Party member and a senior reader of a Moscow Academy of the highest rank…. The sense of insecurity of the Party man is far greater than that of the non-Party man.

I attended the [1934 17th Party] Congress as a visitor. I recall how Postyshev, the Chairman, called on Bukharin to speak, and how Stalin stared at Bukharin with parted lips as if wondering what he would say….

All the outstanding oppositionists were prevailed upon to attend. Bukharin, Rykov, Tomsky, Preobrazhensky, Lominadze, Kamenev–all were there.
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 231

And in fact all his former opponents spoke [at the 17th Party Congress in February 1934], admitting they had been wrong, praising him enthusiastically, and promising total support for the party line: Zinoviev and Kamenev; Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky; Pyatakov, Radek, Lominadze… Kamenev, in the typical tone of the defeated factions, spoke of the Ryutinites as ‘kulak scum’ who had needed ‘more tangible’ rebuttal than mere ideological argument.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 177

Some of the erstwhile oppositionists were elected to the leading organs [at the 17th Party Congress]: Pyatakov, full member; Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky, alternates in the Central Committee. The Congress laughed with, as much as at, Radek, currently an authoritative journalistic spokesman on foreign affairs, when he recounted that he had been cured of Trotskyism.

Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 374

BUKHARIN MAKES A COMPLETE CAPITULATION AT THE 17TH PARTY CONGRESS

In January 1934 the 17th Party Congress was held in Moscow. There Bukharin finally capitulated completely to Stalin. His lengthy speech included the following statements:

"It is clear that the "Rights," of whom I was one, had a different political line, a line opposed to the all-out socialist offensive, opposed to the attack by storm on the capitalist elements that our party was beginning. It is clear that this line proposed a different pace of development, that it was in fact opposed to accelerated industrialization, that it was opposed to…the liquidation of the kulaks as a class, that it was opposed to the reorganization of small peasant agriculture…that it was opposed to the entire new stage of a broad socialist offensive, completely failing to understand the historical necessity of that offensive and drawing political conclusions that could not have been interpreted in any way other than as anti-Leninist…. It is clear, further, that the victory of this deviation inevitably would have unleashed a third force and that it would have weakened the position of the working-class…. It would have led to intervention before we were ready…and, consequently, to the restoration of capitalism as the combined result of the aggravated domestic and international situation, with the forces of the proletariat weakened and the unleashing of anti-proletarian, counter-revolutionary forces…. It is clear, further, that Comrade Stalin was completely right when he brilliantly applied Marxist-Leninist dialectics to thoroughly smash a whole series of theoretical postulates advanced by the right deviation and formulated mostly by myself."

This capitulation did not go unnoticed. Although Bukharin was chosen at the Congress only as a candidate member of the Central Committee, this demotion was accompanied by a return to active political and journalistic activity. In February 1934 Bukharin was appointed editor-in-chief of Izvestia, the second most important Soviet newspaper.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 320

AT THE 17TH PARTY CONGRESS OPPOSITION LEADERS ADMIT THEIR ERRORS

Still worse blows to the opposition were dealt by Zinoviev, a man who had been twice or thrice already in exile and who had recently dubbed Stalin "a traitor to the cause of Lenin." Here was Zinoviev whose slavish conduct later enabled the Stalinists to catch hundreds, if not thousands, of brave oppositionists, the Zinoviev of whom since then no normal anti-Stalinist can think without scorn and loathing. Why, it was only two months earlier that, shaking his clenched fists before his face, he had preached to others on the vital need to struggle with courage against Stalin, Molotov, and Kirov, and here he was, a pitiable sight, all fear and trembling, doing his very utmost to please the master. "Comrades," he said, "if I have decided to mount the tribune of the 17th Congress of the Party–this world tribune in the truest sense, the tribune of the world proletariat–and it the Comrades had allowed me to do so, I trust it is because I have ended completely, utterly, with the anti-Party period of my life, the period of my alienation from the Party in which I spent many years. I have, as I trust and believe, understood to the full and to the utmost the tremendous errors I have made. I

actually had the arrogance to try to foist my own particular view of Leninism on the Party, my own particular understanding of what I call the philosophy of the period…. However, I now see that this was a chain of errors, and that had the Party not shown due resistance to these errors, we would have brought the country to the very edge of catastrophe and destruction…" This renegade then proceeded to glorify his enemy Stalin…. Comrades, what countless attacks on Comrade Stalin were made by myself and by other former oppositionists! Comrades, I have understood that this was all the most profound of errors.
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 232

Still worse was the capitulation of Kamenev, one of Lenin's closest associates, a member of the Politburo and second only to Zinoviev as the leader of the opposition. "While Comrade Stalin," declared Kamenev "the most deserving of Lenin's pupils, took over his work, and with set teeth, rejecting all hesitation, bore aloft the banner wrenched by death from Lenin's hands, the group to which I belonged immediately gave in, was shaken in its fate, and thereafter stubbornly and insistently tried to force its own erroneous views on the Party. We then started on a course which was bound to bring us to counter-revolution…. But the Orthodox intolerance and the perspicacious sense of ideals of Comrade Stalin saved both Party and country. From this tribune I wish to declare that I consider the Kamenev who from 1925 to 1933 struggled against the Party and the Party leadership to be a political corpse, and that I wish to go forward without dragging its old hide behind me.
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 233

Yet another opposition leader, Preobrazhensky, the principal theoretician of the Trotskyists, who in 1927 had organized an anti-Stalin demonstration in Moscow and shouted such slogans as "long-live Trotsky, down was Stalin!," made literally the following Declaration from the tribune: "Now that I have sufficiently recognized all my errors, I tell myself: Vote with Comrade Stalin and you will not be wrong!"
And Rykov, who had succeeded Lenin as Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, and who in 1928, together with Bukharin and Tomsky, had headed the Right-wing Deviation, the one of all the inner -Party deviations which was the most dangerous to Stalin, Rykov mounted the tribune and said: "The rout of the Right-wing Deviation, which was headed by myself and Bukharin, was absolutely essential for the Leninist-Stalinist rallying of the Party…. The rout of the Right-wing Deviation, achieved by Comrade Stalin, constitutes a part of the great deed that brought us to those triumphs of which their organizer, the leader of our Party, Comrade Stalin, has given us a survey…. After the death of Lenin, Comrade Stalin, immediately and without any delay, stood out as the leader, as an organizer of enormous power…"
Even Bukharin, the most consistent and stubborn of the oppositionists, actually went so far as to call a toast in honor of the "Glorious Field-Marshal of the forces of the proletariat, the finest among the finest, Comrade Stalin."
There was only one of the principal leaders of the Right-wing Deviation– Smirnov, an old Bolshevik–who had stood up to the preliminary processing. He alone continued to charge Stalin, Kirov, and Molotov with the creation of a "barrack regime, worse than the regime of Nicholas the First." He alone remained true to the end and not only did not capitulate at the Congress of the Reactionaries, but even refused to be present,…

The considerable “Army” of rank and file Party members who disagreed with Stalin suddenly found itself abandoned by its officers; worse than this, the officers had crossed over to the other side. Declarations of loyalty to Stalin became the order of the day.
…By the summer of 1934,… my friends brought messages from our comrades in Leningrad, the center of the strongest underground movement, urging us to continue the struggle. Our Moscow comrades, however, were pessimistic and inclined to panic; they wished all branches to dissolve it once and wait for “better times.”
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 234-235

By now the old men of the opposition had long been not only defeated but spiritually broken. Even the indomitable Rakovsky, former Ukrainian Premier and Ambassador in London and Paris, who had held out in exile and prison longer than the others, surrendered and returned to Moscow in 1934. Like all the other penitents he, too, signed a statement containing as much flattery of Stalin as self-accusation. The gist of all such statements was that Stalin’s conduct of policy was the only correct one, and that any of the courses advocated by the oppositions would inevitably have brought disaster. The ‘capitulators’ did not admit yet that they had striven towards a restoration of capitalism. Nor were admissions to that effect demanded from them. The gravamen of their self-accusations was that their policies, if adopted, would have, against their best intentions, exposed the country to the danger of capitalist restoration.
…Their recantations were therefore neither wholly sincere nor wholly insincere. On returning from the places of their exile they cultivated their old political friendships and contacts, but carefully refrained from any political action against Stalin. Almost till the middle of the 30s nearly all of them kept in touch with the members of his new Politburo. Some of the penitents, Bukharin, Rykov, Pyatakov, Radek, and others, were either Stalin’s personal advisers or members of the Government.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 351

[At the 17th Party Congress in January 1934] former oppositionists were allowed to speak: Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin, Rykov, Tomsky, Preobrazhensky, Pyatakov, Radek, and Lominadze.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 31

According to an extract from Mikoyan’s diary published in 1987, Kirov met “only with hostility and vengefulness toward the whole Congress and of course toward Kirov himself.”
…Among figures from the past allowed to speak and express their complete conversion to Stalinist orthodoxy were Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin, Rykov, Tomsky, Preobrazhensky, Pyatakov, Radek, and Lominadze. Some were even allowed to become members (Pyatakov) or alternates (Bukharin, Rykov, Tomsky) of the Central Committee. Kamenev’s recantation set the tone for all:
“I want to say from this tribune that I consider the Kamenev who fought the party between 1925 and 1933 to be dead and I don’t want to go on dragging that old corpse after me….”
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 301

BALLOT WERE NOT DELIBERATELY LOST IN THE 1934 CONGRESS VOTING

Although one of the 1960 special commissions charged with investigating the Kirov assassination looked into the archives, it concluded that 166 delegates simply “did not take part in the voting.” In 1989, there was another investigation into the 1934 voting that found that other surviving members of the ballot counting commission had contradicted Verkhovykh’s [a ballot counting official who said in 1960 that 125 or 123 delegates voted against Stalin. He said that the embarrassing ballots were destroyed, and that the other members of the ballot commission knew of the destruction and falsification of the results] story even back in 1960. They would have known of such a ballot discrepancy, and it was presumably safe for them to reveal the story in the first heyday of anti-Stalinism, but none of the other participants would confirm it. The 1989 investigation concluded that 166 ballots were indeed missing, but because the number of original paper ballots is unknown, “it is impossible definitely to confirm” how many may have voted against Stalin. The evidence is still inconclusive;…
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 46

STALIN COMPLIMENTED BY OTHERS AT THE 1934 CONGRESS

What did these former members of the Politburo and pupils of Lenin say at the congress [of 1934]?
Bukharin, the party’s ex-favorite and theorist:
“By his brilliant application of Marx-Lenin dialectics, Stalin was entirely correct when he smashed a whole series of theoretical premises of the right deviation which had been formulated above all by myself…. It is the duty of every party member to rally around Comrade Stalin as the personal embodiment of the mind and will of the party, as its leader, it’s theoretical and practical leader.”
Zinoviev, having been defeated again and again, was now once more a party member:
“We now know that in the struggle which Comrade Stalin conducted on an exclusively high level of principle, on an exclusively high theoretical level, we know that in that struggle there was not the least hint of anything personal.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 197

OLD OPPOSITIONISTS PUT ON THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE AT THE 17TH PARTY CONGRESS

[At the 17th Party Congress in January 1934] a Central Committee was elected, consisting almost solely of Stalinist veterans of the intra-Party struggle, but including Pyatakov among its full members and Sokolnikov, Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky among its candidates.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 33

STALIN CRITICIZES HIMSELF AND HIS ALLIES FOR PUTTING TOO MUCH TRUST IN RECANTATIONS

After he then told about testimony recently received from Pyatakov, Radek and Sosnovsky, Stalin declared: “Believe after this in people’s sincerity!…. We came to the conclusion: you cannot take a single former oppositionist at his word…. And the events of the last two years

have shown this clearly, because it has been shown in deed that sincerity is a relative concept. And when it comes to trusting former oppositionists, then we have shown them so much trust…. We should be punished for the maximum trust for the unbounded trust, that we offered them."
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 102

MEDVEDEV SAYS BAZHANOV LIED ABOUT STALIN CHEATING IN THE CONGRESS VOTING

Bazhanov's new book is rich in invented material of this kind. To give one further example, he maintains that after each Party Congress Stalin's aid, Tovstukha, carefully examined all the ballot papers used for the secret ballot elections to the Central Committee. Tovstukha could identify those who struck out Stalin's name from their handwriting and was then able to compile lists of Stalin's enemies who would have to be destroyed when the proper time came. But in this instance Bazhanov shows complete ignorance of the voting procedure at Party congresses. Those who struck out a name on the ballot paper were not obliged (as Bazhanov states) to write down the name of some other candidate. Therefore a handwriting expert would have no way of knowing who threw which paper into the voting urn. Sitting in his office, Tovstukha was not in a position to draw up lists of all those who spoke against Stalin at Party meetings during the years of struggle with the Opposition.
Medvedev, Roy. On Stalin and Stalinism. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 35

TROTSKYITE EASTMAN UNDERMINED TROTSKY

The battle over the construction of the Dnieper station played a far less important role in Trotsky's political destiny, however, than did the Eastman affair. The Eastman affair grew out of a book published in the West by Max Eastman, an American Communist and journalist. Eastman had traveled to Russia numerous times, knew Russian, was married to a Russian woman, and was thus able to gather a great deal of material about the struggle within the Soviet political leadership during the last months of Lenin's life and following his death. Eastman met several times with Trotsky and was his ardent supporter. In Eastman's betrayal, Trotsky was one of the few true leaders of the Russian Revolution, who, after its culmination, fell victim to the scheming of unprincipled Kremlin intriguers.
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 69

After the appearance of Eastman's book, Trotsky found himself in a difficult situation. Almost immediately the heads of several Western Communist parties addressed inquiries to him, asking whether the facts reported by Eastman about Trotsky's persecution corresponded with reality. Submitting to party discipline (because the facts cited by Eastman were considered secret), Trotsky was forced to answer that Eastman was lying. But this meant that Trotsky himself was now lying, because much of what Eastman wrote was the truth. Initially, wishing to extract himself from an unpleasant situation with the least damage, Trotsky tried to simply offer several general rebuttals. Stalin, who had a vested interest in this incident, however, decided to publicize it as widely as possible and to exploit it vigorously to discredit Trotsky. On June 17, 1925, Stalin sent the following lengthy memorandum:

“TO ALL MEMBERS AND CANDIDATES OF THE POLITBURO AND PRESIDIUM OF THE CENTRAL CONTROL COMMISSION
On May 8th of this year, the Politburo received a statement from Comrade Trotsky addressed to ‘Comrade Verney at the periodical Sunday Worker in reply to Eric Verney’s inquiry about a book by Eastman, Since Lenin Died. Published and widely quoted in the bourgeois press, Since Lenin Died depicts Comrade Trotsky as a ‘victim of intrigue,’ and readers of the book are given to understand that Trotsky regards [bourgeois] democracy and free trade in a favorable light. In view of this presentation, Verney asked Comrade Trotsky to provide an explanation that would be published in the Sunday Worker.
Comrade Trotsky’s statement, as is known, was printed in Pravda, on May 9, 1925.
I personally paid no attention to Comrade Trotsky’s statement at the time because I had no notion of the nature of Eastman’s book.
On May 9, 1925, Comrade Trotsky received an inquiry from the Central Committee of the British Communist Party signed by Comrade Inkpin in connection with Eastman’s book. Inkpin asked Comrade Trotsky to make a statement concerning Eastman book, because “the enemies of the Communist International in our country exploit your position in relation to the Russian Communist party’.”
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin’s Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 70

Here is the full text of the letter from Inkpin:
May 9, 1925. To Comrade Trotsky.
“Dear Comrade Trotsky! The Central Committee of the British party has assigned me to send you the attached copy of the book by Max Eastman, Since Lenin Died, and the issues of the New Leader, Lansbury’s Weekly, and the Labor Magazine containing reviews of the book. These reviews will show you how enemies of the Communist International in our country exploit your position in relation to the Russian Communist Party.
Our Central Committee considers that it would be very useful if you would write and send an answer to these reviewers. Such an article would be of good service to the Communist movement in our country, and we for our part would do everything possible to give it the widest publicity. With Communist greetings, General Secretary Inkpin.”
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin’s Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 71

Comrade Trotsky wrote the following letter in reply to Inkpin’s letter:
“Dear Comrade Inkpin: Your letter of May 9 was evidently written before my answer to the inquiry from the Sunday Worker was received in London.
My brochure: “Where Is England Headed?” will be, I hope, a sufficient reply to all the attempts of the Fabian pacifists, the parliamentary careerists, the Philistines, and McDonalds to use various events in our party as proof of the advantage of reformism over communism and of democracy over the dictatorship of the proletariat.
As soon as my brochure is received by the Central Committee of our party, I will not delay in sending you the manuscript.
With Communist greetings, L. Trotsky. May 21, 1925.”
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin’s Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 71

At the same time, Comrade Trotsky's sent to the Politburo in care of Comrade Stalin a letter dated May 19, 1925, wherein Comrade Trotsky, without providing a direct reply to the questions raised by Comrade Inkpin, attempts to get by with a reference to his brochure 'Where Is England Headed?' which has no relationship to Comrade Inkpin's inquiry.
Here is the text of Comrade Trotsky's letter:
"To Comrade Stalin. Dear Comrade! In order to avoid any misunderstandings whatsoever, I consider it necessary to provide you with the following information regarding the English book by Max Eastman, (I have just received this book and have managed to leaf through it quickly)."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 71

"In a private conversation, I told you that for half a year I have not received any Comintern documents. In particular, I have no idea whatsoever what the 'inquiry' Treint raised about me involves. To this day I do not know why Rosmer and Monatte were expelled from the party, I do not know what their disagreements are with the party, and I do not know what they are publishing or even whether they are publishing anything at all."
With Communist greetings. L. Trotsky, Moscow, May 19, 1925.
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 73

"I became acquainted with Eastman as an American Communist at one of the first international congresses of the Comintern.
Three or four years ago, Eastman asked for my assistance in writing my biography. I refused, suggesting that he do some other work of more general interest. Eastman replied in a letter in which he argued that the American worker would become interested in communism not in response to the expounding of theory or history but in response to a biographical story; he and other American writers wanted to fashion a weapon of Communist propaganda out of the biographies of several Russian revolutionaries. Eastman asked me to give him the necessary facts and subsequently to review the manuscript. I replied that in view of his explanation I did not feel I could refuse to tell him the necessary facts, but I definitely refused to read the manuscript and thus accept direct or indirect responsibility for the biography.
Subsequently I gave Eastman information relating to the first 22 years of my life, before I arrived in London in 1902. I know that he visited my relatives and schoolmates and collected information about that same era. These materials are what gave him, apparently, the opportunity to write the book Lev Trotsky: Portrait of a Youth, the announcement of which is printed on the cover of the book Since Stalin Died.
The last time I saw Eastman must and been more than a year and a half ago; I lost track of him altogether after that. I had no notion of his intention to write a book devoted to the discussion in our party. And even he, of course, did not have this intention during that period when he met with me to collect facts about my youth.
It goes without saying that he could not have received any party documents from me or through me. Eastman, however, did speak and write Russian well, had many friends in our party, was married to a Russian Communist, as I was recently told, and consequently had free access to all our party literature, including, evidently, those documents that were sent to local organizations, distributed to members of the 13th Party Congress, etc. I have not verified whether he has cited these documents accurately or from rumor.

The press of the British Mensheviks is trying to use Eastman's book against communism (the secretary of the British Communist Party sent me, along with Eastman's book, three issues of Menshevik-type publications that included articles about that book). Meanwhile, my telegram was supposed to appear in the Sunday Worker (there is mention of this in the Daily Herald). I think that my pamphlet 'Where Is England Headed?' will be quite timely under these circumstances and will dispel many illusions and much gossip spread by the Menshevik and bourgeois press. I intend to do an appropriate supplement for the English edition."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 72

"Only after this letter from Comrade Trotsky and only because Comrade Trotsky stubbornly refused to reply directly to Comrade Inkpin's questions about the Eastman book did it become clear to me [Stalin] that I had to familiarize myself immediately with the contents of that book.
Acquaintance with Eastman's book convinced me that this book was not written naively, that its purpose is to discredit the government of the USSR and the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party, and that for these purposes Eastman indulges in a whole range of slanders and distortions, referring to Trotsky's authority and to his 'friendship' with Trotsky and to some secret documents that have not yet been published. I was particularly surprised by Eastman's statements concerning his 'chats' with Comrade Trotsky about Lenin's so-called testament and about the 'main figures in the Central Committee,' and also by his statement that the authenticity of [his text of] Lenin's so-called testament was confirmed by' three responsible Communists in Russia,' whom 'I [that is, Eastman) interviewed separately and who had all recently read the letter and committed its most vital phrases to memory.
For me it became clear that, given everything I had just related, it would be not only intolerable but outright criminal to hush up the question of Comrade Trotsky's relationship with Eastman and his book Since Lenin Died."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 73

"In view of that, after discussing the matter with the secretaries of the Central Committee, I ordered Eastman's book translated into Russian and sent the translation to Politburo members and candidates for their review.
I was also moved to act because, meanwhile, all and sundry bourgeois and social democratic parties have already begun to use the Eastman book in the foreign press against the Russian Communist Party and Soviet rule: they take advantage of the fact that in their campaign against the leaders of the Soviet government they can now rely on the 'testimonies' of the 'Communist' Eastman, a 'friend' of Comrade Trotsky who has 'chats' with him, to the effect that Russia is ruled by an irresponsible bunch of usurpers and deceivers.
I have no doubt whatsoever that Eastman's book is libelous, that it will prove enormously profitable to the world counterrevolution (and has already done so!), and that it will cause serious damage to the entire world revolutionary movement.
That is why I think that Comrade Trotsky, on whom Eastman occasionally claims to rely in his book when speaking against the leaders of the Russian Communist Party and the Soviet revolutionary authority, cannot pass over Eastman's book in silence.
I'm now thinking at present of proposing to Comrade Trotsky that he substantively respond in the press to the fundamental issues covered in Eastman's book, which are the fundamental

questions of our disputes as well. Let the party and the International judge who is right and whose political position is correct, the position of the Central Committee or the position of Comrade Trotsky.
But certain minimum obligations rest on party members; a member of the Central Committee and Politburo, such as Comrade Trotsky is at this moment, has a certain minimum moral duty that Comrade Trotsky cannot and should not refuse. This minimum requires that Comrade Trotsky speak out in the press unequivocally against the crude distortions of facts that are known to everyone, distortions permitted in Eastman's book for the purpose of discrediting the Russian Communist party. Obviously the silence of Comrade Trotsky in this case may be construed only as a confirmation or an excuse for these distortions.
I think that Comrade Trotsky should rebut at least the following distortions:
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 74

1) In the section, 'Attacking the Old Guard,' Eastman's little book says that 'Trotsky's letter [the reference is to an appeal to the local committees in 1923 in connection with the Politburo's resolution on internal party democracy–Stalin] and some supplementary articles in pamphlet form were practically suppressed by the Politburo' [53].
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 74

Further, in chapter 9 of Eastman's book, it says that 'Trotsky's book [the reference is to volume three of Trotsky's works and Lessons of October–Stalin] was practically suppressed by the Politburo until they [that is, the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party–Stalin] were sure of the success of their maneuver' [80-81].
Finally, chapter 14 of Eastman's book says that 'Trotsky's true texts do not appear in public to refute their [that is, the Central Committee's–Stalin] statements. These texts are read privately, conscientiously, by those minds who have the courage and penetration to resist the universal official hysteria stimulated and supported by the State' [125]. I think that Comrade Trotsky should refute these statements by Eastman as malicious slander against the party and the Soviet government. Comrade Trotsky cannot help but know that neither during the party discussions of 1923 or 1924, nor at any time whatsoever, did the Central Committee obstruct the printing of Comrade Trotsky's articles and books in any way.
In particular, Comrade Trotsky must recall that during the 1923 discussion he himself refused in his well-known statement in the press to reply to the arguments of representatives of the party majority. He must also remember the following statement 'From the editors' of Pravda, the central party organ:
'From the editors. In reply to the question posed by a number of comrades concerning why Comrade Trotsky is not responding to the criticism of Trotskyism, the editors of Pravda report that so far neither Comrade Trotsky nor his close supporters have submitted any articles in response to the criticism of Trotskyism' (see Pravda, December 13, 1924).
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 75

2) The second chapter of Eastman's book speaks of the Russian Communist Party leaders as 'suppressing the writings of Lenin himself,' [20] and in chapter 9 it says that they, that is, the party leaders, 'clapped the censorship on his [that is, Lenin's–Stalin] own last words to his party' [92].

I think that Comrade Trotsky should also refute these statements by Eastman as a lie and as libel against the leaders of the party, the Central Committee, and its Politburo. Trotsky knows quite as well as do all other members of the Central Committee that Eastman's reports do not correspond with reality to the slightest degree.
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 75

3) In the second chapter of his book, Eastman states that 'all those present at the meeting, including the secretaries, were not only against the policies proposed by Lenin, but they were against the publication of the article' [25] [the reference is to Lenin's article 'How We Should Reorganize Rabkrin–Stalin].
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 75

I think that Comrade Trotsky should also refute this statement by Eastman as an obvious slander. He cannot help but recall, first, that Lenin's plan as set forth in his article was not discussed substantively at this time; second, that the Politburo was convened in connection with the statements in Lenin's article about the possible schism in the Central Committee–statements that could have provoked misunderstanding in the party organizations. Comrade Trotsky could not help but know that the Politburo then decided to send to party organizations, in addition to Lenin's printed article, a special letter from the Orgburo and the Politburo of the Central Committee stating that the article should not provide grounds for any perception of a schism in the Central Committee. Comrade Trotsky must know that the decision to publish Lenin's article immediately, and to send a letter from the members of the Orgburo and Politburo about the absence of a schism within the Central Committee, was passed unanimously; any notion that the Politburo's decision on the publication of Lenin's article was passed under pressure from Comrade Trotsky is a ridiculous absurdity.
Here is the text of the letter:
Letter to the Provincial and Regional Committees.
Dear Comrades, Pravda No. 16 of January 25 carries Lenin's article 'How We Should Reorganize Rabkrin.' One part of this article speaks about the role of the Central Committee of our party in the need to take organizational measures that will eliminate the prospect of, or make as difficult as possible, a schism in the Central Committee if mutual relations between the proletariat and the peasantry become complicated in connection with the changes ensuing from NEP. Some comrades have directed the Politburo's attention to the fact that the comrades in the provinces may view this article by Comrade Lenin as an indication of a recent internal schism within the Central Committee that has prompted Comrade Lenin to advance the organizational proposals outlined in this article. In order to eliminate the possibility of such conclusions–which do not at all correspond with the real state of affairs–the Politburo and the Orgburo consider it necessary to notify the provincial committees of the circumstances surrounding the writing of Comrade Lenin's article.
The return of Comrade Lenin to highly pressured work after his illness led to exhaustion. The doctors pronounced it necessary to prescribe for Comrade Lenin a certain period of absolute rest without even reading newspapers (since for Comrade Lenin reading newspapers is, of course, not entertainment or a means of relaxation but an occasion for intense contemplation of all the current political issues). It goes without saying that Comrade Lenin does not take part in the Politburo sessions, and he is not even sent–again, in strict

accordance with his doctors' advice–the transcripts of the sessions of the Politburo and the Orgburo. The doctors believe, however, that because complete mental inactivity is intolerable for him, Comrade Lenin should be allowed to keep something like a journal, in which he notes his thoughts on various issues; when authorized by Comrade Lenin himself, moreover, a portion of this journal may appear in the press. These external conditions underlying the writing of 'How We Should Reorganize Rabkrin' demonstrate that the proposals contained in this article are suggested not by any complications inside the Central Committee but by Comrade Lenin's general views on the difficulties that will face the party in the coming historical epoch.
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 76

In this strictly informational letter we will not consider the possible long-range dangers that Comrade Lenin appropriately raised in his article. The members of the Politburo and Orgburo, however, wish to state with complete unanimity, in order to avoid any possible misunderstandings, that in the work of the Central Committee there are absolutely no circumstances that would provide any basis whatsoever for fears of a 'schism.'
This explanation is provided in the form of a strictly secret letter, rather than being published in the press, to avoid giving enemies the opportunity to cause confusion and agitation through false reports about the state of Comrade Lenin's health. The Central Committee has no doubt that if anyone in the provinces has drawn the alarming conclusions noted in the beginning of this letter from the article by Comrade Lenin, the provincial committees will not delay in correctly orienting the party organizations.
Available Members of the Politburo and Orgburo of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party:
Andreev, Molotov, Bukharin, Rykov, Dzerzhinsky, Stalin, Kalinin, Tomsky, Kamenev, Trotsky, Kuibyshev, Moscow, January 27, 1923.
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 77

4) Chapter 3 of Eastman's book talks about Lenin's 'Testament.'
"One of the most solemn and carefully weighed utterances that ever came from Lenin's pen was suppressed–in the interests of 'Leninism'–by that triumvirate of 'old Bolsheviks,' Stalin, Zinoviev, and Kamenev…. They decided that it might be read and explained privately to the delegates–kept within the bureaucracy, that is to say,–but not put before the party for discussion, as Lenin directed' [28-29].'
I think that Comrade Trotsky should also refute this statement by Eastman as a malicious slander. First of all, he cannot help but know that Lenin's 'testament' was sent to the Central Committee for the exclusive use to the Party Congress; second, that neither Lenin nor Comrade Krupskaya 'demanded' or in any way proposed to make the 'testament' a subject of 'discussion before the entire Party'; third, that the 'testament' was read to all the delegations to the Congress without exception, that is, to all the members of the Congress without exception; fourth, that when the Congress presidium asked the Congress as a whole whether the 'testament' was known to all the members of the Congress and whether any discussion of it was required, the presidium received the reply that the 'testament' was known to all and that there was no need to discuss it; fifth, that neither Trotsky nor any other member of the Congress made any protest about possible irregularities at the Congress;

sixth, that by virtue of this, to speak of suppressing the ‘testament’ means to slander maliciously the Central Committee and the 13th Party Congress.
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin’s Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 78

5) The second chapter of Eastman’s book says that the ‘article [the reference is to Lenin’s article on the nationalities question–Stalin] which Lenin considered of ‘leading importance,’ and which he designed to have read at a party convention, but which constituted a direct attack upon the authority of Stalin, and a corresponding endorsement of the authority of Trotsky, was not read at the party convention, the triumvirate deciding that it was for the welfare of the party to suppress it [23].
I think that Comrade Trotsky should also refute this statement by Eastman as clearly libelous. He must know, first, that Lenin’s article was read by all members of the Congress without exception, as stated at a full meeting of the Congress; second, that none other than Comrade Stalin himself proposed the publication of Lenin’s article, having stated on April 16, 1923, in a document known to all members of the Central Committee, that ‘Comrade Lenin’s article ought to be published in the press’; third, that Lenin’s article on the nationalities issue was not published in the press only because the Central Committee could not fail to take into consideration that Lenin’s sister, Maria, who had Lenin’s article in her possession, did not consider it possible to publish it in the press. Comrade Fotieva, Lenin’s personal secretary, states this in a special document dated April 19, 1923, in reply to Stalin’s proposal to print the article: ‘Maria [Lenin’s sister–Stalin] has made a statement,’ writes Comrade Fotieva, ‘to the effect that since there was no direct order from Lenin to publish this article, it cannot be printed, and she considers it possible only to have the members of the Congress familiarize themselves with it….’ and, in fact, Comrade Fotieva adds that ‘Vladimir Ilyich did not consider this article to be finished and prepared for the press’; fourth, that Eastman’s statement that the Congress was not informed of Lenin’s article therefore slanders the party.
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin’s Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 78

6] In the second chapter of his book, Eastman, among other things, writes the following about Lenin’s ‘testament’: ‘There is no mystery about my possession of this and the foregoing information; it is all contained in official documents stolen by the counter-revolutionists and published in Russian, at Berlin, in the Socialist Herald’ [26].
Here Eastman once again distorts the truth. Not Lenin’s ‘testament’ but a malicious distortion of it was published in The Socialist Herald.
I think that Comrade Trotsky should make a declaration about this distortion.
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin’s Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 79

7) In the second chapter of Eastman’s book, Comrade Kuibyshev is incorrectly portrayed as an opponent of Lenin’s plan set out in the article about the Worker-Peasant Inspection: ‘The degree to which the policies outlined by Lenin have been followed may be inferred from the fact that Kuibyshev…is now the People’s Commissioner of Workers’ and Peasants’ Inspection, and the head of the Central Control Committee of the party’ [25].
In other words, it seems that when the Central Committee and the Party Congress appointed Kuibyshev commissar of Worker-Peasant Inspection and chairman of the Central Control

Commission, they intended not to implement Lenin's plan but to sabotage it and cause it to fail.
I think that Comrade Trotsky should also make a declaration against this libelous statement about the party, for he must know that, first, Lenin's Plan, developed in the article about the Worker-Peasant Inspection, was passed by the 12th Party Congress; second, Comrade Kuibyshev was and remains a supporter and promoter of this plan; third, Comrade Kuibyshev was elected chairman of the Central Control Commission at the 12th Congress (re-elected at the 13th Congress) in the presence of Comrade Trotsky and without any objections on the part of Comrade Trotsky or other members of the Congress; fourth, Comrade Kuibyshev was appointed head of Worker-Peasant Inspection at the Central Committee plenum of April 26, 1923, in the presence of Comrade Trotsky and without any objections on his part.
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 79

8) Eastman states in the first chapter of his book: 'When Lenin fell sick and was compelled to withdraw from the Government, he turned again to Trotsky and asked him to take his place as President of the Soviet of People's Commissars and of the Council of Labor and Defense' [16].
Eastman repeats the same thing in the second chapter of his book: 'He [that is, Comrade Trotsky–Stalin] declined Lenin's proposal that he should become head of the Soviet Government, and thus of the revolutionary movement of the world' [18].
I do not think that this statement by Eastman, which, by the way, does not correspond at all to reality, could harm the Soviet government in any way. Nevertheless, because of Eastman's crude distortion of the facts on a matter concerning Comrade Trotsky, Comrade Trotsky ought to speak out against this undeniable distortion as well. Comrade Trotsky must know that Lenin proposed to him, not the post of chairman of the Council of Commissars and the Labour Defense Council, but the post of one of the four deputies of the chairman of the Council of Commissars and Labour Defense Council, having in mind already two deputies of his own who had been previously appointed, Comrades Rykov and Tsiurupa, and intending to nominate a third deputy of his own, Comrade Kamenev. Here is the corresponding document signed by Lenin:
To the Secretary of the Central Committee, Comrade Stalin. Since Comrade Rykov was given a vacation before the return of Tsiurupa (he is expected to arrive on September 20), and the doctors are promising me (of course, only in the event that nothing bad happens) a return to work (at first very limited) by October 1, I think that it is impossible to burden Comrade Tsiurupa with all the ongoing work, and I propose appointing two more deputies (deputy to the chairman of the Council of Commissars and deputy to the chairman of the Labour Defense Council), that is, Comrades Trotsky and Kamenev. Distribute the work between them with my clearance and, of course, with the Politburo as the highest authority. September 11, 1922. Vladimir Ulianov (Lenin).
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 80

Comrade Trotsky must be aware that there were no other offers then or now from Comrade Lenin regarding his appointment to the leadership of the Council of Commissars or the Labour Defense Council. Comrade Trotsky thus turned down, not the post of chairman of the Council of Commissars or the Labour Defense Council, but the post of one of the four

deputies of the chairman. Comrade Trotsky must be aware that the Politburo voted on Lenin's proposal as follows: those in favor of Lenin's proposal were Stalin, Rykov, Kalinin; those who abstained were Tomsky, Kamenev; and Comrade Trotsky 'categorically refused'; (Zinoviev was absent). Comrade Trotsky must be aware that the Politburo passed the following resolution on this matter: 'The Central Committee Politburo with regret notes the categorical refusal of Comrade Trotsky and proposes to Comrade Kamenev that he assume the fulfillment of the duties of deputy until the return of Comrade Tsiurupa.'

The distortions condoned by Eastman, as you can see, are glaring. These are in my opinion, the eight indisputable points, Eastman's crudest distortions that Comrade Trotsky is obliged to refute if he does not wish to justify through his silence Eastman's slanderous and objectively counter-revolutionary attacks against the party and the Soviet government.
In connection with this, I submit the following proposal to the Politburo:
PROPOSE TO COMRADE TROTSKY THAT HE DISASSOCIATE HIMSELF DECISIVELY FROM EASTMAN AND MAKE A STATEMENT FOR THE PRESS WITH A CATEGORICAL REBUTTAL OF AT LEAST THOSE DISTORTIONS THAT WERE OUTLINED IN THE ABOVE-MENTIONED EIGHT POINTS.
As for the general political profile of Mr. Eastman, who still calls himself a Communist, it hardly differs in any way from the profile of other enemies of the RCP [Russian Communist party] and the Soviet government. In his book he characterizes the RCP Congress as nothing but a 'ruthless' and 'callous bureaucracy,' the Central Committee of the party as a 'band of deceivers' and "usurpers,' the Lenin levy (in which 200,000 proletarians joined the party) as a bureaucratic maneuver by the Central Committee against the opposition, and the Red Army as a conglomerate 'broken into separate pieces' and 'lacking defense capability,' and these facts clearly tell us that in his attacks against the Russian proletariat and its government, against the party of this proletariat and its Central Committee, Eastman has outdone run-of-the-mill counter-revolutionaries and the well-known charlatans of White Guardism. No one, except the charlatans of the counter-revolution, has ever spoken of the RCP and the Soviet government in such language as the 'friend' of Comrade Trotsky, the 'Communist' Eastman, permits himself. There is no question that the American Communist Party and the Third International will properly evaluate these outstanding exploits of Mr. Eastman."
Stated by Stalin on June 17, 1925.
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 81

The following day, June 18, the Politburo affirmed Stalin's proposal about Trotsky's statement of rebuttal in the press. Trotsky himself promised that within three days he would submit the text of his statement. On June 22, Trotsky in fact sent Stalin material entitled "On Eastman's Book 'Since Lenin Died'." Without citing any accusations, Stalin replied with a brief note:
"If you are interested in my opinion, I personally consider the draft completely unsatisfactory. To do not understand how you could submit such a draft regarding the counter-revolutionary book by Eastman, filled with lies and slander against the party, after you accepted a moral obligation at the Politburo session of June 18 to disassociate yourself resolutely from Eastman and to rebut categorically the factual distortions."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 82

In an appeal to the Politburo, Trotsky tried to defend himself, attempting to prove that Stalin's accusations were nonsense. After meeting the usual rebuff, however, he began to revise the text of his statement for the press. Oversight of his revision was assumed by Bukharin, Zinoviev, Rykov, and Stalin. They demanded from Trotsky harsher accusations against Eastman and a categorical denial of the facts cited in Eastman's book. Trotsky conceded to all demands. The final text of his statement, which had satisfied the censors from the "seven," was ready by July 1, 1925.

Now Stalin and his supporters decided to take the affair outside the framework of the Politburo by first briefing a broad circle of Party functionaries about it and then publicizing it generally. In early July, Central Committee members Kaganovich, Chubar, and Petrovsky submitted a statement that contained a request that "all members of the Central Committee be sent all materials on the publication of Eastman's book" and that members of the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Communist Party be briefed. On 7 July 1925 after a poll of Politburo members, this request was fulfilled. The materials on the Eastman affair were typeset, published in the form of a small book (containing Stalin's letter, the Politburo's resolutions, Trotsky's correspondence with Stalin and with other members of the Politburo, and drafts of Trotsky's statement), and sent to Central Committee members. But Stalin had further plans to publish, both in the West and later in the USSR, the following documents: Trotsky's statement, a letter specially prepared by Krupskaya, in which she, as Lenin's widow, refutes Eastman, and the letter from Stalin himself that demonstrates his role in the struggle for Party interests. But these plans, to which Stalin repeatedly referred in his letters to Molotov, were never fully realized.

Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 82

Soon after the materials on the affair were sent to Central Committee members, Trotsky had occasion to take the offensive. On 16 July 1925 the French Communist newspaper, L'Humanite, published the original version of Trotsky's statement. On 27 July, Trotsky addressed a letter to Bukharin, who at that time was acting as chairman of the Comintern's Executive Committee. Trotsky expressed his puzzlement and protest over the French publication and demanded that the circumstances of the leak be investigated, hinting that publication had deliberately been arranged even after he, Trotsky, had made all the necessary concessions and had demonstrated his readiness to co-operate with the Politburo majority in defending the party's interests. That day, after a poll of Politburo members, the following resolution was passed:

a) To request L'Humanite to publish [a notice] that the text of Comrade Trotsky's letter regarding Eastman's book that appeared in L'Humanite is incomplete and distorted.

b) To request L'Humanite to publish the full (final) text of Comrade Trotsky's letter about Eastman's book.

Bukharin, in turn, ordered an investigation into the circumstances of the incident and informed Trotsky of this decision.

Soon it became clear that the original version of Trotsky's article had been given to L'Humanite by Manuilskii, a member of the Comintern's Executive Committee presidium, during his trip to France. The documents that remain do not enable us to determine the real circumstances behind Manuilskii's initiative. Nevertheless, as can be seen from the published letters, Stalin was involved in this conflict, and he was even forced to deny categorically that Manuilskii had acted in concert with him.

Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 83

As the letters testify, Stalin was also unable to get the "seven" to agree to publish his own letter. The affair ended in a compromise. Only Trotsky's and Krupskaya's statements were published, first abroad, then in the USSR (in the journal Bolshevik, 1925, No. 16). As for the documents on the Eastman affair, it was decided that only a relatively small group of party officials should see them. After attaining the approval of the "seven,' on 27 August 1925 the Politburo decided to turn over all materials on the Eastman book to the Comintern's Executive Committee so it could "brief the central committees of the most important Communist parties.' The Politburo also sent the documents, along with Eastman's book itself, to all the party's provincial committees and to members and candidate members of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission; these items were given the status of a restricted distribution letter. At Trotsky's insistence, the correspondence concerning the L'Humanite incident was included in the package of documents sent to the Comintern's Executive Committee.
The publication and dissemination of documents on the Eastman affair had highly unfortunate consequences for Trotsky. Once again, to the mass of party bureaucrats at various levels, he appeared humbled and defeated, hanging his head before Stalin. The rank-and-file party members, especially his supporters, were shocked at Trotsky's recantation in Bolshevik. By declaring Eastman a slanderer, Trotsky seemed to be withdrawing from further struggle, disallowing his former accusations against the party leadership. Furthermore, by denying many well-known facts, Trotsky looked like a liar. "It's terrible, simply terrible! It's incomprehensible why Lev Davidovitch [Trotsky] would do that. Surely he has put his head on the block with such a letter. He has made himself despicable…." [Stated by Valentinov (Volsky) in The New Economic Policy and the party crisis after Lenin's death, Moscow, 1991, page 295]. Trotsky himself was loath to recall this episode of his political biography.
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 84

In an August 1925 letter to Molotov Stalin stated, "Kamenev and Zinoviev want to establish the preconditions for making Trotsky's removal from the Central Committee necessary, but they will not succeed in this because they don't have supporting facts. In his answer to Eastman's book Trotsky determined his fate, that is, he saved himself."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 94

TROTSKY ATTACKS OTHER COMMENTS BY EASTMAN

In a 1925 letter regarding Lenin's testament Trotsky said, "Eastman's assertions that the Central Committee confiscated or in some way held up my pamphlets in 1923 or 1924 or at any other time are false and based on fantastical rumors.
Also completely incorrect is Eastman's assertion that Lenin offered me the post of chairman of the Council of Commissars or of the Labor Defense Council. I learned of this for the first time from Eastman's pamphlet.

No doubt a more attentive reading of the book would uncover a number of other inaccuracies and errors, but there's hardly any need to do this. Using Eastman's information and citing his conclusions, the bourgeois and especially the Menshevik press have tried in every way to emphasize his "closeness' to me as the author of my biography and his "friendship" with me, clearly trying by this indirect means to give his conclusions a weight they do not and could not have on their own. It is therefore necessary to dwell on this matter. Perhaps the best way of showing the real nature of my relationship with Eastman is to quote a business letter I wrote before there was any talk of his book Since Lenin Died.

During my stay in Sukhumi, I received from a party Comrade who is involved in publishing my works in Moscow a manuscript by Eastman entitled Lev Trotsky: Portrait of a Youth. From my associate's accompanying letter, I learned that the author had submitted this manuscript to the State Publishing House so they can consider publishing a Russian edition…. I replied to this letter on April 3, 1925, even before becoming acquainted with Eastman's manuscript, I am in complete agreement with you that it would be absolutely inappropriate to publish it. Thank you for sending the manuscript, but I have no stomach for reading it. I'm quite willing to believe that it is unappetizing, especially to our Russian Communist state…. I responded to Eastman's repeated requests for help with the following words: I'm willing to help by providing you with accurate information, but I cannot agree to read your manuscript…. Ask him not to publish the book as a personal favor. I'm not close enough to him to make that request.

…the tone of my letter leaves no room for doubt that my relationship to Eastman differs in no way from my relationship to very many Communists or "sympathetic foreigners' who turn to me for help in trying…to learn about the October Revolution, our party, and the Soviet state–certainly no closer.

With vulgar self-assurance, Eastman waxes ironic about my "quixotic' attitude to my closest comrades on the Central Committee, since according to him I referred to them in friendly fashion [even] during the "fierce discussion.' Eastman, evidently, feels called upon to correct my "mistake" and gives a description of the leaders of our party that is impossible to describe as anything other than slander.

We saw earlier how rotten is the foundation on which Eastman has constructed his edifice. With a scandalous disregard for facts and for proportion, he uses individual aspects of the intra-party discussion in order to blacken our party's name and destroy confidence in it. It seems to me, however, that any really serious and thoughtful reader does not even need to verify Eastman's citations and his "documents'–something, in any event, that not everyone can do. It is sufficient to ask oneself this simple question: if the malicious evaluation of the leaders of our party given by Eastman is true even in part, then how could such a party have gone through long years of underground struggle, carried out a great revolution, led masses many millions strong, and aided in the formation of revolutionary parties in other countries? Not one honorable worker will believe the picture given by Eastman. It contains its own internal contradiction. It makes no difference what Eastman's own intentions are. His book can be of service only to the most malicious enemies of communism and the revolution, and is therefore, objectively speaking, a tool of counter-revolution."

Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 246-47

During 1925 Trotsky held himself aloof from party politics. He did not speak at the 14th Party Congress and watched with apparent contempt the efforts of Zinoviev and Kamenev to oppose Stalin. The savaging he had suffered in the previous year had hurt him deeply and

he had retreated behind a wall of silence. His one public statement, made in September 1925, was mendacious. In a book entitled Since Lenin Died, the American writer Max Eastman, who was a close friend of Trotsky's, published some extracts from Lenin's "Testament" and an account of the struggles within the party since Lenin's death. He had obtained this information from well-informed foreign communists, from party members close to Trotsky, and possibly from Krupskaya or even from Trotsky himself. In an article Trotsky denounced the book and its inside information as false. It was "a slander, to suggest that documents had been concealed from the Central Committee, and "a malicious invention, to allege that Lenin's "Testament" had been violated.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 212

Now about Lenin's "will." The oppositionists shouted here–you heard them–that the Central Committee of the Party "concealed Lenin's will." We have discussed this question several times at the plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission, you know that it has been proved again that nobody has concealed anything, that Lenin's "will" was addressed to the 13th Party Congress, that this "will" was read out at the congress, that the congress unanimously decided not to publish it because, among other things, Lenin himself did not want it to be published and did not ask that it should be published. The opposition knows all this just as well as we do. Nevertheless, it has the audacity to declare that the Central Committee is "concealing" the "will."
The question of Lenin's "will" was brought up, if I am not mistaken, as far back as 1924. There is a certain Eastman, a former American Communist who was later expelled from the Party. This gentleman, who mixed with the Trotskyists in Moscow, picked up some rumors and gossip about Lenin's "will," went abroad and published a book entitled After Lenin's Death, in which he did his best to blacken the Party, the Central Committee and the Soviet regime, and the gist of which was that the Central Committee of our Party was "concealing Lenin's "will." In view of the fact that this Eastman had at one time been connected with Trotsky, we, the members of the Political Bureau, called upon Trotsky to disassociate himself from Eastman who, clutching at Trotsky and referring to the opposition, had made Trotsky responsible for the slanderous statements against our Party about the "will." Since the question was so obvious, Trotsky did, indeed, publicly disassociate himself from Eastman in a statement he made in the press. It was published in September 1925 in Bolshevik, No. 16. Permit me to read the passage in Trotsky's article in which he deals with the question of whether the Party and its Central Committee was concealing Lenin's "will" or not. I quote Trotsky's article:
"In several parts of his book Eastman says that the Central Committee 'concealed' from the Party a number of exceptionally important documents written by Lenin in the last period of his life (it is a matter of letters on the national question, the so-called 'will,' and others); there can be no other name for this than slander against the Central Committee
of our Party. From what Eastman says it may be inferred that Lenin intended those letters, which bore the character of advice on internal organization, for the press. In point of fact, that is absolutely untrue…. Lenin did not leave any 'will,' and the very character of his attitude towards the Party, as well as the character of the Party itself, precluded the possibility of such a 'will.' What is usually referred to as a 'will' in the emigre and foreign bourgeois and Menshevik press is one of Lenin's letters containing advice on organizational matters. The 13th Congress of the Party paid the closest attention to that letter, as to all of the others, and drew from it conclusions appropriate to the conditions and circumstances of

the time. All talk about concealing or violating a 'will' is a malicious invention and is entirely directed against Lenin's real will, and against the interests of the Party he created."
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 10, p. 178-179

KRUPSKAYA ATTACKS EASTMAN

EXCERPT FROM KRUPSKAIA'S LETTER
(translated by the U.S. editor from Bolshevik)
1925, no. 16:71-73 July 1, 1925

The magazine Bolshevik published a letter on July 1, 1925, written by Krupskaya in which she says, "Mr. Eastman writes all sorts of unbelievable nonsense about these letters (calling them a "testament'). Mr. Eastman has no understanding of the spirit of our party….
Lenin's letters on intra-party relations (the "testament') were also written for a Party Congress. He knew that the party would understand the motives that dictated this letter. Such a letter could only be addressed to people who would undoubtedly put the interest of the cause first. The letter contained, among other things, personal descriptions of the highest party comrades. There's no lack of faith expressed in the letters toward these comrades, with whom Lenin worked for many years. On the contrary, there's much that is flattering–Eastman forgets to mention this. The letters had the aim of helping the other comrades get to work moving in the proper direction, and for that reason, they mention not only virtues but also defects (including Trotsky's), since it is necessary to take into account these defects when organizing the work of the party collective in the best possible way.
As Lenin wished, all members of the Congress familiarized themselves with the letters. It is incorrect to call them a "testament,' since Lenin's Testament in the real sense of the word is incomparably wider….
The enemies of the Russian Communist party are trying to use the "testament' in order to discredit the present leaders of the party and to discredit the party itself. Mr. Eastman is energetically working to achieve the same purpose: he slanders the Central Committee by shouting that the "testament' has been suppressed. In this way he tries to inflame an unhealthy curiosity, thus distorting the real meaning of the letter."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 248

RYUTIN IS COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY SCUM

In a September 13, 1930, letter to Molotov Stalin stated, "With regard to Riutin… This counter-revolutionary scum should be completely disarmed…."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 215

The document's (Ryutin Platform) call to "Stalin's dictatorship" was taken as a call for armed revolt.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 53

Another anti-Stalin group that arose inside the party in the early 30s was the Ryutin group….
This group drafted a lengthy document, known to history as the "Ryutin Platform."

Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 296

The unpublished memoirs of Alikhanova, who knew Ryutin well, mention that he asserted more than once, among his closest co-thinkers, that the assassination of Stalin was not only possible but actually the only way to get rid of him. The Ryutin group, however, did not make any preparations or attempts to carry out such an assassination.
When Stalin found out about the group through the GPU or his own private informers, he struck quickly…. Stalin insisted on the arrest of the group's members and demanded that its leaders be shot. The majority of the Politburo, however, did not agree with Stalin. An unwritten law still existed at the time–that excessively severe measures should not be taken against Party activists. The decision was made to expel the "Ryutinites" from the Party, and to exile most of them to remote areas.
Ryutin himself was expelled and arrested first. On Oct. 11, 1932, Pravda published a decree of the Central Control Commission on the expulsion of 20 persons from the party "as degenerate elements who have become enemies of communism and of Soviet power, as traitors to the party and working-class, who tried to form an underground bourgeois-kulak organization under a fake 'Marxist Leninist' banner for the purpose of restoring capitalism in general and kulakdom in particular in the USSR."
… They were all banished from Moscow. Sten, Petrovsky, Uglanov, and Ravich-Cherkassky were expelled from the party for one year. They were given the right "after a year, depending on their conduct, to raise the question of a review of the present decree."
Many of these people soon "recanted," were reinstated in the party, and returned to Moscow.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 297

Ryutin also called for a "struggle for the destruction of Stalin's dictatorship," which would "give birth to new leaders and heroes." These words could be taken as advocating terrorism, because there was no sign of an open, organized movement against the government. Stalin could well have interpreted these words as a personal threat.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 17

In 1930 Stalin's protege, Syrtsov, newly promoted to candidate membership of the Politburo, had to be expelled from his post (though not from the party) for an 'unprincipled left-right bloc' with the Georgian Old Bolshevik Lominadze and others: they had complained about the 'feudal' approach to the peasantry, and described the new industrial showcases as eyewash. A far more significant case, especially as regards Stalin himself, came from a lower-level group. Ryutin, who had formerly been a party secretary in Moscow, was in trouble in 1930 for a memorandum arguing that Bukharin had been right as to policy, and Trotsky as to the intolerable regime within the party. He called for the suspension of collectivization, and a return to a rational industrial policy; and he censured Bukharin and his colleagues for their capitulation. Ryutin was arrested, but released for want of any evidence of criminal intent, and even readmitted to the party with a warning. But in 1932 he and a small group issued an 'Appeal' to all members of the party, attacking the destruction of the countryside, the collapse of genuine planning, the lawlessness in both the party and the country is a whole, the crushing of opinion, the ruin of the arts, the transformation of the press into 'a monstrous factory of lies'; it called for the removal of Stalin and his clique as soon as possible, adding that they would not go voluntarily so they would have to be forcibly ejected. (Ryutin is now

held up in the Soviet Union as a model of resistance to Stalin, as against the submission of Bukharin and the others.)
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 161

In 1989, it [the Ryutin platform] seems to have been rediscovered, and a summary was printed; it consisted of 13 chapters, four of them attacking Stalin. It is believed to have run to 200 pages, and according to reports later reaching the West the key sentence was “The Right wing has proved correct in the economic field, and Trotsky in his criticism of the regime in the Party.” It censored Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky for their capitulation. It proposed an economic retreat, the reduction of investment in industry, and the liberation of the peasants by freedom to quit the kolkhozes. As a first step in the restoration of democracy in the Party, it urged the immediate readmission of all those expelled, including Trotsky.
It was even more notable for its severe condemnation of Stalin personally. Its 50 pages devoted to this theme called forcefully for his removal from the leadership. It describes Stalin as “the evil genius of the Russian Revolution, who, motivated by a personal desire for power and revenge, brought the Revolution to the verge of ruin….
Ryutin was expelled from the party in September 1930, and arrested six weeks later. However, on January 17, 1931 the 0GPU Collegium acquitted him of criminal intent, and he was released and later restored to Party membership, with a warning.
… Above all, it stated, “Stalin and his clique will not and cannot voluntarily give up their positions, so they must be removed by force.” It added that this should be done “as soon as possible.”
Stalin interpreted the Appeal as a call for his assassination. In the Bukharin-Rykov Trial in 1938, it was to be spoken of at length as “registering the transition to the tactics of over throwing the Soviet power by force; the essential points of the Ryutin platform were a palace coup, terrorism….
On September 23rd, 1932, Ryutin was again expelled the Party and arrested…. it [the 0GPU] referred the question to the Politburo. There Kirov is said to have spoken “with particular force against recourse to the death penalty. Moreover, he succeeded in winning over the Politburo in this view.” Another account says that in addition to Kirov, Ordjonikidze, Kuibyshev, Kossior, Kalinin, and Rudzutak spoke against Stalin, who was only supported by Kaganovich. Even Molotov and Andreyev seemed to have wavered.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 23-24

A joint session of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission took place from September 28, to October 2, 1932. (Zinoviev, Kamenev, and others had already been called before the Presidium of the Control Commission; Zinoviev and Kamenev had expressed regret, but Uglanov is reported “accusing his accusers.”) The Ryutin group were now expelled from the Party “as degenerates who have become enemies of Communism and the Soviet regime, as traitors to the Party and to the working-class, who, under the flag of a spurious ‘Marxism-Leninism,’ have attempted to create a bourgeois-kulak organization for the restoration of capitalism and particularly kulakdom in the USSR.” Ryutin was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment, and 29 others to lesser terms.
The plenum passed another resolution “immediately expelling from the Party all who knew of the existence of this counter-revolutionary group, and in particular had read the counter-revolutionary documents and not informed the Central Control Commission and the Central Committee of the All Union Communist Party (Bolshevik), as concealed enemies of the Party and the working-class.” It was signed “Stalin.” Zinoviev and Kamenev, thus again

expelled from the Party, were deported to the Urals. Soon afterward, Ivan Smirnov, who on his readmission to the Party had become head of the Gorky Automobile Works, was rearrested and sentenced to 10 years in jail, going to the “isolator” at Suzdal. Smilga received five years, and with Mrachkovsky was sent to Verkhne-Uralsk.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 26

INTERVIEWER: I understand that “The Letter of an Old Bolshevik” contains the first account of the so-called Riutin platform. Did you learn about this from Bukharin?
NICOLAEVSKY: I had, of course, known about the platform of Riutin, whom I had met personally in 1918 in Irkutsk, when he was still a Menshevik. I knew that in 1928 he was one of the pillars of the right-wing opposition in the Moscow Committee, which Stalin broke up, and that after he was removed from his post as editor of Krasnaya Zvezda he wrote a long program, the bulk of which dealt with an analysis of the role of Stalin in the life of the Communist Party.
Nicolaevsky, Boris. Power and the Soviet Elite; “The letter of an Old Bolshevik.” New York: Praeger, 1965, p. 11

ZINOVIEV AND KAMENEV EXPELLED AGAIN FOR ACCEPTING THE RYUTIN PLATFORM

By that time [the period when collectivization succeeded in 1932–1933], Zinoviev and Kamenev had started up once again their struggle against the Party line, in particular by supporting the counter-revolutionary program put forward by Riutin in 1931–1932. They were expelled a second time from the Party and exiled to Siberia.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 136 [p. 117 on the NET]

In 1932 Zinoviev and Kamenev were once again expelled from the party for “contacts with the Ryutin group.” They were arrested…. After one more recantation, however, they were freed and readmitted to the party. At the Seventeenth Party Congress (in 1934) they gave speeches confessing their sins.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 179

Following Ryutin’s arrest in September 1932 one of the top bodies of the party, the Control Commission, expelled 20 other members for belonging to a “counter-revolutionary group” led by him. Among those ousted were the former Politburo members and oppositionists Zinoviev and Kamenev, who reportedly had received copies of one of Ryutin’s works but had not informed the authorities.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 17

…During one of Yagoda’s routine visits to Stalin, the master said: ‘Keep an eye on Kamenev. I think he’s tied up with Ryutin. Kamenev is not one to give in so easily. I’ve known him for more than 20 years. He’s an enemy.’ Yagoda did as he was told. Kamenev was arrested in 1934, tried in 1935 and given five years. He was tried again in the same year and this time given 10 years. At the end of 1936, a full stop was put to his case, forever.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 61

In 1932 Zinoviev, Kamenev, and many others were once again expelled from the party and exiled to Siberia. “The greatest political mistake of my life was that I deserted Trotsky in 1927,” Zinoviev now said…. A few months later, however, in May 1933, Zinoviev and Kamenev were, after a new recantation, allowed to return from exile.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 350

Zinoviev and Kamenev were also acquainted with the documents, but neither of them informed the GPU or the Central Committee. They had therefore failed in their duty as Party members to notify the Party and the GPU immediately of oppositional activity….
On September 15, 1932, the “counterrevolutionary” group was arrested by the GPU. Zinoviev and Kamenev were summoned by the Party Control Commission. They were charged with knowing about the group and failing to report it. The commission reminded Kamenev of his conversation with Bukharin and of his alliance with the Trotskyists. The October leaders were expelled from the Party and banished –Kamenev to Minusinsk, Zinoviev to Kustanai. Bukharin was not yet touched.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 274

STALIN DID NOT DEMAND THE DEATH OF RYUTIN

The Politburo Commission’s examination of the Ryutin group did not find any evidence that Stalin demanded their execution in 1932, or that Kirov opposed it.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 44

On 30 September, Riutin was arrested. It is possible that Stalin, supported by Kaganovich, demanded the death penalty for Riutin but the execution of a comrade–a fellow “sword-bearer”–was a dangerous step, resisted by Sergo and Kirov. There is no evidence that it was ever formally discussed– Kirov did not attend Politburo sessions in late September and October. Besides, Stalin would not have proposed such a measure without first canvassing Sergo and Kirov, just as he had in the case of Tukhachevsky in 1930. He probably never proposed it specifically. On 11 October, Riutin was sentenced to 10 years in the camps.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 92

The second case of repression of an unrepentant ‘rightist’ centered on one of Bukharin’s erstwhile supporters in the Moscow party organization, Ryutin. Apparently he had some links to the Syrtsov group, because in October 1930 he was expelled from the party along with two minor figures associated with Syrtsov. Once out of the party Ryutin enjoyed no immunity to police action and was exiled to some remote place. Here he had the contumacy to write and smuggle out a ‘platform’, which circulated secretly in the party in Moscow and other cities. Supposedly this was a long document, sharply critical of Stalin as an individual. The boss, must have found it highly objectionable, for it was suppressed so thoroughly that no copy reached the West at the time, nor has it turned up in any post-Stalin scholarship, dissident or official. When the identity of the author was discovered, Ryutin was sent to jail–one of the ‘isolators’ in which troublesome Trotskyists resided. According to a leading Emigre Menshevik Kremlinologist of the 1930s, Boris Nicolaevsky, Stalin asked the Politburo

to authorize Ryutin's execution, arguing that the illegal platform was tantamount to a call for the assassination of Stalin. Perhaps. Nicolaevsky later said that his information came largely from Bukharin, who saw Nicolaevsky in the course of a visit to Western Europe in 1936. But Nicolaevsky admitted that he mixed in material from other sources, and one wonders how well-informed Bukharin was on such sensitive details as conversations in the Politburo, from which he had been expelled in 1929.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 145

KEY MEMBERS SUPPORTED THE RYUTIN PLATFORM

Smirnov had been proposed as the leading Secretary of the Party in 1922, just before the job went to Stalin. After being exiled with the other Trotskyites in 1927, he had recanted but, during the Ryutin period, had spoken approvingly of the proposals to remove Stalin and had been in jail ever since.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 84

He [Rykov] went on to describe the supposed Rightist underground which arose after 1930. He then came to the Ryutin platform–which, he said, he, Tomsky, Bukharin, Schmidt, and Uglanov had been responsible for. Ryutin had merely fronted for them, and Yagoda's protection had saved the main culprits.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 354

INTERVIEWER: Didn't Stalin know of Bukharin's ideas? If so, why didn't he take measures against him?
NICOLAEVSKY: Bukharin was not physically molested at this time [circa 1936]. He was only worked over, so to speak, in the press and at all sorts of meetings. The Communist Academy was even forced to conduct a special discussion devoted to unmasking his deviation, … He was, for example, accused of being in favor of war. But no action was taken against him.
Nicolaevsky, Boris. Power and the Soviet Elite; "The letter of an Old Bolshevik." New York : Praeger, 1965, p. 19

A Trotskyist who was in jail then maintains that Ryutin and some associates were tried and imprisoned at this time, but official publications show that they were merely reprimanded by the Central Committee, not expelled from the party. Smirnov, the only one who had been on the Central Committee, was removed from it and threatened with expulsion from the party if he did not mend his ways. The same resolution was also relatively mild in merely reprimanding Rykov and Tomsky, who supposedly had been in touch with this group. Once again, the majority in the Politburo and Central Committee seems to have opposed harsh sanctions.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York : New York University Press, 1988, p. 146

RYUTIN ACTUALLY WROTE WORDS OF SUPPORT FOR STALIN

A warm spell. The trial of the young Party members who had supported Ryutin ended with light sentences. Ryutin himself wrote to his wife from prison in November 1933 that "only in

the USSR, under the leadership of a great genius like our beloved Stalin, have such unprecedented successes in socialist construction been achieved."
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 298

Industrialisation

AMERICAN ENGINEERS SUPPORT 5 YEAR PLAN

American engineers who came to help build the new industries often said that the five-year plan was “utterly logical,” but added, “if the people will stand for the sacrifices.”
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 68

For five years I worked in the Urals, helping to build Magnitogorsk.
Scott, John. Behind the Urals Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1942, p. viii

At every stage of production the shortage of trained workers was acute. Engineers and technicians were engaged from the United States, Germany, and France. In March 1931 a director of the Supreme Council of National Economy stated that about 5000 foreign specialists were employed in Soviet industry. Hundreds of Soviet engineers and students were trained abroad, especially in the United States, and returned to their country to act as instructors and leaders of industry.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 253

Conditions were reported to be especially bad in the copper mines of the Ural Mountain region, at that time Russia’s most promising mineral-producing area, which had been selected for a lion’s share of the funds available for production. American mining engineers had been engaged by the dozens for use in this area, and hundreds of American foreman had likewise been brought over for instruction purposes in mines and mills. Four or five American mining engineers had been assigned to each of the large copper mines in the Urals, and American metallurgists as well.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 87

WISE TO SHIFT INDUSTRY TO INTERIOR

The Soviet leaders met what they considered an imminent danger of war by shifting the emphasis of the Five-Year Plan toward building a main center of heavy industry in the Ural Mountains and the Kuznetsk Basin -the practically impregnable part of the coountry.
With the conclusion of the First Five-Year Plan, the Soviet Union plunged into the second, which did three times as much new construction as the First Five-Fear Plan had done and did it with much less strain. Soviet industry was completely reorganized and equipped throughout with the latest machines and methods. Greater emphasis was given than previously to producing goods of consumption. This, together with the rapid improvement of farming, caused a fairly swift rise in the general standard of living.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 70-71

THE HIGH COST OF INDUSTRIALIZATION

The second Five-Year Plan was completed…. There is nothing with which to compare its development. To judge the incidents of this mightiest of human emancipatory movements by

the yardsticks of Western political democracy is a sheer waste of the critical faculty. Stalin and the Bolshevik Party were leading a war which had to be won quickly because war of another kind was already in the offing. In this period Russia was no eldorado. The Socialist Society was not falling as heavenly manna from the skies. It was being won with “sweat, blood, and tears” and the casualties were great. Thousands upon thousands were killed and wounded, frozen to death, starved…. Thousands were court-martialed, shot. The winning of the industrial battle of Magnitogorsk, which gave the Soviet Union her greatest steel-producing plant, made possible the winning of the Battles of Stalingrad, Kharkov, Kiev, and many more, but it was not without casualties. The riveters who froze to death on the top of the great construction, the riggers who fell from swaying scaffolding, the thousands who starved in tents in the Siberian temperatures of 40 below 0, must not be forgotten in assessing the costs of saving the world from Nazi domination. To crowd into ten years whole centuries of human experience would have been impossible without casualties, injustices, and suffering unpardonable judged by the standards of another society enjoying a period of comparatively quiescent development.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 180

Industrial reconstruction means the transfer of resources from the field of production of articles of consumption to the field of production of means of production. Without that, there is not, and cannot be, any serious reconstruction of industry, especially under Soviet conditions. But what does that mean? It means that money is being invested in the construction of new enterprises, that the number of new towns and new consumers is increasing, while, on the other hand, the new enterprises will begin to put out additional masses of commodities only in three or four years’ time. It is obvious that this does not help to overcome the shortage of goods. Does it mean that we have to fold our arms and admit our impotence in the face of the shortage of goods? Of course not. We must take energetic measures to mitigate the shortage. That can be done, and should be done, immediately. For this purpose we must accelerate the expansion of those branches of industry which are directly associated with the development of agriculture: the Stalingrad tractor works, the Rostov agricultural machinery works, the Voronezh seed-sorter works, etc., etc.. Further, we must as far as possible strengthen the branches of industry which can increase the output of deficient goods (cloth, glass, nails, etc.) and so on, and so forth.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 144

SU CONSTITUTION GUARANTEES EQUAL RIGHTS FOR ALL RACES AND NATIONALITIES

Article 123: equal rights for citizens of the USSR, irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social, and political life, shall be irrevocable law.
Constitution of the USSR. Moscow: Co-operative Pub. Society of Foreign Workers in the U.S.S.R., Chapter 10, 1936

Whatever one may say about the lack of personal freedom and individual liberty under his regime–and very much indeed can be said against it–there is no doubt that realization of the principle of racial and national equality inside the Soviet Union is in line with the best traditions of democracy. Stalin was quite right in attributing much of Soviet Russia’s strength to that policy.

Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 162

In 1922 the USSR was created. The name of Stalin is indissolubly bound up with that great historic event. The Constitution of the USSR is, fundamentally, the marvelous set of rules drawn up by the revolutionary minority under Tsarism. It may be summed up as follows. It establishes, or, rather, it proposes: “A close economic and military union, at the same time as the widest possible independence, complete liberty of development of all national culture, systematic destruction of all survivals of national inequality, and powerful aid from the stronger nations for the weaker.”
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 101

Thus national equality in all forms (language, schools, etc.) is an essential element in the solution of the national problem. A state law based on complete democracy in the country is required, prohibiting all national privileges without exception and all kinds of disabilities and restrictions on the rights of national minorities.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 196

Kazakhstan is one of the minority republics of the Soviet Union, and the Communist authorities had passed a law some time before providing that all industries in minority republics should employ at least 50 percent of the native races, both in production and management. This may be a very enlightened law, which appeals to professors and humanitarians in all parts of the world, but didn’t seem to work out in Kazakhstan in 1932….
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 107

I cannot speak with authority about pre-Revolutionary Russia. I do know that since 1928 The Soviet Government has vigorously enforced its [anti-racist] laws making the slightest demonstrations of race prejudice criminal offenses. I saw, during the years I traveled among the Asiatic tribes, that no offense was likely to be punished more swiftly. In fact, the authorities leaned over backward in this respect, and Russians took care not to get involved in a dispute with members of minority races, because they knew that Soviet courts would give them the worst of it.
I am sure that mining and other industries located in minority republics have been held back because the Communists strictly enforce a regulation that native men and women must occupy at least half the jobs in any local industry, and half of the managing jobs as well. This regulation, in my opinion, has been carried to ridiculous extremes. I have come up against incompetent, ignorant, and arrogant native tribesmen holding down executive jobs in mines and mills for which they were entirely unsuited. Their Russian subordinates, who were trying to cover up their mistakes, apparently were afraid to remove them for fear they would be accused of chauvinism, a capital crime in Soviet law.
The same principle is observed in the political field, and large districts have been terrorised or at least retarded in their proper development because the highest political positions have been turned over to illiterate Asiatic tribesmen. Native officials usually have their Russian secretaries, who probably keep control in their own hands. But it requires a lot of patience to deal with these people, especially after they have gotten the idea that they hold the whip-hand, and that Russian underlings will not dare interfere with them.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 256-257

At any rate, the Asiatic regions of Russia with which I have been familiar for many years had been transformed almost beyond recognition during the time I have known them. The change-over from an agricultural to an industrial manner of life has been accomplished in these regions in a remarkably short time. Hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of Asiatics have been pushed into new forms of industrial labor, and a large proportion of those who were illiterate have been taught to read and write, and provided with new alphabets and new books in their own languages where none existed before. So far as possible, the Asiatic tribes have been given schools, hospitals and clinics, libraries, and theaters equal to those in European Russia.
The Communists make a great point of their belief that all races are equal in potential ability, and that one can be as good as another if it has the same opportunities. Holding this belief, they are determined to give the same opportunities to all races and tribes in Russia at the earliest possible moment. They had distributed a disproportionate amount of their available funds for education, public health, and sanitation, in the Asiatic regions where these things had been most neglected.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 259

…The white people in Russia have been remarkably free from prejudice against the colored races for generations, if not centuries. Now all social and legal discriminations against mixed marriages are being rigorously prohibited by law and custom.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 262

Clearly, in no sense can the Asiatic Republics of the USSR be characterized as colonies or neo- colonies of the Slavic areas; they have been rapidly and thoroughly integrated into the USSR while their native languages and cultures have thrived. Their living standards, educational opportunities, and welfare systems have been raised to those of the European USSR. Rather than being exploited by Russia, and their industrialization and all around economic development impeded, their economies have been rapidly industrialized and modernized, largely at the expense of heavy economic subsidies from the European areas. Natives of the Asiatic Republics predominate in the politically responsible positions. The absence of any significant signs of discontent with the Soviet system among Soviet Asians contrasts radically with nationalist and anti-imperialist movements across the Soviet borders in such countries as pre-1979 Iran, and is evidence of the lack of felt national oppression among Soviet Asians.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 68

ECONOMIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND INDUSTRIAL PROGRESS IN THE 30’S

The industrialization of a great community is by itself obviously not unique…. What is unique in the USSR is that a single decade saw developments which required half a century are more elsewhere. Industrialization was achieved, moreover, without private capital, without foreign investments (save in the form of engineering skills and technical advice), without private property as a spur to individual initiative, without private ownership of any of the means of production, and with no unearned increment or private fortunes accruing to entrepreneurs or lucky investors. Resources were developed, labour was recruited, trained and allocated, capital was saved and invested not through the price mechanism of a

competitive market but through a consciously devised and deliberately executed national economic plan, drawn up by quinquennia, by years and by quarters for every segment of the economy, for every region, city, town, and village, for every factory, farm, mine and mill, for every store, bank and school, and even for every hospital, theater and sports club.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 211

The adventure led from the illiteracy to literacy, from the NEP to socialism, from archaic agriculture to collective cultivation, from a rural society to a predominately urban community, from general ignorance of the machine to social mastery of modern technology.
Between the poverty stricken year of 1924, when Lenin died, and the relatively abundant year of 1940, the cultivated area of USSR expanded by 74 percent; grain crops increased 11 percent; coal production was multiplied by 10; steel output by 18; engineering and metal industries by 150; total national income by 10; industrial output by 24; annual capital investment by 57. During the First Five-year Plan, 51 billion rubles were invested; during the Second, 114; and during the Third, 192. Factory and office workers grew from 7,300,000 to 30,800,000 and school and college students from 7,900,000 to 36,600,000. Between 1913 and 1940, oil production increased from nine to 35 million tons; coal from 29 to 164; pig iron from 4 to 15; steel from 4 to 18; machine tools from 1000 to 48,000 units, tractors from 0 to over 500,000; harvestor combines from 0 to 153,500; electrical power output from two billion kWh to 50 billion; and the value of industrial output from 11 billion rubles to more than 100 billion by 1938. If the estimated volume of total industrial production in 1913 be taken as 100, the corresponding indices for 1938 are 93.2 for France; 113.3 for England, 120 United States; 131.6 for Germany, and 908.8 for the Soviet Union.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 212

The Soviet government has never defaulted and on any of its own obligations.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 241

Much interest was aroused in both countries [the USSR and USA] by the 1944 summer journey of Eric Johnston, President of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, who visited the Urals, Siberia, and Kazakhstan and declared that Soviet economic progress since 1928 was “an unexampled achievement in the industrial history of the whole world.”
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 491

Therefore to Stalin belongs the credit for having in the course of a decade lifted the largest country in the world, and the richest in natural resources, from a backward peasant state to an industrial state, and for having at the same time transformed its agriculture by American methods and carried culture, education, science, and, above all, the possibility of obtaining these, literally to every one of its cottages.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam’s sons, 1942, p. 119

The Soviets attained under Stalin’s rule the first place in the world in regard to tractors, machines, and motor trucks; the second as to electric power. Russia, 20 years ago the least mechanized country, has become the foremost…. In the same decade between 1929 in 1939, in which the production of all other countries barely mounted, while even dropping in some, Soviet production was multiplied by 4. The national income mounted between 1913 in 1938 from 21 to 105 billion rubles. The income of the individual citizen was increased by

370% in the last eight years–with only irrelevant income taxes and reasonable social security contributions imposed upon them–while it dropped almost everywhere else in the world.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 129

The arguments of the "left" and right opposition groups that their actions were justified because the Party policy was undermining the state are belied by the economic and social record. Between 1928 and 1934 iron production rose from 3 million to 10 million tons, steel from 4 to 9 million, oil from 11 to 24 million. The figures, though stark and simple, have social as well as economic significance. "We inherited from the past," Stalin noted in 1935, "a technically backward, impoverished, and ruined country. Ruined by four years of imperialist war, and ruined again by three years of civil war, a country with a semi-literate population, with a low technical level, with isolated industrial islands lost in a sea of dwarf peasant farms." The figures show that this impoverished and largely feudal country was pulling out of the ruins and establishing the economic foundations of socialism.
In 1933 Stalin could announce that (in the midst of the world capitalist depression) "unemployment has been abolished." The following year he reported on the developing "new village":
"The appearance of the countryside has changed even more. The old type of village, with a church in the most prominent place, with the best houses–those of the police officer, the priest, and the kulaks–in the foreground, and the dilapidated huts of the peasants in the background, is beginning to disappear. Its place is being taken by the new type of village, with its public farm buildings, with its clubs, radio, cinemas, schools, libraries, and creches; with its tractors, harvester combines, thrashing machines, and automobiles."
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 73

In 1939 Stalin reported that the iron and steel industry, which had been virtually non-existent in the early 1920s, had made great strides: "In 1938 we produced about 15 million tons of pig iron; Great Britain produced 7 million tons." Agriculture had been mechanized. In 1938 there were 483,500 tractors in use and 153,500 harvester combines–in a previously horse and plow countryside. Wages had doubled, from an annual average of 1,513 rubles in 1933 to 3,447 in 1938. Similar advances had been made in education; in a nation of centuries-old mass illiteracy there were now nearly 34 million "students of all grades"; in higher educational institutions there were 600,000 students; in 1938, 31,300 engineers, 10,600 agricultural specialists, and 35,700 teachers graduated. A new "stratum" of professionals had been born:
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 74

When we consider Stalin's facts and figures, it becomes clear that we are witnessing the most concentrated economic advance ever recorded–greater even than those of the Industrial Revolution. Within 10 years a primarily feudal society had been changed into an industrialized one. And for the first time in history such an advance was due not to capitalism but to socialism.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 75

In 1928 I wrote (It is I, Barbusse, who is speaking now) that: "In the Five-Year Plan now in progress, it was not a question of speculations on figures and words by bureaucrats and literary men, but one of a cut-and-dried programme; the figures of the State Plan should be considered more as accomplished victories than as indications and," I concluded, "when the

Bolsheviks assure us that by 1931 Soviet industry will have increased by 8%, that 7 billion rubles will have been invested in economic revival, that their hydro-electric stations will reach a power of 3,500,000 kilowatts, etc…. we must admit that these things virtually exist already…."
…Now if, at the date indicated, the above figures were not exactly as had been foretold, it was because they were nearly all exceeded.
…If any of the prophesied figures have not been reached, their percentage is absolutely insignificant and negligible. In a great many directions they have been exceeded. The Soviet economic plans were realized to the extent of 109% in 1922-23 and 105% in 1923-25, on all the main heads, to speak only of the earlier Plans.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 142

By the time of the holding of the 17th Party Congress in January 1934, the Soviet people under the glorious leadership of the CPSU headed by Stalin, that resolute opponent of all reactionaries, had made the following unprecedented achievements:
(a) Industrial production in the USSR now accounted for 70% of total production, and the country had been transformed from an agrarian country to an industrial one.
(b) Capitalist elements in the sphere of industry had been completely eliminated and the socialist economic system had become the sole economic system in this sphere.
(c) The kulaks had been eliminated as a class and the socialist economic system had become predominant in the sphere of agriculture.
(d) The collective-farm system had put an end to the poverty and misery of millions of people in the countryside who now enjoyed material conditions hitherto unknown to them.
(e) As a result of the development of socialist industry, unemployment had been abolished, and though the eight-hour day had been retained in certain industries, in the majority of the enterprises a seven-hour day had been instituted; in the case of industries representing special danger to health, the length of the working day was reduced to six hours.
(f) The victory of socialism in all branches of the national economy had put an end to the exploitation of man by man.
No wonder that the 17th Party Congress is known as the Congress of Victors.
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 181

The second five-year plan brought unprecedentedly high rates of industrial growth. In 1934 gross industrial output rose by 19 percent, in 1935 by 23 percent, and in 1936 by 29 percent. The majority of people's commissars and obkom secretaries in1935-1936 were awarded the Order of Lenin, which at that time was a rare and very high honor. In 1936 no more than two or three hundred persons bore this honor….
After several years of stagnation, agricultural production also began to increase: in 1935 gross industrial output was 20 percent higher than in 1933. Soon after rationing was ended, collective farms were permitted to sell grain on the open market, which stimulated farmers' interest in his increasing grain production. (The system of grain procurements did not create such a stimulus because of low procurement prices.) Consumer goods prices began to drop. The acute food crisis of the early 30s was apparently over. The standard of living, both urban and rural, rose appreciably. It was at this time that Stalin uttered his famous phrase: "Life has become better, comrades; life has become more joyful."
Life really did become a bit "more joyful," and this atmosphere engendered a certain enthusiasm.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 352

It was only in the late 30s that the fruits of the second revolution began to mature. Towards the end of the decade Russia's industrial power was catching up with Germany's. Her efficiency and capacity for organization were still incomparably lower. So was the standard of living of her people. But the aggregate output of her mines, basic plants, and factories approached the level which the most efficient and disciplined of all continental nations, assisted by foreign capital, had reached only after three-quarters of a century of intensive industrialization. The other continental nations, to whom only a few years before Russians still looked up, were now left far behind. The Industrial Revolution spread from central and western Russia to the remote wilderness of Soviet Asia. The collectivization of farming, too, began to yield positive results. Towards the end of the decade agriculture had recovered from the terrible slump of the early '30s; and industry was at last able to supply tractors, harvester-combines, and other implements in great numbers and the farms were achieving a very high degree of mechanization. The outside world was more or less unaware of the great change and the shift in the international balance of power which it implied. Spectacular failures of the first five-year plan induced foreign observers to take a highly skeptical view of the results of the second and the third. The macabre series of 'purge' trials suggested economic and political weakness. The elements of weakness were undoubtedly there; and they were even greater than may appear when the scene is viewed in retrospect from the vantage point of the late '40s. But the elements of strength were also incomparably greater than they were thought to be in the late 30s.
[Footnote]: A detailed description of the achievements of the planned economy can hardly have its place in Stalin's biography. Only a brief statistical summary can be given here, in which the strength of Russian industry in 1928-29 is compared with that of 1937-38, i.e., towards the end of the second and the beginning of the third five-year plan. In the course of that decade the output of electricity per annum rose from 6 to 40 billion kwh, of coal from 30 to 133 million tons, of oil from 11 to 32 million tons, of steel from 4 to 18 million tons, of motor cars from 1,400 to 211,000. The value of the annual output of machine-tools rose from 3 billion to 33 billion rubles (in 'stable prices'). (In 1941 the total output of the Soviet machine-building industry was 50 times higher than in 1913). Between 1928 and 1937 the number of workers and employees rose from 11.5 million to 27 million. Before the revolution the number of doctors was 20,000; it was 105,000 in 1937. The number of hospital beds rose from 175,000 to 618,000. In 1914, 8 million people attended schools of all grades; in 1928, 12 million; in 1938, 31.5 million. In 1913, 112,000 people studied at university colleges; in 1939, 620,000. Before the revolution public libraries possessed 640 books for 10,000 inhabitants; in 1939, 8610.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 340

The achievement was remarkable, even if measured only by the yard-stick of Russian national aspirations. On a different scale, it laid the foundation for Russia's new power just as Cromwell's Navigation Act had once laid the foundation for British naval supremacy. Those who still view the political fortunes of countries in terms of national ambitions and prestige cannot but accord to Stalin the foremost place among all those rulers who, through the ages, were engaged in building up Russia's power. Actuated by such motives even many of the Russian White emigres began to hail Stalin as a national hero. But the significance of the second revolution lay not only and not even mainly in what it meant to Russia. To the world it was important as the first truly gigantic experiment in planned economy, the first instance in which a government undertook to plan and regulate the whole economic life of its

country and to direct its nationalized industrial resources towards a uniquely rapid multiplication of the nation's wealth…. What was new in Stalin's planning was the fact that it was initiated not merely as a wartime expedient, but as the normal pattern of economic life in peace. Hitherto governments had engaged in planning as long as they had needed implements of war. Under Stalin's five-year plans, too, guns, tanks, and planes were produced in great profusion; but the chief merit of these plans was not that they enabled Russia to arm herself, but that they enabled her to modernize and transform society.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 341

The dam on the Dnieper was built by the firm of Col. Hugh Cooper, a prominent American hydraulic engineer; the majority of the largest Soviet power plants were equipped by the British firm Metropolitan-Vickers; Western companies designed, built, and equipped Magnitogorsk and Kuznetsk, the Urals Machinery Works, the Kaganovich Ball Bearing Plant in Moscow, an automobile plant in Nizhny Novgorod, and a truck plant in Yaroslavl, among others. Ordjonikidze, the commissar of heavy industry, was able to state with full justification: "Our factories, our mines, our mills are now equipped with excellent technology that cannot be found in any one country…. How did we get it? We bought the most highly perfected machinery, the very latest technology in the world, from the Americans, Germans, French, and English, and with that we equipped our enterprises." And he added caustically, "Meanwhile, many of their factories and mines still have machinery dating from the nineteenth century, or the early part of the twentieth."
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 231

On the eve of World War II the Soviet Union held first place in the world for extraction of manganese ore and production of synthetic rubber. It was the number one oil producer in Europe, number two in the world; the same for gross output of machine tools and tractors. In electric power, steel, cast iron, and aluminum it was the second-largest producer in Europe and the third largest in the world. In coal and cement production it held third place in Europe and fourth place in the world. Altogether the USSR accounted for 10 percent of world industrial production.
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 317

There actually were certain grounds for claiming economic successes. In 1935-36, Soviet industry reached tempos of growth in the productivity of labor which were unknown in the previous decade.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 291

[Report to the 18th Congress on March 10, 1939]
As regards livestock farming, considerable advances have been made during the past few years in this, the most backward branch of agriculture, as well. True, in the number of horses and in sheep breeding we are still below the prerevolutionary level; but as regards cattle and hog breeding we have already passed the prerevolutionary level.
It is obvious that trade in the country could not have so developed without a certain increase in freight traffic. And indeed during the period under review freight traffic increased in all branches of transport, especially rail and air. There was an increase in water-borne freight, too, but with considerable fluctuations, and in 1938, it is to be regretted, there was even a drop in water-borne freight as compared with the previous year.

Franklin, Bruce, Ed. The Essential Stalin; Major Theoretical Writings. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p. 359

[Report to the 18th Congress on March 10, 1939]
The abolition of exploitation and the consolidation of the socialist economic system, the absence of unemployment, with its attendant poverty in town and country, the enormous expansion of industry and the steady growth in the number of workers, the increase in the productivity of labor of the workers and collective farmers, the securement of the land to the collective farms in perpetuity, and a vast number of first-class tractors and agricultural machines supplied to the collective farms–all this has created effective conditions for a further rise in the standard of living of the workers and peasants. In its turn, the improvement in the standard of living of the workers and the peasants has naturally led to an improvement in the standard of living of the intelligentsia who represent a considerable force in our country and serve the interests of the workers and the peasants.
Franklin, Bruce, Ed. The Essential Stalin; Major Theoretical Writings. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p. 363

At the same time the large capital investments of the first five-year plan resulted in a huge increase in industrial capacity. From approximately August 1933 to the summer or autumn of 1936 industrial and agricultural production grew rapidly, and the standard of living of a large section of the population increased above the very low level of the years of hunger and deprivation.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 10

Beginning in the April-June quarter of 1933 the performance of heavy industry, including the crucial iron and steel and coal industries, considerably improved. According to official statistics, production in December 1933 was 12% greater than in December 1932 and exceeded the low point of January 1933 by as much as 35%. The confidential Annual Report of the British Foreign Office for 1933 stated that “there seems to be a certain justification, in the light of the progress made in the basic industries in the closing months, for the increasing optimism with which the authorities regard the future.”
Another reason for confidence in the economic situation was that the severe restrictions imposed on state expenditure from the end of 1932 succeeded in bringing about financial stability. Currency in circulation declined by 19% between 1 January and 1 July, and did not increase during the rest of the year. And in every quarter of 1933 exports exceeded imports; a deficit of 135 million rubles in 1932 gave way to a surplus of 148 million rubles in 1933.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 188

The year 1934 was the calmest of the 13 years of Soviet history from the “great breakthrough” of 1929 to the German invasion. In this year the economy began to yield some of the fruits of the painful struggle for industrialization in the previous five years. For the first time the production of heavy industry exceeded the plan; and the production of the food industry also increased substantially. Although the harvest was not outstanding, the amount of grain harvested was probably several million tons greater than in 1933. After the disastrous decline in 1929-33, the number of cattle, sheep, and pigs increased for the first time since 1930.

Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 236

The new policy thus adopted amounted to nothing less than a second agrarian revolution, even greater in magnitude than that of 1917-1918. The innumerable scattered strips and tiny holdings throughout the USSR were to be summarily amalgamated into several hundred thousand large farms, on which agriculture could be effectively mechanized. Only in this way, it was finally concluded, could the aggregate production of foodstuffs be sufficiently increased, within the ensuing decade, to meet the requirements of the growing population; to rescue from inevitable poverty the mass of the peasants unable to produce even enough for their own families; and to build up a grain reserve adequate to provide against the periodic failure of crops, whilst meeting the needs of defense against ever-possible foreign invasion.
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, p. 464

When I had left for the Soviet Union, a relative had expressed the hope that the experience would cure my revolutionary illusions. That did not happen. I left the Soviet Union more convinced of communism than when I had arrived. The Party had overcome one formidable obstacle after another and had succeeded in transforming the Soviet Union from a backward, semi-literate peasant country into a modern industrial state with a well-educated population, with equal opportunities for all, regardless of sex or ethnicity. While production was stagnating or receding in the capitalist world, with unprecedented mass unemployment, the Soviet economy was expanding rapidly, with employment and social security for everyone. While the utopian expectations of 1930 had been toned down by the difficulties of the three following years, there was confidence that progress would continue from year to year. You knew what you were working for: a better society….
Certainly there was not universal brotherhood, but there was much more warmth and openness in human relations than in the West;…
Blumenfeld, Hans. Life Begins at 65. Montreal, Canada: Harvest House, c1987, p. 173

But let us begin by providing the reader a picture of the Soviet 1930-ies, as a matter of fact a decisive decade in the history of the Soviet Union. Among other things, it was during the 1930-ies that the first and second five-year plan were realised and the collectivisation of the agriculture took place. The national income, which was 29 million Roubles in 1929, grew to 105 millions 1938. An increase by 360 per cent in ten years, a unique phenomenon in the history of industrialisation! The number of workers and employees increased from 14,5 millions 1930 to 28 millions 1938. The average, annual salary of industrial workers grew from 991 Roubles 1930 to 3,447 Roubles 1938. The grants for cultural and social matters in the state budget increased from approximately 2 billion Roubles 1930 to 35 billions 1938….
During the 1930-ies production in the Soviet Union grew at a rate never before seen in the history of mankind. In the beginning of 1930 the total value of the industrial production was 21 million Roubles. Eight years later the value of the industrial production was above 100 million Roubles. (Both figures counted in the prices of 1926-27). The industrial production of the country had multiplied almost five times in eight years! In the beginning of 1930 the area sown with all kinds of crops was 118 million hectares. 1938 the area was 1369 million hectares. Simultaneously, the country had carried through a total collectivisation of the agriculture and passed through and solved gigantic problems connected with the collectivisation and modernisation of the agriculture. In the beginning of 1930 the number of

tractors in the Soviet Union was 34,900. In the year 1938 it was 483,500. The tractors were multiplied almost fourteen times in eight years. During the same period the combine-harvesters increased from 1,700 to 153,500 and the harvesters from 4,300 to 130,800.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle during the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

On 7 January 1933, Stalin celebrated the completion of the First Five-Year Plan in agriculture and industry in a widely publicized address to the Central Committee. Before the plan, he claimed, the Soviet Union lacked iron and steel, tractor, automobile, machine-tool, chemical, agricultural machinery and aircraft industries; in electrical power, coal and oil production the country had been 'last on the list'; it had only one coal and metallurgical base, one textile center. All these deficiencies, asserted Stalin, had been rectified in the Five-Year Plan that had been completed in four years. The effect of all this was to create factories that could be quickly switched to defense production, thus transforming the Soviet Union from 'a weak country, unprepared for defense, to a country mighty in defense, a country prepared for every contingency'. Without this, he added, 'our position would have been more or less analogous to the present position of China, which has no heavy industry and no war industry of its own and which is being molested by anyone who cares to do so'.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 141

STALIN'S FOCUS ON HEAVY INDUSTRY OVER CONSUMER GOODS SAVED THE DAY

The members of all three segments (collective farmers, urban workers and Soviet technocrats and managers) of the social hierarchy would have gained more (from a short run and shortsighted perspective) if the savings provided for in successive plans had been invested in the production of consumer goods rather than in heavy industry. Such a decision, which would obviously have led to fatal consequences in 1941–1942, might very well have emerged from the free interplay of popular wishes and pressures during the preceding years. It was the task and duty of the party to persuade enforce all strata of the population into accepting and carrying out a program of industrialization rendered imperative by military exigencies and future hopes of plenty.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 583

The ultimate aim of Soviet planning is abundance for the Soviet people, but the only way of reaching that aim was to temporarily sacrifice consumer goods in favor of building heavy industry.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 45

A Communist economist can give a Westerner a good battle over comparative statistics of growth. He always returns, however, to his central point: Whatever Stalin's failures and whatever Stalin's exaggerated claims, he won World War II with war material that was plentiful enough and of high enough quality to defeat the German Army, not with inflated statistics. The early Five Year Plans were not proved failures because Stalin produced only 18.3 million tons of steel a year instead of what he had predicted or because he may not even have produced that much; they were proved successes because Stalin won the war….

Again, the essential case for Stalin centers on the war. Had Stalin allocated more investment to the consumer goods industries total production might have been greater, but the number of tanks, heavy guns, airplanes, and machines to produce them, would have been significantly less, and Hitler's armies might have prevailed. The margin of survival was not very large. If Stalin had opted for more consumer goods, the Soviet people might have been better fed and better clothed as they watched the Nazi troops march through the ruins of better houses….

One can distinguish three possible courses of action that Stalin might have pursued before World War II. There was the extreme and bloody course he did pursue–which did lead to victory over Hitler. There was the opposite course of mild rule coupled with more consumer-oriented economic growth, which was discouragingly likely to have led to defeat at the hands of Hitler. And there was the middle course: a strong coercive buildup of heavy industry and armaments sufficient to stop Hitler, without the foolish methods and self-defeating excesses of brutality that we can retrospectively separate from the core of Stalin's construction.

Before we succumb to the temptation to approve the middle course, we should remember that there is no sure way of distinguishing between necessary and unnecessary brutality in building an economy until years and often decades later. And if we approve the middle course, we are in effect supporting the undemocratic side of arguments over how to industrialize the backward countries of the world.

Randall, Francis. Stalin's Russia. New York: Free Press, 1965, p. 180-182

STALIN SUPPORTS TRADE WITH CAPITALISTS

I [Duranty] said to Stalin, "…many Americans say, "Why help build up a country whose avowed aim is to overthrow our Constitution and upset everything which we believe made the greatness of the United States."

Stalin refused to be drawn out.

"They provide equipment and technical help, don't they?" he said rather sharply. "And we pay them, don't we, for everything–pay top prices, too, as you and they know. You might as well say we are arming Americans and helping to maintain their capitalist system against ours.

Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 238-39

By 1932 Russia was taking 30.5% of German machinery exports. Hundreds of German technicians and engineers were working and instructing in Russia, and German officers were training Russian troops.

The launching of the First Five-year Plan brought further changes in emphasis in Soviet policy. Reporting in July 1930 to the 16th Party Congress, Stalin declared that "our policy is a policy of peace and of strengthening trade relations with all countries." Trade had been regarded merely as an instrument of foreign policy in attacking the markets and influence of the capitalist powers. Now trade was recognized as essential in obtaining the machinery, technical assistance, and capital for industrialization.

Fundamental to Stalin's policies, internal and external, was the conviction that war was imminent and might devastate Soviet Russia before she was able to gather strength. It was with this thought that he had demanded immediate collectivization and headlong industrialization. There was no time to lose. The Treaty of Versailles was no more than a

truce between two wars. He followed events closely in the last, seeking early signs of the coming conflict.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 295

Stalin's new policy alignment was reflected strikingly in Soviet foreign trade. In 1932 Germany had supplied 46.5% of Russia's total imports. By 1935 the figure had dropped to 9%. Britain had displaced Germany, and imports from the United States were increasing. Germany extended massive credits in seeking to recover this vital trade. In 1936 the German share of the Soviet market rose 22.8% but it soon dropped again.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 300

You know that a certain influx of capital into our country from abroad has already begun. There is hardly any reason to doubt that with the continued growth and consolidation of our national economy, this influx will increase in volume….
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 152

I think that the existence of two opposite systems, the capitalist system and the socialist system, does not exclude the possibility of… agreements. I think that such agreements are possible and expedient in conditions of peaceful development. Exports and imports are the most suitable ground for such agreements. We require equipment, raw material (raw cotton for example), semi-manufactures (metals, etc.) while the capitalists require a market for their goods. This provides a basis for agreement. The capitalists require oil, timber, grain products, and we require a market for these goods. Here is another basis for agreement. We require credits, the capitalists require good interest for their credits. Here is still another basis for agreements in the field of credit. It is known that the Soviet organs are most punctual in their payments.
The limits to these agreements? The limits are set by the opposite characters of the two systems between which there is rivalry and conflict. Within the limits permitted by these two systems, but only within these limits, agreement is quite possible. This is proved by the experience of the agreements concluded with Germany, Italy, Japan, etc.
… Finally, it depends upon the terms of the agreement. We can never accept conditions of bondage. We have an agreement with Harriman who is exploiting the manganese mines in Georgia. That agreement extends for 20 years. As you see, not a brief period. We also have an agreement with the Lena Goldfields Co., which is extracting gold in Siberia. That agreement has been signed for 30 years–a still longer period. Finally, we have an agreement with Japan concerning the exploitation of the oil and coal fields in Sakhalin. We would like these agreements to have a more or less solid character. But that depends of course not only upon us, but upon the other parties.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 270-271

At that time [1928], the cooperation between Russia and Germany was very strong; the Russians had hired hundreds of German experts to help them set up their industrial enterprises and were buying all sorts of materials in Germany for new factories and industries and transportation lines. The arrangement worked out very well for both countries, and I am sure many Germans were disappointed–and some Russians too–when Hitler's rise to power broke up these relations.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 12

I wasn't at all sure that this Soviet-made automobile would stand up under such a severe test. It was modeled after the first Ford Model A. open cars, and the plant had been installed at the Russian city of Nizhny-Novgorod (later named Gorky) with the permission and assistance of Ford.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 182

Nevertheless the Belgians did buy from us both minerals and wood, for business is business. They bought also butter and tinned fish, both of which we sold cheap.
Barmine, Alexandre. Memoirs of a Soviet Diplomat. London: L. Dickson limited, 1938, p. 254

I signed contracts for the sale to Belgium of asbestos and manganese. Timber exports reached such high figures that I was given an assistant, who worked with the title of Director of the Timber Department.
Barmine, Alexandre. Memoirs of a Soviet Diplomat. London: L. Dickson limited, 1938, p. 256

The full extent of Western economic and technological aid to the Soviet Union will not be known until the Soviet archives are opened up. The Western firms that collaborated with Moscow have concealed the information almost as carefully as their Soviet partners. Nevertheless, the American historian Anthony Sutton has come to the conclusion, on the basis of German and English archives, that 95 percent of Soviet industrial enterprises received Western aid in the form of machines, technology, and direct technical aid.
The Soviet Union made skillful use of the competition among capitalist firms. "In the realm of technical assistance," wrote Economic Life, "we have neither an English, nor a German, nor an American orientation. We maintain a Soviet orientation…. When we need to modernize our oil, automobile, or tractor industries, we turn to the United States because it is the leading country in these industries. When we speak about chemistry, we approach Germany."… The capitalist firms, who were competing bitterly with each other, rushed to offer their services: they gained concessions, supplied the latest equipment and technology, sent engineers and technicians, and took on Soviet trainees. The myth about a "blockade," "economic isolation," and the hostile attitude of the capitalist "sharks" toward "the socialist homeland" falls apart in the face of the facts.
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 213

American and German technology was bought with revenues which accrued from the rise in grain exports. Foreign firms were contracted to establish new plants and help train Soviet personnel.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 265

Stalin made it plain in an instruction to Molotov: "Force up the export of grain to the maximum. This is the core of everything. If we export grain, credits will be forthcoming.' The state needed to seize grain for export in order to finance the expansion of mining and manufacturing output.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 272

5 YEAR PLAN IS THE PARTY TRAINING THE MASSES TO MATURE

To understand the Five-year Plan and its relation to the USSR today one must grasp the underlying fact that the Communist Party regards itself in a sense as tutor and guardian of the Russian masses, who have not yet reached the stage where they are fit for independent self-government. I say “in a sense,” because from another angle the Communist Party regards itself as the expression of the Russian people and as the representative quintessence of the peoples will…. …it may be assumed that the party is indeed the guardian of the “infant” masses of its fellow countrymen, whom it is training for adult life and citizenship. The form this training takes is the Five-year Plan.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 253

SU WORKERS ARE TOO FREE TO MOVE AROUND WHICH CAUSES PROBLEMS

April 8, 1932–It is your correspondent’s opinion–which recent edicts from the Kremlin would indicate is fully shared by Soviet leaders and which certainly is shared by American engineers who have worked in Russia–that one of the principal reasons for the present difficulties, as an American expressed it, is that “labor here is too darn free and too darn talkative.” If other proof were needed, the terrific amount of “floating labor” noticeable here is sufficient. People hear there are better wages, food, or housing at such and such a mine or factory or construction camp, and they chuck their jobs and get there somehow.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 366

The regime found it almost impossible to regulate workers, who were able to skirt laws repeatedly, often with the help and understanding of managers. Shortages of labor, especially of skilled people, compelled industrial executives to accommodate workers whenever possible. Repeated efforts to control the flow of proletarians around the country failed each time.
Workers could influence their environment and take part in decision-making by leaving one job for another, slowing down their work when it was time to set new norms, denouncing managers, or simply by voicing their opinions. Managers, desperate to fulfill their production plans and facing grave danger if they did not, had to listen.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 184

The industrial labor force continued to enjoy its most basic freedom, the ability to move and change jobs, on a broad scale until the war. Curtailment of this right resulted primarily from military needs, not from some fundamental imperative of the regime.
Far from basing its rule on the negative means of coercion, the Soviet state in the late 1930s fostered a limited but positive political role for the populace.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 193

Under the NEP labor policy had been characterized by a high degree of laissez-faire: workers had been free to choose their jobs, even though the scourge of unemployment made that freedom half-illusory; managers had been more or less free to hire and fire their men. But rapid industrialization at once created an acute shortage of labor, and that meant

the end of laissez-faire. This was, in Stalin's words, the 'end of spontaneity' on the labor market, the beginning of what, in English-speaking countries, was later called direction of labor. The forms of direction were manifold. Industrial businesses signed contracts with collective farms, by which the latter were obliged to send specified numbers of men and women to factories in the towns. This was the basic method. It is an open question whether the term 'forced labor' can fairly be applied to it. Compulsion was used very severely in the initial phase of the process, when members of collective farms, declared redundant and deprived of membership, were placed in a position not unlike that of the unemployed man whom economic necessity drives to hire himself as a factory hand. Once in town, the proletarianized peasant was free to change his job. Stalin aimed at securing by decree the reserve of manpower for industry which in most countries had been created by the chronic and spontaneous flight of impoverished peasants to the towns.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 335

DESPITE EVERYTHING INDUSTRIALIZATION MADE RAPID PROGRESS

But in spite of everything industrialization made rapid progress.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 168

I have lived through 15 years of incredibly rapid progress which have almost wiped out all memory of the past. To dwellers in the Soviet Union, the pre-war period seems already prehistoric, and even 1921 seems a century ago. We have seen in these 15 years a more than tenfold increase in industrial production; we have seen a leap in farming from the 16th century into the 21st. We have lived through a series of epochs sharply distinct from each other in the regulations affecting our daily existence, but all these periods have been characterized by one continuous fury of energetic endeavor.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 116

At the Congress of 1929 a speaker submitted from the platform the First Five-Year Plan, and as he indicated on a large map of the Union the places where new power centers were to be erected, small electric lights sprang out one after another. As he touched on the planned foundries, mines, oil wells, textile factories, lights of different colors illustrated each enterprise. With the speaker finally pointed to the glowing map and said softly and as if incidentally, "This is what we're fighting for," a storm of enthusiasm swept through the audience. Tears came into the speaker's eyes.
What must have been Stalin's emotions when he had the map lit up once more four years later! In every spot where a lamp glowed, there was now real light.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 156

Rapid development of the nation could only come through seizure of natural resources for the benefit of all.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 32

Planning on such a scale is enormously complex, yet it has enabled a country to decide what kind of country it wants to be. In a period of less than a quarter of a century, Russia has Leaped from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth century.

Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 46

The first five-year plan was a resounding success. Production indexes in mining, steel, and chemicals increased severalfold in four years. Factories and mines materialized everywhere, and the country was proud of the new giant dams, plants, and railroads whose construction contrasted so sharply with the industrial doldrums of the Great Depression in the West. Unemployment disappeared, and although real wages actually fell (another casualty of capital accumulation), education, opportunity, and mobility were available to everyone willing to work. In the lives of the rapidly increasing urban masses, on the factory wall charts of production, and in the rapidly growing network of educational institutions, everything was onward and upward.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 43

Now the real facts are these. The most poverty-stricken state in Europe (in spite of its vast size), ignorant, fettered, ill-treated, starved, bleeding, and shattered, has, in 17 years, become the greatest industrial country in Europe, and the second in the world–and the most civilized of all, in every respect. Such progress, which is unequalled in the history of the world, has been achieved–and this too is unequaled–by the sole resources of the country of which every other country has been the enemy. And it has been achieved by the power of an idea, an idea which was directly opposed to the ideas of the rulers of all other national societies–the idea of fraternal and scientific justice.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 214

Industrial workers were a fast-changing group under Stalin. Between 1926 and 1939, the number of urban dwellers increased by about 29.6 million. Where there had been 14.6 million industrial workers and members of their families in 1913, there were 33.7 million in 1939. The number of workers doubled between 1928 and 1932 alone, and increased from 3,124,000 in the first of those years to 8,290,000 in 1940.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 165

STALIN ADVOCATES GETTING HELP FROM FOREIGN COMPANIES

In an August 23, 1929, letter to Molotov Stalin stated, "Meanwhile, there is no greater need for foreign technical assistance than in this complex business…. Why, for example, couldn't we bring in Austin & Co. or some other firm on a contract basis to build the new plans?…."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 172

Stalin's position had gradually become so strong that he could announce the erection of 60% new collective farms, and then reduce the number to 21%. Following Lenin's example, he also made other concessions, tolerating at times even an open market where goods could be privately bought at a twentyfold price and a black stock exchange where the dollar bought 40 rubles instead of two.
Though Stalin, in spite of all reverses, refused to take up foreign loans, he was beleaguered by the big banks abroad who recognized that the Russians purchased a tremendous amount

of goods and honored their drafts more punctually than democratic Europe. At that time the depression in America stood the Russians in good stead:…. The old states had crisis on crisis, the new socialistic one forged steadily ahead.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 131

In 1924 the general industrial production of Russia was between 10 and 15 percent of the level of 1913. For the next four years the country struggled back to its feet with the help of the New Economic Policy. Foreign concessions and the partial development of private enterprise and industry and commerce facilitated this recovery.
Scott, John. Behind the Urals, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1942, p. 62

Foreign concessionaires were growing rich under our eyes from the manufacture in Russia of pencils, pens, cardboard, drawing-pins, pliers, etc.. The biggest of them was an American company run by a Mr. Hammer. The State Mospolygraph Trust began making cheap pencils, but the quality was so bad that they could not compete with Mr. Hammer's more expensive goods.
Barmine, Alexandre. Memoirs of a Soviet Diplomat. London: L. Dickson limited,1938, p. 219

The State departments continued to prefer the products of private enterprise and foreign concessionaires, even though they were more expensive than ours, for the industrialist offered commissions to the badly paid State servants in return for their orders. This form of corruption was, for several years, a regular scourge, as long indeed, as private enterprise was allowed to compete with the state factories.
Barmine, Alexandre. Memoirs of a Soviet Diplomat. London: L. Dickson limited,1938, p. 220

INDUSTRIALIZATION WAS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY DESPITE HIGH COST

Farming must be brought out of the Middle Ages, modernized and made efficient. For this two roads of development were possible. The employing peasants, known as kulaks, who already owned the best of the rural means of production, better plows, more horses, occasional threshers, creameries and flour mills, might be allowed to expand, to acquire tractors, combines, and the additional land which these machines could cultivate, dispossessing more and more landless peasants into the ranks of the unemployed. Thus capitalist farming grew in other countries out of the feudal ages. The price of such growth for Soviet Russia under the world conditions of the modern era would be not only continued class war in rural districts, not only swiftly increasing unemployment, not only the steady submergence of all socialist industry by an expanding capitalism, but the complete dependence of this young Russian capitalism on the financial oligarchs of the imperialist world. Such, at least, was the analysis made by Stalin and the Communist Party in adopting in 1928 the now famous Five-Year Plan.
The Five-Year Plan proposed the rapid industrialization of the country, more rapid than any industrialization known in the world before. Heavy industry must first be built, the machines that make machines for other industry and for farming. Lighter industries to raise the standard of living must rapidly follow. Farming must be industrialized, not by strengthening a class of rural capitalists, but by the voluntary uniting of all non-exploiting peasants, beginning with the poorest, into collective groups farming their lands jointly with machinery which the

developing state industry would supply. This was necessary to make farming modern, while giving the benefits of its modernization to all farmers. It was necessary to make Russia socialist, or even to preserve the half-socialism which the city workers had begun. It was necessary for the independence of the country and the very existence of the Soviet government. “We could not refrain,” said Stalin, “from whipping up a country which was a hundred years behind and which owing to its backwardness was faced with mortal danger.”
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 125

Trotskyists kept up the pressure. They claimed we devoted too little attention to industrialization, and that we needed to industrialize as rapidly as possible or perish.
We said, no, we will not perish! We will not perish if we don’t fall out with the peasants. But we had to tighten our grip on the kulak. We clamped down on the kulak and the Nepmen;…we squeezed our monies wherever we could–every ruble and kopek–to fund the revival of industry, even if only modestly.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 169

I do not remember the reason, but I happened to remark, “Without industrialization the Soviet Union could not have preserved itself and waged such a war.”
Stalin added, “It was precisely over this that we quarreled with Trotsky and Bukharin.”
Djilas, Milovan. Conversations with Stalin. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962, p. 75

However, let us not be unjust toward Stalin! What he wished to accomplish, and even that which he did accomplish, could not be accomplished in any other way. The forces that swept him forward and that he led, with their absolute ideals, could have no other kind of leader but him, given that level of Russian and world relations, nor could they have been served by different methods.
Djilas, Milovan. Conversations with Stalin. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962, p. 191

Stalin stated, “Our country had to be transformed from an agricultural country into an industrial country, capable of itself producing everything which it needed. This was the principal point, the foundation of our general line of action.”
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 131

But Lenin had peremptorily specified that: “If we cannot find means of creating industry among us, and of fostering it, that is the end of our country as a civilized country and, a fortiori, as a socialist country.” And Stalin made similar observations about heavy industry.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 132

Once more a conflict began between the logic of the groundlings and the logic of the giants, between the far-sighted idealists with their overwhelming preoccupations about the future and the short-sighted people who carried no burden on their shoulders.
Let us start in a small way and develop gradually, said the latter. In this way you will limit public sacrifice, you will curtail the era of privation and you will facilitate internal peace, instead of hurling yourselves headlong into the system of turning villages into cities and of attacking world records when you do not possess a sufficiency of the necessities of life.
But:
“Your point of view is the wrong one, comrades.”

And logic and patient anticipation of the future, answering through Stalin's lips, explained: "Yes, one would satisfy a few of the immediate desires of the urban and rural populations by beginning with the light industries. And after that? Only heavy industries can serve as a basis for the industrial revival of the country. Only the development of the heavy industries can make co-operation in the country districts possible, that is to say the achievement of great socialist ideals."
"Co-operation between the peasant and the worker is essential," declares Stalin, "but the re-education of the peasant, the destruction of his individualist psychology and the transforming of it into a collectivist mentality, can only be accomplished on the basis of a new technique, of collective labor, of production on a large scale. Either we must carry out this task and then we shall establish ourselves permanently, or we must abandon it, and then the return to Capitalism may become inevitable."
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 133

Stalin, on the day on which, summarizing things broadly, some years later, he said that the first foundation of the Soviet State was the alliance between worker and peasant and that the second was the union of nationalities, added that the third was the Red Army.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 134

The country had to be forced into a modern industrialized state in half a generation: otherwise it would go under. Whatever else he did, in this he was manifestly right.
Snow, Charles Percy. Variety of Men. New York: Scribner, 1966, p. 254

Stalin really believed that the USSR could become the leading industrial nation of the world, and no man knows if he was wrong.
To Stalin to result was inevitable. The problem was to industrialize fast enough to produce a proletarian majority in the USSR before the capitalist-minded peasants could begin a counter-revolution, and fast enough to support a mechanized army sufficient to repel the inevitable attack from the capitalist West…. In a sense, Stalin started to industrialize 20 years too soon, before the development of the mathematical and other analytic tools of contemporary economics that might have helped him enormously. On the other hand, his own program of industrialization was perhaps the greatest single stimulus to modern developmental economics.
Randall, Francis. Stalin's Russia. New York: Free Press,1965, p. 172

But to Stalin, the crucial phases of the industrial revolution were his. He had started in 1928 with roughly the equivalent of the industrial plant that had failed to withstand Imperial Germany. By 1941 he had built an industrial plant that proved capable of repelling the far more formidable military and economic might of Hitler's united continental Europe.
Randall, Francis. Stalin's Russia. New York: Free Press,1965, p. 179

STALIN'S OVERALL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Howard K. Smith said from Europe: "Stalin did more to change the world in the first half of this century than any other man who lived in it." Let that stand as his worldwide epitaph. He built up Russia to a great power, to the world's first socialist state…. "He altered the West's whole attitude to the workingman," Howard K. Smith noted. For all ideas of

government planning, of “New Deal” in the USA and “welfare state” in Britain, arose in competition with Russia’s Five-Year Planning, to keep the 1929 world economic crisis from producing revolution.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 117

No voice today can be final about the Stalin era…. What we know, at least, is that he set out in 1928 to build socialism in one country, a backward peasant land surrounded by a world of foes. When he began, Russia was peasant, illiterate; when he finished, it was the world’s second industrial power. Twice over he thus built it, once before the Hitler invasion and again upon the war’s ruin. That stands to his credit forever; he engineered that job.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 125

Under Stalin more than 82 major towns with more than 100,000 inhabitants, designed by the most able architects of our time, have sprung up in the Soviet Union: and this in the midst of a traditional peasant’s country.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam’s sons, 1942, p. 128

One can say, for instance, that Stalin, more than any other single individual, built the first socialist society and built it on the wreck left by imperialist intervention and civil war. One can also say that Stalin, more than any other single individual, was responsible for ending Nazi imperialism; in doing so, he not only preserved socialism but helped to extend its foundations in Eastern Europe. These are immense accomplishments, accomplishments that place Stalin among the foremost historical figures of our century. They are, moreover, accomplishments in the interest of humanity as a whole and run counter to the plans of world reaction.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 7

Lenin and Stalin did not invent history, but they organized it. They brought the future nearer.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 282

According to Medvedev, it is these accomplishments [under Stalin] that must, in good part, account for the high level of popularity of the Party’s General Secretary, especially among the working people of the USSR. Medvedev concludes:
“It was known that Party and state leaders were being arrested as ‘enemies of the people,’ but at the same time new schools, factories, and palaces of culture were rising everywhere. Military leaders were being arrested as spies, but the Party was building a strong, modern army. Scientists were being arrested as wreckers, but Soviet science had developed rapidly with the Party’s support. Writers were being arrested as Trotskyites and counter-revolutionaries, but some literary works appeared that were real masterpieces. Leaders in the union republics were arrested as nationalists, but the formerly oppressed nationalities were improving their lot, and friendship among the peoples of the USSR was growing. And this obvious progress filled Soviet hearts with pride, engendering confidence in the Party that was organizing it and in the man who stood at the head of the Party.”
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 257

When Stalin looked back on the rise of industry in his cities he was distressed at the many shortcomings, which he made constant attempts to rectify. But he was immensely proud of the total result. An agrarian country was fast becoming half urban. A largely agrarian

economy was now overwhelmingly weighted toward industry. The postulated inevitable industrialization of all countries was coming true in his own country under his own guidance. Because of the size and riches of the country, the industrialization process had produced the second largest and mightiest industrial plant in the world.
Randall, Francis. Stalin's Russia. New York: Free Press,1965, p. 202

Irrespective of Stalin's right to leadership, the next question is, How far has he lived up to his responsibilities? In other words, What has he done for his Party and his country? The list can be made as follows:
1. As Commissar of Nationalities, he played the major role in forming the USSR, which was a far more difficult job than forming the 13 American colonies into the United States, because the Soviet Union was composed of dozens of diverse and formerly hostile peoples with different languages, cultures, and religions.
2. He created a Russian heavy industry free from foreign control and independent of foreign technical personnel.
3. He took the 25 million small peasant holdings–they could hardly be called farms–that were the backward and wasteful agriculture of Russia, and reorganized them into a modern, mechanized system of collective farming.
4. He led his country to victory through the most devastating and disastrous of wars.
Duranty, Walter. Stalin & Co. New York: W. Sloane Associates, 1949, p. 67

Future historians may well declare that Stalin's greatest achievement, greater even than his conduct of the war to a victorious end, was his conquest of the Russian villages for socialism. It was indeed a long and cruel struggle, almost as costly in human suffering and actual loss of life as a foreign war. Stalin's contemporaries, whether in Russia or abroad, certainly regarded it as a major struggle and we have his own words in the History of the Party: "This was a profound revolution, a leap from an old qualitative state of society to a new qualitative state, equivalent in its consequences to the Revolution of 1917."
Duranty, Walter. Stalin & Co. New York: W. Sloane Associates, 1949, p. 72

He [Stalin] achieved a lot: urbanization, military strength, education, and Soviet pride. His USSR could claim impressive achievements. It became a model for radical political movements,and not only communist ones,elsewhere in the world. And at a time before the Second World War when liberal-democratic government signally failed to stand up effectively to fascism, Stalin appeared to have established a plausible alternative . If this had not been the case, he would never have gained the support necessary for him to survive and flourish.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 602

Volodya says, "Stalin continued the work of Lenin, and he was quite successful; we prevented the ruin of the country and its collapse after the civil war. We created industry, we collectivized the peasants, and to this day there is no desire among the peasants to leave the kolkhozes. We won the war, even though it was very, very tough. Hitler was armed for imperialism and the fact that our country managed to defeat him was to Stalin's huge merit. The economy of the country was restored, atomic weaponry was created which has maintained peace for all these years. At the tail end of this the first Sputnik was launched into space, space rockets were built: and alll this is due to the activity of one person….

Stalin was a great man who had both a good side and a bad side, like everyone. What he did in our country was huge, his merits are enormous and he is not guilty of everything that happened in this country. All serious politicians say this. He was a great, great organizer. Even Churchill elevated Stalin very highly.
A gigantic task was accomplished in changing the face of this country: the second great world power emerged after his term in office–you cannot deny this fact! That power was so international in its essence that we did not know any “ethnic fights”, so we were brought up knowing nothing of our “nationalist roots”; we could not care less. The ethnic fights are purely the result of present-day policies.”
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin’s Shadow. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994, p. 279

During the years of Stalin’s reign, the Soviet nation made dramatic gains in literacy, industrial wages, health care, and women’s rights. These accomplishments usually go unmentioned when the Stalinist era is discussed. To say that “socialism doesn’t work” is to overlook the fact that it did. In Eastern Europe, Russia, China, Mongolia, North Korea, and Cuba, revolutionary communism created a life for the mass of people that was far better than the wretched existence they had endured under feudal lords, military bosses, foreign colonizers, and Western capitalists. The end result was a dramatic improvement in living conditions for hundreds of millions of people on a scale never before or since witnessed in history.
State Socialism transformed desperately poor countries into modernized societies in which everyone had enough food, clothing, and shelter; where elderly people had secure pensions; and where all children (and many adults) went to school and no one was denied medical attention….
Parenti, Michael. Blackshirts and Reds, San Francisco: City Light Books, 1997, p. 84

Furet sees communism is a kind of flash in the pan of modern history. When the illusion passed, he writes, it left virtually no traces and no enduring legacy. This is preposterous….
Labor reform in the West in the past century came about under the threat of a radicalized international labor movement, protected and supported by the USSR. President Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal was in part meant to steal the thunder of radicals who looked to Moscow and therefore could not be ignored. Social goals that are commonplace today, including women’s rights and racial integration, were planks of the Communist Party platform long before mainstream American parties took them seriously. It was Communists who first went to the American South and began organizing African-Americans and poor whites around issues of social justice. The more politically acceptable young people who followed them in the sixties are heroes today. On the international scene the Soviet Union provided support for Nelson Mandela and other reformers. Communism made life difficult for Western establishments, and it is doubtful that reforms would have come when they did if the USSR had not existed. Communists always rejected reform in favor of revolution. Ironically, however, the existence of the Soviet Union helped the capitalist West reform itself and avoid the bloody revolutions of the East. Twentieth-century communism was no passing illusion; its legacies are everywhere.
The Future Did Not Work by J. Arch Getty, Book Review of The Passing of an Illusion by Franois Furet [March 2000 Atlantic Monthly]

SU MEETS ITS FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS WITH THE CAPITALISTS

My old friend, Owen Young, Chairman of the Board of General Electric Co.,…tells me that the Soviet government has an exceptionally high credit rating in banking and business circles in New York and this country; that they have the reputation of being meticulously careful to meet their financial obligations promptly and even before the due date. In the course of business relations which the General electric has had with the Soviet government, running into millions of dollars, and covering 10 or 15 years, he stated that the Soviets have been scrupulously prompt in their payments and had lived up to their promises in every respect. He gave them a most excellent reputation for living up to their promises, quite in contrast to nonbusiness and politically minded people with whom I have discussed the Soviets here.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 8

PEOPLE OF THE SU DID THE INDUSTRIALIZING THEMSELVES

While a few thousand foreign technicians assisted in the work, the brunt of the immense task fell on the shoulders of the Soviet peoples. Russia was industrialized with the sweat and blood of the one hundred and sixty-odd million inhabitants of the vast country.
Scott, John. Behind the Urals, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1942, p. 257

CENTRALIZATION SAVED THE NATION, ESPECIALLY REGARDING INDUSTRIALIZATION

The Stalinist economic system was one well suited to the war effort. Indeed, the economies of many of the other combatants moved in the direction of greater central coordination and planning, like that associated with the Soviet economic structure created during the 1930s. The centralization of control meant that the economy could quickly move onto a full war footing, particularly since the last years of the 1930s had seen an increasing emphasis placed upon the production of weapons and war material in general. In this sense, the general priority on heavy industry evident in the earlier decade was also useful for the war effort because it facilitated the move to wartime production much more than would have been the case had a focus on light industry and consumer goods production been characteristic of the Soviet development pattern.
Gill, Graeme. Stalinism. Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press International, 1990, p. 35

…Victory had been very expensive for the USSR; some 20 million Soviet soldiers and civilians were killed or incapacitated during the war. Many towns and cities lay in ruins, with almost half of all urban living space in occupied territory destroyed. Large numbers of factories were left in ruins, while much of the agricultural infrastructure was destroyed. The transport network in the occupied areas had to be almost totally rebuilt. But ultimately, the USSR had triumphed. …the centralization of the economic and political structures enabled the transformation of the economy onto a war footing in a shorter time than would have been possible had the economy worked on a decentralized, market basis. Furthermore while the centralization of political power magnified the effect of any mistakes Stalin made, it also enabled speedy decision-making and similarly magnified the effect of good decisions. Moreover the propaganda apparatus that was developed was also instrumental, particularly

in terms of its effect of maintaining popular enthusiasm and commitment. Indeed, the war posed a major test of the Stalinist system, and it had come through that test well.
Gill, Graeme. Stalinism. Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press International, 1990, p. 42

This new appreciation of Stalin's role did not spring only from afterthoughts borne in the flush of victory. The truth was that the war could not have been won without the intensive industrialization of Russia, and of her eastern provinces in particular. Nor could it have been won without the collectivization of large numbers of farms. The muzhik of 1930, who had never handled a tractor or any other machine, would have been of little use in modern war. Collectivized farming, with its machine-tractor stations scattered all over the country, had been the peasants' preparatory school for mechanized warfare. The rapid raising of the average standard of education had also enabled the Red Army to draw on a considerable reserve of intelligent officers and men. 'We are 50 or 100 years behind the advanced countries. We must make good this lag in 10 years. Either we do it, or they crush us'–so Stalin had spoken exactly ten years before Hitler set out to conquer Russia. His words, when they were recalled now, could not but impress people as a prophecy brilliantly fulfilled, as a most timely call to action. And, indeed, a few years delay in the modernization of Russia might have made all the difference between victory and defeat.
Against this we must set the price Russia had paid for victory: the 7 million dead, officially counted–the losses may in fact have been much larger; the uncounted millions of cripples; the devastation of most cities and towns, and of much of the country-side in European Russia; the destruction of industry, exemplified by the total flooding of the coal-mines of the Donetz; the complete homelessness of 25 million people, living in caves, trenches, and mud huts, not to speak of the latent homelessness of many more millions of evacuees in the Urals and beyond. Last but not least, the cost of victory included the utter weariness of a people that had, in the interests of industrialization and rearmament, for many years been denied the most essential necessities of life.
[Footnote]: Incidentally, collectivization had made it easier for the Government to build up stocks of food and raw materials, by which the townspeople were saved from famine, and industry from paralysis, when the country was cut off from its granaries and transport was disrupted.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 550

[In a speech delivered at the First All-Union Conference of Leading Personnel of Socialist Industry on February 4, 1931 Stalin stated] We are 50 or 100 years behind the advanced countries. We must make good this distance in 10 years. Either we do it, or we shall go under.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 13, p. 41

INDUSTRIALIZATION HAD TO BE DONE AT THE RIGHT TIME NOT WHEN TROTSKY WANTED IT

Only after we had laid the foundation did we step up the pace of industrialization. Lenin directed our policy in the same way. He used to say that Trotsky held an absurd position–without a czar and under a workers' government. What kind of revolution was this? To overthrow Czarism and shift immediately to a proletarian revolution? To Lenin that was nonsense and sure to fail. Instead we had to pass through all the stages of the democratic

path to arrive at socialist revolution. He proposed that we form a revolutionary democratic government with the participation of the peasantry and only when it no longer moved forward, had exhausted its revolutionary potential, would we move on to proletarian revolution.
Stalin proceeded in just that way. He believed that if you began instant industrialization without preparations, it would fail. Superindustrialization is just babbling. In fact you, the Trotskyist, are not for industrialization because you do not believe in the possibility of alliance with the peasantry. You believe only in the revolutionary potential of the Western worker; but he is in no hurry. You do not believe in the revolutionary potential of our people and so ruch us into risky adventurism, the pernicious policy of superindustrialization.
But when we prepared and got started, they found themselves overtaken by events: you're doing it the wrong way, making mistakes, you're pushing too hard. Then right-wingers began to accuse us of following a policy of superindustrialization. Both Trotskyists and right-wingers were of course wrong.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 170

A brief recapitulation of his crucial statements on industrialization reveals equally striking contradictions. In the middle '20s Russian industry, recovering to its pre-war condition, increased its output by 20 to 30 percent per year. The Politburo argued over the rate at which output could be expanded after all the existing plants and factories had been made to operate at full capacity. Everybody agreed that once this point had been reached, the annual increases would be smaller. Zinoviev, Trotsky, and Kamenev thought that it would still be possible to raise output by somewhat less than 20 percent a year. Stalin dubbed them 'super-industrializers'. When his opponents advanced the project for the Dnieprostroy, the great hydro-electrical power station on the Dnieper, he shelved it, allegedly saying that for Russia to build the Dnieprostroy would be the same as for a muzhik to buy a gramophone instead of a cow. His report to the 15th Congress, in December 1927, was full of contentment with the industrial condition of the country; but he already took a leaf from the opposition's book–and suggested that in the next few years industrial output should be increased at the annual rate of 15 percent.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 320

Trotsky advocated super-industrialization in the manner of the Five-Year plan as far back as 1921, and he wanted to expel the kulaks (rich farmers) in 1925, a task which Stalin did not set himself till almost five years later. But that was the trouble. Trotsky, impulsive, demanded these things prematurely, at the wrong time; Stalin had the strength to wait.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 526

STALIN SAID THEY HAD TO CATCH UP IN 5 TO 10 YEARS OR PERISH

…Stalin was right, saying that we are 50 to a hundred years behind Western Europe, and if we do not close this gap in 5 to 10 years we shall perish.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 201

Thoroughly biased as he is against Stalin, Isaac Deutscher in his biography of Stalin is obliged to make the following admission as to the factors that underlay the Soviet victory in the Second World War:

“The truth was that the war could not have been won without the intensive industrialization of Russia, and of her eastern provinces in particular. Nor could it have been won without the collectivization of large numbers of farms. The muzhik of 1930, who had never handled a tractor or any other machine, would have been of little use in modern war. Collectivized farming, with its machine-tractor stations scattered all over the country, had been the peasants’ preparatory school for mechanized warfare. The rapid raising of the average standard of education had also enabled the Red Army to draw on a considerable reserve of intelligent officers and men. ‘We are 50 or 100 years behind the advanced countries. We must make good this lag in 10 years. Either we do it, or they crush us’–so Stalin had spoken exactly 10 years before Hitler set out to conquer Russia. His words, when they were recalled now, could not but impress people as a prophecy brilliantly fulfilled, as a most timely call to action. And, indeed, a few years delay in the modernization of Russia might have made all the difference between victory and defeat.” (Deutscher, Stalin: A Political Biography, London, Pelican, 1966, page 535).
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 496

The climax of the celebrations came on June 24, when the great Victory Parade took place in the Red Square…. Standing on the Lenin Mausoleum, Stalin appeared as a small remote figure, but, as hundreds of German regimental banners were flung down on the steps of the mausoleum and at his feet, he dominated the scene.
It was in a real sense his victory. It could not have been won without his industrialization campaign and especially the intensive development of industry beyond the Volga. Collectivization had contributed to the victory by enabling the government to stockpile food and raw materials and to prevent paralysis in industry and famine in the towns. But also collectivization, with its machine-tractor stations, had given the peasants their first training in the use of tractors and other machines. Collectivized farming had been “the peasants preparatory school for mechanized warfare.” The raising of the general standard of education had also contributed by providing a vast reserve of educated men who could readily be trained.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 419

I decided to take advantage of this opportunity for a heart-to-heart talk with Klim Voroshilov about everything that was going on. He told me frankly that he disapproved of many things, but there was now no other way: either we can build up our heavy industries and our armament industry within some ten years–that is before Germany has had time to re-arm and the inevitable world war breaks out– or, as a backward farming country, we should fall victim to that war…. I felt that Koba had won him to his side and that henceforth he would back him to the end, whatever happened.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 133

In political theory, Tsarist Russia was a great power. In economic fact, its development lagged more than 100 years behind that of Britain and at least 75 years behind Germany.
Nearing, S. The Soviet Union as a World Power. New York: Island Workshop Press, 1945, p. 8

At once he [Stalin] started… the greatest of all industrial revolutions. “Socialism in one country” had to work. Russia had to do in a decade something like what England had done in 200 years. It was going to mean that everything went into heavy industry. The primitive

accumulation of capital wouldn't leave much more than subsistence for the workers. It was going to mean an effort such as no country had ever made. Yet in this he was dead right. Even now, in the 1960s, one can see traces of the primitive darkness from which the country had to be yanked — side by side with technology as advanced as any in the world. Stalin's realism was harsh and unillusioned. He said, after the first two years of industrialization, when people were pleading with him to go slower because the country couldn't stand it:
"To slacken the pace would mean to lag behind: and those who lag behind are beaten. We did not want to be beaten. No, we don't want to be…. [Old Russia]…was ceaselessly beaten for her backwardness. She was beaten by the Mongol khans. She was beaten by the Turkish beys, she was beaten by the Swedish feudal lords, she was beaten by Polish-Lithuanian pans, she was beaten by Anglo-French capitalists, she was beaten by Japanese barons, she was beaten by all–for backwardness. For military backwardness, for cultural backwardness, for political backwardness, for industrial backwardness, for agricultural backwardness. She was beaten because to beat her was profitable and went unpunished. You remember the words of the prerevolutionary poet: 'Thou art poor and thou art plentiful, thou art mighty and thou art helpless, Mother Russia.'
We are 50 or 100 years behind the advanced countries. We must make good the lag in 10 years. Either we do it or they crush us."
At this date, no person of moderate detachment could disagree.
Snow, Charles Percy. Variety of Men. New York: Scribner, 1966, p. 257

HOW ARE THE ADVANCEMENTS FINANCED

And now for the financing of all this. The problem presents itself here in a peculiar form of its own. "Substantially," explains Stalin, "in capitalist countries the funds invested in big industrial schemes are obtained either by foreign loans, or by spoliation." (War indemnities, colonial confiscations, unfair exploitation of labor.)
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 199

GREAT ADVANCEMENTS AND SUCCESS OF THE FIVE YEAR PLAN

Now the 1928 Five-Year Plan, supported by colossal figures, ended in four years by an achievement of 93 percent of its objectives. As regards heavy industry, the achievement in four years amounted to 108 percent. National production trebled between 1928 and 1934. Pre-war production was quadrupled by the end of 1933.
From 1928 to 1932 the number of workmen employed increased from 9,500,000 to 13,800,000 (an increase in important industries of 1,800,000, in agriculture of 1,100,000, and in commercial employees of 450,000) and, naturally, unemployment has become a thing of the past there.
The part played by industry in total production, that is to say in relation to agricultural production, was 42 percent in 1913, 48 percent in 1928, and 70 percent in 1932.
The part played by the socialist industry in total industry at the end of four years was 99.93%.
The national revenue has increased during the four years by 85 percent. At the end of the Plan, it was more than 45 billion rubles. A year later 49 billion (1/2% being capitalist and foreign elements).
The amount of the workers' and employees' wages rose from 8 billion to 30 billion rubles.

The number of persons able to read and to write has risen, for the whole of the USSR, from 67 percent at the end of 1930, to 90 percent at the end of 1933.
Pause a moment and compare these figures, which testify to a progress unique in the annals of the human race, with the virtuous prophecies which figure above–Insolvency, Deadlock, Catastrophe, Breakdown–all of which were uttered at a time when the Plan was almost realized already–in spite of universal opposition.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 194-195

Listen to the great newspapers. They have a bitter pill to swallow.
Le Temps in its number of January 27th, 1932, says: “The Soviet Union has won the first round by industrializing itself without the aid of foreign capital.” The same paper, some months later, in April, observes: “Communism seems to have leaped in one bound over the constructive stage which in a capitalist regime has to be crossed very slowly. To all intents and purposes, the Bolsheviks have beaten us in this respect.”
The Round Table: “The achievements of the Five-Year Plan constitute a surprising phenomenon.”
The Financial Times: “There can be no doubt about their success. The Communists’ exultation in the Press and in their speeches is by no means without foundation.”
The Neue Freie Presse (Austria): “The Five-Year Plan is a modern giant.”
The Nation (United States): “The four years of the Five-Year Plan show a really remarkable series of achievements. The Soviet Union has devoted itself with an intense activity, more appropriate to war-time, to the construction of the foundations of a new life.”
Forward (Scotland): “What England did during the war was a mere bagatelle beside it. The Americans recognize that even the feverish period of the most intense construction in the Western states could offer nothing comparable to it…a degree of energy unprecedented in the history of the world. A brilliant challenge to a hostile capitalist world.”
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 215-216

I [Medvedev] am not about to deny the major successes achieved by the Soviet Union during the first five-year plan. In the period from 1928 to 1933 alone, 1500 big enterprises were built and the foundations were laid for branches of industry that had not existed in tsarist Russia: machine-tool production, automobile and tractor manufacturing, chemical works, airplane factories, the production of powerful turbines and generators, a high-grade steel, of ferrous alloys, of synthetic rubber, artificial fibers, nitrogen, and so on. Construction was begun on thousands of kilometers of new railroads and canals. Major centers of heavy industry were created in the territories of the non-Russian minorities, the former borderlands of tsarist Russia–in Byelorussia, the Ukraine, Transcaucasia, Central Asia, Kazakhstan, Tataria, the Northern Caucasus, and Buryat Mongolia. The eastern part of the country became a second major center for metallurgy and the oil industry. A modern defense industry was established. And hundreds of new cities and workers settlements were founded. Stalin put considerable effort into the huge task of building a modern industry in the Soviet Union.”
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 248

In January 1933 Stalin reported that the first five-year plan had been fulfilled in four years and three months, that industrial output in 1932 had reached the goals set for 1933…. In fact, over the five-year period gross industrial output approximately doubled and heavy industry increased by 2.7 times….

Ten million tons of pig iron were planned for the last year of the five-year plan, and in 1930 Stalin declared this goal raised to 17 million tons. In 1932, 6.16 million tons were poured. On the eve of the war, in 1940, 15 million tons of pig iron were poured. Only in 1950 did the figure past 17 million….
The transfer to the cities of millions of peasants, most of them poor, was accompanied by an improvement in their standard of living. And of course the material position of the former unemployed was improved; now they all had work….
It goes without saying that the difficulties in fulfilling the first five-year plan can be explained in part by the fact that it was the first five-year plan in history.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 250-253

There is no need to discuss the success or failure of the Five Years Industrial Plan. Certain facts are self-evident. The Government is undoubtedly building as fast as it can, in the face of immense financial, economic, and physical difficulties, model factories for the people to work in and model houses for them to live in. It is improving conditions of work and prolonging the intervals of leisure. It is building better civil prisons and reforming prison life on modern lines. It is beginning to establish maternity centers, and clinics for the care of child life.
It is organizing sanatoriums for the sick and convalescent homes for jaded workers who have done good service to the State. Within its own limited definition of what constitutes the arts it is actively encouraging them.
It is building schools and universities and is rapidly reducing the number of illiterates. The next generation of Russians will not be classed among the illiterates of the world;…
Among other things the State has done is to make idleness a crime and the idle rich recognized by proletarian opinion not only as useless drones but as enemies to the hive-economy. It has practically abolished prostitution.
There is not a prostitute left in the streets of Moscow; any woman found soliciting would be reported by the police to her factory boss and threatened with the loss of her job and her union card. Formal religion has been “eliminated” as an opium of the mind employed to deaden the sensitiveness of wage-slaves to the miseries of capitalist oppression.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 280

…he [a worker named Saifuddinov] reminded me that we had just completed the First Five-Year Plan and were now on our way at full speed towards a happy, joyful life; we were creating mammoth industrial plants, we were setting up tractor stations in collective farms, we were increasing productivity, we were growing, we were flourishing–whereas in the countries of capitalism everything was going quickly downhill, the workers were starving and subjected to arbitrary rule.
“Comrade Saifuddinov,” I remember asking him during a class, “will you please take yourself as an example to illustrate the improvement in the material and domestic conditions of the working class of the USSR.”
“What is the point of taking an individual example, Comrade Instructor,” he replied at once. “I was speaking of the improvement of conditions all around, as a whole. Like that, there is a steady improvement. Individual cases have nothing to do with it.”
“All the same,” I asked, “has your personal position improved?”
“Of course it is improving! Are we not building an underground railway in Moscow? Are we not building the Moscow Volga Canal? Of course we are, and we are building up Socialism, aren’t we?”

Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 230

Food supplies improved so much by early 1935 that most of the rationing decreed in the late 1920s was abolished. The tone of the press and of the leaders' speeches became considerably milder.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 2

That great changes have been brought about in the Soviet Union as a result of the Five Year Plans is admitted by a friend and foe alike. Everyone acknowledges that the Soviet Union is now in possession of scores of important industries which it did not previously possess, that a mighty technical revolution has taken place in agriculture.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 83

The enormous assignment for fundamental construction in the first plan (Five-year Plan), now largely gave way to the provision of goods of consumption. This could only be done when the main plant had been laid down; but once it was there, set going with all the force and purpose of a socialist state, the actual goods came out at a tremendous pace. In 1931 there were hardly any cars; by 1935 I found the streets covered with them.
Pares, Bernard. Russia. Washington, New York: Infantry Journal, Penguin books, 1944, p. 156

No one can deny that these achievements have been tremendous. No other country has made similar progress in developing its productive forces in so short a period. In speed of development Russia is far ahead of all capitalist countries. Compared with 1913 there has been a 10-fold increase in Russia's heavy industrial production, while in the same period German production, for example, has advanced by only 50 percent. And, in contrast with all capitalist countries, the rate of Russian advance has been almost uninterrupted. This fact becomes even more impressive if one remembers that Russia, during this period, went through the world war, civil war, and two periods of actual famine. As early as 1937 80% of all industrial products and 90% of all agricultural machines such as tractors and combines came from factories which had been newly built or entirely reconstructed since the beginning of the First Five-Year Plan.
The progress in agriculture is no less impressive. Collectivization and mechanization have resulted in a vast increase in output, although the agricultural population has been steadily declining in numbers. In 1926 an agricultural population of 120 millions under NEP conditions could produce an extremely good harvest that was worth 14.8 million rubles. Two years ago an agricultural population that was 6 million smaller than a 1926 could produce a good harvest that was worth 3.7 million rubles more.
Without going beyond the framework of this book we cannot do more than merely indicate the tremendous economic progress that has been made; a progress which has also been implemented by a great cultural advance. Illiteracy has practically disappeared. Factories and collective farms have been equipped with up-to-date clubs, libraries, theaters, cinemas, creches, hospitals, and laboratories for the benefit of the working people. All these things have been described in great detail in many books.
Socialist Clarity Group. The U. S. S. R., Its Significance for the West. London: V. Gollancz, 1942, p. 37

On the other hand, even for the whole population, the standard of living is certainly higher than that of the working population under the Tsarist Regime.
In the light of this experience one must come to the conclusion that, in the economic sphere Russia's achievements by far outweigh the cost and sacrifice they have rendered necessary.
Socialist Clarity Group. The U. S. S. R., Its Significance for the West. London: V. Gollancz, 1942, p. 38

The latest Western estimates of Soviet production in the 1930s still tell a remarkable story: steel output rose from 4.3 million tons in 1928 to 18.1 million a decade later; coal production more than trebled, from 35 million tons to 133 million; truck production, an insignificant 700 at the start of the plans, 182,000 in 1938.
Overy, R. J. Russia's War: Blood Upon the Snow. New York: TV Books, c1997, p. 36

SOVIET INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS ARE A GREAT SUCCESS

Mr. Cooper, the American technical adviser who was engaged on Dnieprostroy, told me at the inauguration of the titanic dam there that all records and even all calculations had been beaten by the workers, in the most difficult and unexpected circumstances, and that nothing like the economy of labor that took place had ever been seen before. Besides, 20,000 qualified workers sprang fully armed from that enterprise.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 234

The terrible famine of the winter of 1932-33 had been followed by a record harvest in 1933…. The industrialization campaign had achieved outstanding results and had laid the foundations of heavy industry on which the second plan could build.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 258

Yes… we proceeded confidently and vigorously along the road of industrializing and collectivizing our country. And now we may consider that the road has been traversed. Everybody now admits that we have achieved tremendous successes along this road. Everybody now admits that we already have a powerful, first-class industry, a powerful mechanized agriculture, a growing and improving transport system, an organized and excellently equipped Red Army.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 98

In July 1937 the London Times devoted three articles to the situation after 20 years of Soviet Power. Gone are the assertions of the country being a vestige of its former self, of the impending collapse of industry. The new economic machine is obviously beginning to "deliver the goods," and so the note of criticism is transferred from the economic to the political sphere. Stalin, it is said, is no longer carrying out Lenin's program but one of his own. The State is not "withering away" as Lenin had proposed that it should, but is actually being strengthened in every possible way. The writer is distinctly reproachful about the refusal of Stalin to allow the State to "wither away."
This is typical of the general shift of criticism in relation to the Soviet Union. A few years ago the critics, with Trotsky in the van, were shouting that the Soviet Five Year Plan would not produce the expected economic results. Today, when the economic results aimed at have in

the main been achieved, they shout in chorus: “But it is not yet Socialism. There is no equality of income. The State has not yet disappeared, etc.”
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 128

[It was new year’s, 1937] In commissariats and party bureaus the finishing touches were being put to the annual report. And there was something to report. During the last year, the Kharkov Machine-Building Plant had been commissioned, the Kama Cellulose Combine had been ceremonially opened, building had started on the Solikamsk magnesium factory, the Konakar hydroelectric station in Armenia had started up, the Murmansk Fish Combine had started working, alongside hundreds of other enterprises of all sizes. All this was impressive, in quantity, if not in quality. Even the defense industry commissariat, which had only been formed in 1936 and had not fulfilled its plan on a number of lines, sent in a report which began, ‘The defense industry will be the best in the country’. Stalin was pleased with the reports he got from commissars Kaganovich, Mikoyan and Lyubimov: rail transport, light and local industry and trade were at last yielding a small surplus.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 275

Nevertheless, in an unusually short time gigantic industrial projects were completed in the Urals, the Kuznetsk basin, the Volga region, and Ukraine. Factories were built in Moscow Leningrad, textile mills in Central Asia, and so on. The Turkestan-Siberia Railway, built before the revolution, was extended and a branch added to Karaganda. In all, 5,500 kilometers of rail were laid.
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 230

These included Roy Medvedev the first Soviet historian who, 20 years ago, had the courage to break the conspiracy of silence about Stalin, gives a figure of approximately 1500 big enterprises built, the largest power station in Europe, on the Dnieper; the Magnitogorsk and Kuznetsk metallurgical complexes; the Ural machine factory and chemical works; the Rostov agricultural machinery plant; tractor factories at Cheliabinsk, Stalingrad, and Kharkov; automobile factories in Moscow and Sormovo; the Kramator heavy machinery plant, and so on.
New sectors of industry were established that had not existed in tsarist Russia: machine tools, automobile and tractor manufacture, airplane factories, the production of high-grade steel, ferrous alloys, synthetic rubber. The construction was begun of thousands of kilometers of new railways and canals, and of many new cities and workers’ settlements. New centers of heavy industry were cited in the territories of the non-Russian peoples, the former borderlands of tsarist Russia–in Byelorussia, the Ukraine, Transcaucasia, Central Asia, Kazakhstan, the North Caucasus, Siberia, and Buriat-Mongolia. This wider dispersal of industry created a second center of the metallurgical and oil industries in the eastern part of the country.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 279

In January 1933, Stalin delivered a swaggering Bolshevik rodomontade to the Plenum: the Five-Year Plan had been a remarkable success. The Party had delivered a tractor industry, electric power, coal, steel and oil production. Cities had been built where none stood before. The Dnieper River Dam and power station and the Turk-Sib railway and all been completed….
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 119

SOCIALIST INDUSTRIALIZATION WAS FAR LESS PAINFUL THAN CAPITALIST INDUSTRIALIZATION

Kuromiya showed how Stalin presented industrialization as a class war of the oppressed against the old ruling classes.
This idea is correct. Nevertheless, through untold numbers of literary and historical works, we are told to sympathize with those who were repressed during the class wars of industrialization and collectivization. We are told that repression is `always inhuman' and that a civilized nation is not allowed to hurt a social group, even if it was exploiting.
What can be said against this so-called `humanist' argument?
How was the industrialization of the `civilized world' made? How did the London and Paris bankers and industries create their industrial base? Could their industrialization have been possible without the pillage of the India? Pillage accompanied by the extermination of more than sixty million American Indians? Would it have been possible without the slave trade in Africans, that monstrous bloodbath? UNESCO experts estimate the African losses at 210 million persons, killed during raids or on ships, or sold as slaves. Could our industrialization have been possible without colonization, which made entire peoples prisoners in their own native lands?
And those who industrialized this little corner of the world called Europe, at the cost of millions of `indigenous' deaths, tell us that the Bolshevik repression against the possessing classes was an abomination? Those who industrialized their countries by chasing peasants off the land with guns, who massacred women and children with working days of fourteen hours, who imposed slave wages, always with the threat of unemployment and famine, they dare go on at book length about the `forced' industrialization of the Soviet Union?
If Soviet industrialization could only take place by repressing the rich and reactionary five per cent, capitalist industrialization consisted of the terror exercised by the rich five per cent against the working masses, both in their own countries and in dominated ones.
Industrialization was a class war against the old exploiting classes, which did everything they possibly could to prevent the success of the socialist experience. It was often accomplished through bitter struggle within the working class itself: illiterate peasants were torn out of their traditional world and hurled into modern production, bringing with them all their prejudices and their retrograde concepts.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 43 [p. 39 on the NET]

We have seen the follies and the cruelties that attended Stalin's 'great change'. They inevitably recall those of England's industrial revolution, as Karl Marx has described them in Das Kapital. The analogies are as numerous as they are striking. In the closing chapter of the first volume of his work, Marx depicts the 'primitive accumulation" of capital (or the 'previous accumulation', as Adam Smith called it), the first violent processes by which one social class accumulated in its hands the means of production, while other classes were being deprived of their land and means of livelihood and reduced to the status of wage-earners. The process which, in the 30s, took place in Russia might be called the 'primitive accumulation' of socialism in one country….
In this way the individual farmers were either compelled to join the collective farms or were virtually expropriated. Marx recalls 'the bloody discipline' by which the free peasants of

England were made into wage-laborers, ‘the disgraceful action of the state which employed the police to accelerate the accumulation of capital by increasing the degree of exploitation of labor’. His words might apply to many of the practices introduced by Stalin. Marx sums up his picture of the English industrial revolution by saying that ‘capital comes [into the world] dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt’. Thus also comes into the world–socialism in one country.
In spite of its ‘blood and dirt’, the English industrial revolution–Marx did not dispute this–marked a tremendous progress in the history of mankind. It opened a new and not unhopeful epoch of civilization. Stalin’s industrial revolution can claim the same merit. It is argued against it that it has perpetrated cruelties excusable in earlier centuries but unforgivable in this. This is a valid argument, but only within limits. Russia had been belated in her historical development. In England serfdom had disappeared by the end of the 14th century. Stalin’s parents were still serfs. By the standards of British history, the 14th and the 20th centuries have, in a sense, met in contemporary Russia…. Even in the most irrational and convulsive phase of his industrial revolution, however, Stalin could make the claim that his system was free from at least one major and cruel folly which afflicted the advanced nations of the west: ‘The capitalists [these were his words spoken during the Great Depression] consider it quite normal in a time of slump to destroy the “surplus” of commodities and burn “excess” agricultural produce in order to keep up high prices and ensure high profits, while here, in the USSR, those guilty of such crimes would be sent to a lunatic asylum.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 342

When one discussed these matters [peasants selling their grain] with some knowledgeable Russian, he had a simple explanation and defense:
The capital goods that we need for creating heavy industry do not drop down from heaven; they must be obtained through the wealth that is most accessible to us, the peasants’ and labor and property. Prosperity cannot be achieved without an emphasis on heavy industry, and when it is achieved the peasants may sell their grain freely, but not before.
Tuominen, Arvo, The Bells of the Kremlin: Hanover: University Press of New England, 1983, p. 123

SU PROVED SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY COULD WORK

Incredible rebuttal to all those educated renegades who read in scientific books that socialist construction in one country, particularly a peasant one, is not possible. The theory of the `impossibility of socialism in the USSR’, spread by the Mensheviks and the Trotskyists was a mere lamentation showing the pessimism and the capitulationist spirit among the petite bourgeoisie. As the socialist cause progressed, their hatred for real socialism, that thing that should not exist, only sharpened.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 51 [p. 42 on the NET]

INDUSTRIAL SUCCESS WAS THE KEY TO THE COMMUNIST SYSTEM AND NATIONAL PROSPERITY

Industrial development had been the raison d'etre of the Communist system, and the first five-year plan named the expansion of industry as the key to national prosperity. The industrial front was deliberately touted as the symbol of the successes of Soviet planning: 1500 big enterprises were built during the first five-year plan, including the Magnitogorsk metallurgical complex, the Ural machine factory, the Kharkov tractor plant, and automobile plants in Moscow and Novgorod. New industries were developed: in aviation, chemicals, machine tools, synthetic rubber, and more. To a world plunged into economic depression, the successes of Soviet planning looked very attractive.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 421

Meanwhile, there is no more gripping economic and social phenomenon recorded in the pages of history than the superhuman effort which is being made in the Soviet Union to industrialize in the shortest possible time a fundamentally agricultural country, to awaken a powerful people out of its traditional lethargy, and to build a new social order from which the last vestiges of human exploitation and slavery are ultimately to vanish.
Davis, Jerome. The New Russia. New York: The John Day company, c1933, p. 87

AS A RESULT OF THE 5 YEAR PLANS CONDITIONS IMPROVED GREATLY BY THE MID-1930'S

Today, some of our writers claim that during that period only Moscow and two or three others big cities were well supplied. This is not true. In the summer of 1935, I took groups of foreign tourists to many places. I deliberately walked into stores to see what was on sale. Everywhere the shops offered a wide variety of foodstuffs and goods. But more importantly, there were no lines anywhere and no one was traveling to the big cities to buy food.
If I were to enumerate the foodstuffs, drinks, and goods that appeared in the stores in 1935 and 1947, my Soviet contemporaries probably wouldn't believe me. There was black and red caviar in wooden barrels at quite affordable prices. Huge whole salmon, lox, all kinds of meat, ham, piglets, sausages the names of which have long been forgotten, cheeses, fruits, and berries–all of which could be purchased in any amount and without standing in line. Even at subway stations stands offered sausage, ham, cheese, sandwiches, and snacks. Chops and steaks were laid out on large dripping pans. And when you traveled in the country, you could enter any house on a hot day, and its owners, just as during the NEP, would offer you a glass of milk or cold ryazhenka and wouldn't take money for it.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin's Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 220

In the first months of 1935, life noticeably improved, and by the summer it was looking quite normal. Although it was not possible to regain the NEP level of abundance, the people began to breathe more easily. They were getting better food and Stalin's claim that "life's become better, life's become more fun to live" seemed to be getting some justification. The second part of that formula also seemed to be coming true: "… and when life is more fun to live, work gets done faster." Private initiative was still not encouraged, unlike in the 1920s, but the government trade and service sectors began functioning more efficiently, making life better.

…many of us began to feel that the terrible sacrifices of the early 1930s had not been in vain, and that in the final analysis Stalin was right when he radically changed the country's system, putting it on the track of industrialization and collectivization.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin's Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 227

All that happened a little later, but in the summer months of 1935 we felt happy and hopeful. The hungry years were gone. Life held out a promise of many interesting things to come.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin's Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 230

The last summer of my work at Intourist was especially interesting. There were even more tourists that year than in 1934, and I had to travel a lot around the country, accompanying them. The railway stations were once again bustling with activity;… A sense was in the air that the country was gradually coming back to life after the shock of collectivization. In Moscow, Leningrad, Kharkov, Odessa–all cities I visited–life had also returned to normal. It seemed that at long last the country was entering a favorable streak.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin's Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 231

Stalin announced that the first Plan was 93.7% successful. He was referring to industrial results, and probably he exaggerated. Even so, it was a tremendous, unprecedented effort; the only thing in the world quite to be compared to it was the expansion of the United States in the frontier period. Industrial output quadrupled in four years, an "outstanding and unsurpassed achievement." The production of steel increased 40 percent in four years, of pig iron 84 percent. Tractor, automobile, engineering, aviation industries were created out of nothing. Entire new cities were built on the Siberian steppes, or in the Urals, like Magnitogorsk, an industrial colossus that will probably become the largest steel plant in Europe. Enough machinery was imported to enable the USSR to maintain succeeding five-year plans with diminishing amounts of foreign aid. Mines were developed–with the not unimportant result that the USSR now possesses the third-largest gold reserve in the world. Unemployment ceased. All this, too, at a time when the capitalist powers were ravaged by an economic crisis of unprecedented severity and scope.
The costs of the Plan were of course enormous…. In communist jargon, the first Five-Year Plan was a period of "postponed consumption." Sacrifice, in other words, had to precede sufficiency.
In the second plan, the tempo of activity was a good deal relaxed. The second plan was not so much publicized as the first. It aimed to complete the collectivization of agriculture by 1937, and to stress the production of consumers' goods, rather than heavy industrial products, in order to lessen the terrible need in Russia for such items as–to choose at random–nails, decent paper, rope, kitchenware, plumbing utensils, scientific and medical supplies, boots, metalware. It hoped to double the food supply in the cities and reduce retail prices something like 35 percent.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 564-565

FOOD SHORTAGES CAUSED BY SELLING FOOD ABROAD TO GET MONEY TO INDUSTRIALIZE

There have been so many stories about food shortages in Russia that one doesn't know whether to believe them or not. During the days following the Revolution and blockade there were, quite naturally, severe shortages. Even now at times there are deficiencies in some sections of the country. Why? Because it is necessary for the government to do a tremendous amount of foreign purchasing so as to care for the economic industrial program on which it is concentrating. And in order to pay for the machinery, supplies, and technical assistance, it is necessary to export commodities which have a ready market. Most of the commodities exported are foodstuffs– wheat, butter, eggs, which should remain in the country for internal consumption. When international payments are heavy a temporary shortage results which means denying the people of items really needed in their own country.

The consignment of Black Sea butter which arrived in the London harbor recently on the Soviet vessel, Neva, a ship without a steering wheel, is typical of a Russia that considers it more important to fast that she might sell butter to get money for making scientific progress in her merchant naval equipment as well as other projects. It is not a case of having plenty of food, but of selling to pay foreign debts and to buy equipment to produce more food and commodities.

In many cases food shipments have been delayed by railroad tie-ups, this being caused by the congestion of traffic, due chiefly to lack of facilities, in moving the tremendous amount of freight required for producing the means of production, including railway equipment and increased trackage.

Russia has been faced with other difficulties concerning the food situation,–with slowness of the peasant class in becoming socialized. The "kulaks" resorted to withholding their products, secret selling, and even outright destruction in the years 1928 and 1929.

Wright, Russell. One-Sixth of the World's Surface. Hammond, Ind., The Author, c1932, p. 136-138

Certainly, the harvest decline was not the only cause of the Soviet famine: the regime exported food during the crisis. The amount of grain exported during the peak of the famine in the first half of 1933, however, approximately 220,000 tons, was small, less than 1% of the lowest harvest estimates, and the regime was using virtually all the rest of the available harvest to feed people.

Tauger, Mark. Natural Disaster and Human Actions in the Soviet Famine of 1931-1933 Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2001, p. 4

STALIN DID NOT ADOPT TROTSKY'S INDUSTRIALIZATION PROGRAM

One of the more impudent legends circulated by the Trotskyists is that Stalin, after having defeated Trotsky, borrowed Trotsky's policy for the rapid industrialization of the country–hence the Five-Year Plan. Trotsky calmly tells us (The Revolution Betrayed, page 40) that at the end of 1928, "Industrialization was put on the order of the day." But the decision to carry out immediately a policy of rapid industrialization was decided at the 14th Party Congress in December 1925–9 months before Trotsky and Zinoviev became reconciled enough even to talk to each other, let alone formulate an opposition programme on the question of industrialization, and more than three years before the time referred to by Trotsky.

Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 62

PRISON LABOR WAS A GREAT HELP IN INDUSTRIALIZATION AND PROGRESS

There were a lot of things about which I had not yet made up my mind, but I couldn't be ignorant of the fact that the work supplied by our concentration camps had played a sometimes essential part in our exploitation of the northern forests, in the building of our great works at Khibinogorsk and even at Magnitogorsk, and in the construction of the White Sea-Baltic Canal….
Barmine, Alexandre. Memoirs of a Soviet Diplomat. London: L. Dickson limited,1938, p. 273

STALIN SAYS THE SU WILL INDUSTRIALIZE BUT NOT AT THE EXPENSE OF OTHERS

Stalin tested his views not only in speeches to the Central Committee and in the press, but on very rare occasions also in front of workers. His assistant, Tovstukha, wrote down one such speech that he made in the Stalin workshops of the October Railway on March 1, 1927. Stalin, beating time with his hand, slowly expounded:
"We are completing the changeover from a peasant country to an industrial one without help from the outside world. How did other countries make this journey?
England created her industry by robbing her colonies for a period of fully 200 years. There can be no question of our taking the same path.
Germany took 5 billion [francs] from defeated France. But that way, too, the way of robbery through victorious wars, is not for us. Our cause is a policy of peace.
There is also a third way, that chosen by tsarist Russia. That was through foreign loans and secret deals at the expense of the workers and peasants. We cannot take that path.
We have our own way, and that is to accumulate our own. We will not get by without mistakes, there will be shortcomings. But the edifice we are building is so grand that these mistakes and shortcomings will not be important in the end."
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 110

He [Bukharin] went on to explain Stalin's new concept, which was the reason for their disagreements. "Stalin's line was that capitalism grows at the expense of its colonies. We have no colonies, and no one will make us loans. We must therefore rely on tribute from our own peasantry. Stalin knows that there will be resistance. Hence his theory that as Socialism grows so does resistance to it."
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 235

Capitalist countries as a rule built up their heavy industries with funds obtained from abroad, whether by colonial plunder, or by exacting indemnities from vanquished nations, or else by foreign loans. The Soviet Union could not as a matter of principle resort to such infamous means of obtaining funds as the plunder of colonies or of vanquished nations. As for foreign loans, that avenue was closed to the USSR, as the capitalist countries refused to lend it anything. The funds had to be found inside the country.
Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Ed. History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks): Short Course. Moscow: FLPH, 1939, p. 281

CAPITALIST INVESTMENT AND CONCESSIONS IN THE SU WERE MINIMAL

In the final year of NEP (1928) there were only 31 functioning foreign enterprises in the Soviet Union, with a capital (in 1925) of a mere 32 million rubles ($16 million). The majority of these enterprises engaged not in manufacturing but the exploitation of Russia's natural resources, especially timber: the latter accounted for 85 percent of the foreign capital invested in concessions.
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 396

It appeared that in 1925 Comrade Khurgin, who was carrying out Koba's personal commission, opened negotiations in New York concerning the lease of part of the Kamchatka Peninsula to some American financial interests. Koba intended killing two birds with one stone: to secure our recognition by Washington, and obtain a banking credit of 500 million U.S. dollars.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 48

SU INDUSTRIALIZATION WAS PAINFUL AND PROTECTIONISM WAS NEEDED

Seen from another angle, the 'iron curtain' has been a variety of economic protectionism. No great modern nation, with the peculiar exception of the British, has developed its industry without defending itself by high tariff walls and a variety of other prohibitive measures against the competition of older industrialized nations. Shielded by protectionism, the United States and Germany grew to their industrial maturity. Socialism in one country could not but resort to the same method. Other nations had in their industrial development been favored by the assistance of foreign capital or, in the case of the United States, by the geographic 'protectionism' of two oceans. Bolshevik Russia had no comparable advantages. Foreign capital did not help her to develop her wealth. She had hardly started her industrialization in real earnest before she was confronted with the threat of new, total war and was compelled to divert much of her wealth to armament. This made her industrial revolution infinitely more painful than it might otherwise have been; and this invested her protectionism with extraordinary severity and harshness.
That severity, the harshness, was felt in the first instance by the ordinary working man. The Government and the planning authorities had to allocate the national resources to the development of industry and transport, the mechanization of agriculture, armaments, and private consumption. The larger the resources allocated to industry and armament, the less, relatively or even absolutely, was left over for private consumption. This was the plain economic logic of the situation, a logic which all belligerent nations were to learn or re-learn, in different degrees, in the years of the Second World War, but with which Russia had been uncomfortably familiar many years before. The standard of living of the mass of the people, traditionally very low, was sacrificed to higher purposes of national policy. In spite of all that, it began appreciably to rise in the late 30s. But the rise was ephemeral. War once again depressed the standard of living to a terribly low level.
The mass of the Russian people saw how rapidly the nation grew wealthier and wealthier, while the overwhelming majority of its members remained individually poor or even grew

poorer and poorer. True enough, the economists knew that this had been roughly the position of almost every nation engaged in an industrial revolution. The essence of protectionism in the 19th century was that it withheld cheap foreign goods from the mass of consumers in order to shield and stimulate the growth of the nation's industrial strength. But in no other country had the contrast between the accumulation of national wealth and individual property been as sharp as in Russia under Stalin; and, what is perhaps more important, in no other country had that contrast been identified with socialism and a classless society. Stalin asked the working-class not only to make the effort they were making and bear the sacrifices they were bearing, but also to believe that they had an easier and better life than the peoples of the capitalist countries. This was not and could not have been true; and this was not the fault of socialism. Nor was it, by and large, the fault of Stalin or of his Government, although some of their mistakes aggravated the situation.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 556-557

The basis of Soviet economy is production for use, not profit. "Each man shall work according to his abilities, and receive according to his needs." The communist party considers itself a sort of central organization with authority over the whole nation to distribute both activity and rewards according to this formula. It mercilessly extracts profits from laborers and peasants–for instance H.R. Knickerbocker has calculated that the profit of the government on grain is 1000%–but these profits are all plowed back into the business. There are no private gains. The interests of the country as a whole, as determined by the communist party, are the only criterion.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 565

STALIN WORKED HARD TO INDUSTRIALIZE THE SU AND INCREASE THE PROLETARIAT

The much disputed but undeniable growth of Soviet industry under Stalin was of necessity accompanied by the growth of the Soviet proletariat. Industrial workers constituted less than 10 percent of the Soviet population in 1928. At Stalin's death they were more than a third of the people, and their proportion was still increasing. This sheer numerical growth of the proletariat was a great reassurance and comfort to Stalin, for it was one of the major purposes of the industrialization program.
Randall, Francis. Stalin's Russia. New York: Free Press,1965, p. 183

STALIN DENOUNCES ALLOWING BASSECHES TO CONSTANTLY ATTACK SU ECONOMIC POLICIES

[In a letter to Kaganovich and Molotov on 15 July 1932 Stalin stated] I am sending you an extremely offensive diatribe by the foreign correspondent Basseches against Soviet economic policy. Basseches is a correspondent for Neue Freie Presse. He once wrote a vile article about forced labor in the timber industry. We wanted to kick him out of the USSR, but because he repented, he was left in the USSR. Later he wrote vile things about the policy of economic accountability. But we stupidly overlooked these vile things. Now he is outdoing himself with regard to loans and collective-farm trade. Yet we are keeping quiet like idiots,

and are putting up with the slander from this pup and of the capitalist shopkeepers. Bol-she-viks, ho-ho….
I propose:
a) dragging this capitalist on through the mud in Pravda and Izvestia;
b) a short time after that, expelling him from the USSR.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 158

HEAVY INDUSTRIALIZATION PRIOR TO WWII ACCOUNTED FOR VICTORY

As for the tanks [before the Battle of Kursk], it was calculated that the losses might amount to from 65% to 75% of the effectives engaged. The abundance of means was such that these percentages were regarded as acceptable. In order to judge of the scale of this effort it will suffice to recall that for the Dnieper offensive it was calculated that 5500 tanks would be needed; so that the percentage of losses estimated represented 4000 tanks. Here the industrialization which had cost the USSR so many sacrifices and victims shows the importance of the results which it had achieved.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 340

SU HIRED SPECIALISTS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD DURING THE FIRST FIVE YEAR PLAN

In that period, when the First Five-year Plan of super-rapid industrialization got under way, the Soviet Union hired specialists from all over the world, with Germany and the USA supplying the biggest contingents.
Blumenfeld, Hans. Life Begins at 65. Montreal, Canada: Harvest House, c1987, p. 126

STRONG ECONOMIC RECOVERY BEGAN AFTER 1932 AND 1933

After the difficulties of 1932 and 1933 had been overcome and the level of living began improving rapidly, the victory of the revolution was no longer in doubt. We were looking forward to the blossoming of socialist society, including a gradual widening of diversity of opinion. Arthur Koestler has spoken of “darkness at noon.” Darkness at dawn would be more appropriate.
Blumenfeld, Hans. Life Begins at 65. Montreal, Canada: Harvest House, c1987, p. 161

Collectivisation

STALIN ADOPTED TROTSKY’S AGRARIAN PROGRAM BECAUSE TIME WAS RIGHT

Instead, in 1927-1928, Stalin astonished everybody by adopting much of the Trotskyist agrarian program he had recently denounced, less, he explained afterward, because it was

wrong, than because it was untimely (and Stalin has a keen nose for the psychological moment),….
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 222

The Left Opposition, for example, held that the time had come for a decisive assault on the kulaks. It proposed that at least 150 million poods of grain be taken by force from the kulaks and prosperous middle peasants. In a resolution dated August 9, 1927, a plenary meeting of the Central Committee rejected this proposal as “absurd and demagogic, calculated to create additional difficulties in the development of the national economy.”
The opposition’s proposals were also unhesitatingly rejected at the 15th Party Congress in December 1927, when the grain crisis was in full effect. Stalin’s report to the Congress carefully evaded the underlying difficulties, but he did speak plainly on the party’s policy toward the kulaks:
“Those comrades are wrong who think that we can and should do away with the kulaks by administrative fiat, by the GPU: write the decree, seal it… That’s an easy method, but it won’t work. The kulak must be taken by economic measures, in accordance with Soviet legality. And Soviet legality is not an empty phrase. Of course, this does not rule out the application of some administrative measures against the kulaks. But administrative measures must not replace economic ones.”
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 217

WHAT PERCENT OF POPULATION SUPPORTED AND OPPOSED COLLECTIVIZATION

The richer peasants hated collectivization. They were five percent of the total. But the poorest peasants liked it, and they were 30 percent of the total. Of the others, half — the poorer half — were rather for it. The other half were rather against it. But both sections did not care much, provided that collectivization benefited them.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 297

Yet always the communists had on their side half or more than half of the total peasant population and against them only a small minority, while the remainder just judged by the results.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 298

…In short, Stalin was not forcing lines of development on a system in which there was no support for such developments. Rather he was pursuing policy lines for which there was significant support within some sections of the regime. Under such circumstances, the interpretation that Stalin was in part responding to other forces in the system seems to have as much validity as that which attributes an initiating role solely to the leader.
Gill, Graeme. Stalinism. Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press International, 1990, p. 64

The peasant question is one of the most important questions in our politics. In the conditions prevailing in our country, the peasantry consists of various social groups, namely, the poor peasants, the middle peasants and the kulaks. It is obvious that our attitude to these various groups cannot be identical. The poor peasant is the support of the working-class, the middle

peasant is the ally, the kulak is the class enemy–such is our attitude to these respective social groups.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 164

Stalin is giving the Russian people–the Russian masses, not Westernized landlords, industrialists, bankers and intellectuals, but Russia's 150,000,000 peasants and workers–what they really want, namely joint effort, communal effort. And communal life is as acceptable to them as it is repugnant to a Westerner.
Duranty, Walter. "Red Russia of Today Ruled by Stalinism, not by Communism," New York Times, June 14, 1931.

Finally, what about the other 90% of peasants who did not rebel? Some peasants did not reject collectivization and even supported it. In March 1929 peasants suggested at a meeting in Riazan okrug that the Soviet government should take all the land and have peasants work on it for wages, a conception not too distant from the future operation of kolkhozy. An OGPU report quoted one middle peasant in Shilovskii raion, Riazan okrug, in November 1929 to the effect that 'the grain procurements are hard, but necessary; we cannot live like we lived before, it is necessary to build factories and plants, and for that grain is necessary'. In January 1930, during the campaign, some peasants said, 'the time has come to abandon our individual farms. It's about time to quit those, [we] need to transfer to collectivization.' Another document from January reported several cases of peasants spontaneously forming kolkhozy and consolidating their fields, which was a basic part of collectivization. Bokarev's analysis summarized above suggests a reason why many peasants did not rebel against collectivization: the kolkhoz in certain ways, especially in its collectivism of land use and principles of egalitarian distribution, was not all that far from peasant traditions and values in corporate villages throughout the USSR. In any case, this example, and the evidence that the vast majority of peasants did not engage in protests against collectivization, clearly disproves Graziosi's assertion cited above that the villages were 'united' against collectivization.
Tauger, Mark. "Soviet Peasants and Collectivization, 1930-39: Resistance and Adaptation." In Rural Adaptation in Russia by Stephen Wegren, Routledge, New York, NY, 2005, Chapter 3, p. 75.

For the same reasons, all such anecdotal citations from OGPU documents of peasants refusing to work are at best problematic and often meaningless as overall indicators of their actions and the consequences of them, and no generalizations or conclusions that most or all peasants resisted work in the farms, are valid if drawn from such evidence.
In such extreme versions, the "resistance interpretation" would lead one to expect that the kolkhoz system could not have functioned: peasants would have avoided work, committed sabotage and subterfuge, and produced little or nothing. Writings in this interpretation rarely indicate that peasants actually performed any agricultural work; from these studies, it appears that virtually all that peasants ever did was show resistance…. The harvest data for the 1930s, however, demonstrate that this interpretation is not compatible with the results of the system's work. Many if not most peasants adapted to the new system and worked hard in the crucial periods every year. When conditions were favorable, harvests were adequate and sometimes abundant; when unfavorable, the results were crop failures, and famine if harvests were especially low. Most notably, harvests were larger in the years after natural disasters and crop failures (1933, 1935, 1937), indicating that many peasants worked under

very difficult conditions, even famine, to produce more and overcome the crises. This means that in addition to its problems of evidence, the “resistance interpretation,” at least in its extreme versions, is one-sided, reductionist and incomplete. Peasants’ responses to the kolkhoz system cannot be reduced to resistance without serious omissions and distortions of actual events. A more complete and accurate interpretation has to take more than resistance into account.
Tauger, Mark. “Soviet Peasants and Collectivization, 1930-39: Resistance and Adaptation.” In Rural Adaptation in Russia by Stephen Wegren, Routledge, New York, NY, 2005, Chapter 3, p. 78.

When one reads that peasants refused to work ‘in certain kolkhozy’ or ‘in a series of kolkhozy’, sometimes one begins to think that those phrases are euphemisms or a code for ‘everyone’, ‘everywhere’ and ‘always’. In fact, of course, OGPU personnel did write ‘everywhere’ and ‘always’ when they meant it. This focus can also lead the researcher to inflate the concept of resistance to include actions and attitudes that were understandable and temporary responses to natural disaster, mismanagement or other problems, and not attacks on the system.
Tauger, Mark. “Soviet Peasants and Collectivization, 1930-39: Resistance and Adaptation.” In Rural Adaptation in Russia by Stephen Wegren, Routledge, New York, NY, 2005, Chapter 3, p. 79.

First we need to address the meaning of resistance. Scholars often cite OGPU reports of peasants not going out to work, or of only a few kolkhozniki working.. These reports have to be understood in the context that in 1930, and for years afterwards, most collective farms had a labor surplus. An investigation in April 1930 found that kolkhozy in the North Caucasus would employ only 60% of their available labor, and those in the Urals only 50%;… and Ukraine even lower, from 25 to 31%…. This low labor use in 1930 does not appear to have reduced farm work done: for example, a nearly complete survey in mid-1930 in the Middle Volga found that sowings in kolkhozy increased more than six-fold over 1929, and included one-third of the region’s sown area even though kolkhozy had only 22% of the region’s households. Farms could increase crop areas despite low labor turnout because collectivization eliminated the traditional inter-stripping of allotments, the typical pattern of landholding in Soviet villages. This pattern constrained many peasants’ capabilities, particularly because the population growth in the 1920s resulted in smaller allotments. Once this basically medieval system was eliminated, many fewer peasants could cultivate all the village land. For years farms had more labor than they could employ, despite dekulakization and recruitment of peasants for industrial labor. A low turnout for work, therefore, may not have been a sign of resistance as much as a result of the real demands of work in the kolkhozy.
Tauger, Mark. “Soviet Peasants and Collectivization, 1930-39: Resistance and Adaptation.” In Rural Adaptation in Russia by Stephen Wegren, Routledge, New York, NY, 2005, Chapter 3, p. 79.

Then, often kolkhozniki would not show up for work because of the income distribution plans in the kolkhoz. Apparently most kolkhozy in 1930 and many in 1931 distributed income in an equalizing manner, despite directives to distribute by work done (in 1931 according to the labor-day system)…. When some kolkhozy began work with plans to distribute jobs and remuneration on an equal basis, peasants stopped showing up for work. Then the farms

announced that they would remunerate on the basis of the amount each member worked, and everyone showed up for work, even (in one case) members who had submitted doctors' notes that they were not labor-capable. Admittedly, these are anecdotal sources, but they do suggest an alternative interpretation of some of the other anecdotal sources used to document resistance.
Tauger, Mark. "Soviet Peasants and Collectivization, 1930-39: Resistance and Adaptation." In Rural Adaptation in Russia by Stephen Wegren, Routledge, New York, NY, 2005, Chapter 3, p. 80.

Based on these sources, however, the peasants' most frequent form of 'resistance' was to divide up kolkhozy into individual fields to harvest. These actions were stimulated in some cases by a rumor of a secret state decree to dissolve the kolkhozy; one North Caucasus peasant urged division of his kolkhoz because (he thought) kolkhozy in Ukraine had been dispersed. In this case as in many others, however, peasants' actions did not have the quality of opposition or sabotage, of a clandestine attempt to undermine the state. Their demands were open, sometimes formalized in a petition to higher authorities, and honest: to be allowed to work in the way they thought best. In several cases peasants urged division of the kolkhozy to save the harvest and to provide higher procurements for the government. These demands and actions do not fit easily into the "resistance interpretation," because peasants explicitly stated that they intended their actions as a means to fulfill the government's demands to produce more and to meet the procurement quotas.
Even besides these cases, and despite or because of the crisis conditions in summer and autumn 1932, many peasants tried to work within the system. During early 1933 OGPU and other personnel investigated villages to determine the extent of the famine for relief efforts. Invariably their reports showed that while famine affected mostly peasants who did not earn many labor-days, it often struck peasants who had earned hundreds of labor-days, and highly productive, successful kolkhozy. Clearly, since many kolkhozniki were hard-working and successful until the procurement campaign of autumn 1932, resistance is far from the whole story.
By early 1933, the USSR was in the throes of a catastrophic famine, varying in severity between regions but pervasive. After efforts in January to procure more grain, the regime began desperate efforts in February to aid peasants to produce a crop. The political departments, which the regime introduced into the state arms (sovkhozy) and the machine tractor stations (MTS) in early 1933, played a crucial role in these efforts. These agencies, composed of a small group of workers and OGPU personnel in each MTS or sovkhoz, removed officials who had violated government directives on farm work and procurements, replacing them with kolkhozniki or sovkhoz workers, who they thought would be more reliable, and organized and otherwise helped farms to produce a good harvest in 1933. They were supported by draconian and coercive laws enforcing labor discipline in the farms in certain regions, but also by the largest allocation of seed and food aid in Soviet history, 5.76 million tons, and by special sowing commissions set up in crucial regions like Ukraine, the Urals, the Volga and elsewhere to manage regional-level aspects of organization and supplies to the farms.
Tauger, Mark. "Soviet Peasants and Collectivization, 1930-39: Resistance and Adaptation." In Rural Adaptation in Russia by Stephen Wegren, Routledge, New York, NY, 2005, Chapter 3, p. 82.

To focus so exclusively on resistance, especially as extreme versions of the resistance interpretation do, in light of Soviet peasants' repeated production of good harvests in the wake of serious crop failures and famines, misrepresents most peasants' actions and omits their accomplishments, and therefore presents an incorrect interpretation of Soviet rural life….
Collectivization was thus fundamentally ambivalent as a policy, with good sides and bad. Peasants' responses to this were also ambivalent; including of course significant resistance but also many other attitudes including significant adaptation and support. And in the peak of crisis, peasants repeatedly demonstrated their ability to put aside their objections, to overcome adversity even at great cost, and to produce harvests that ended famines.
In other words, the 'trope' that I propose here to encompass and understand all of the peasants' responses to collectivization is not that of heroic but futile resistance against a totally wrong system, the noble peasants fighting with the weapons of the weak, which refers only to a fraction of the peasants, but rather one of bitter and ambivalent heroism, desperate but often successful efforts by some peasants despite natural disasters, the ineptitude and harshness of the regime, and the scorn and hostility of some of their neighbors. This conception corresponds much better to the concrete results that in most years fed the growing population of the USSR.
The "resistance interpretation" seems to be an example of theory-driven or even politically motivated scholarship, in which scholars selected evidence to fit preconceived theoretical assumptions or express their hostility to the Soviet regime, but did not consider how representative and realistic their evidence actually was. The "resistance interpretation," in its extreme versions at least, is actually deeply unrealistic: peasants, like other people, had different attitudes and responses to the events that affected them. Just consider the wide array of views of some former peasants who came to positions of prominence in the early 20th century Russia and the USSR:… Given such a spectrum of perspectives from former peasants, we should expect and seek out a variety of views in the evidence, rather than assume that all peasants were resistant and attribute to all of them the views of a minority.
Tauger, Mark. "Soviet Peasants and Collectivization, 1930-39: Resistance and Adaptation." In Rural Adaptation in Russia by Stephen Wegren, Routledge, New York, NY, 2005, Chapter 3, p. 88.

PEASANTS HAVE ACCEPTED COLLECTIVIZATION

One thing, however, is sure–the peasants have accepted collectivization and are willingly obeying the Kremlin's orders. The younger peasants already understand that the Kremlin's way will benefit them in the long run, that machines and mass cultivation are superior to the old "strip system" and individual farming.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 318

Beyond all question, the new kolkhoz statute was Stalin's greatest success in his whole political life. The collectivization of agriculture in the new form satisfied the peasants, and it had the most far-reaching historical consequences. The problem of the development of agricultural technique and of the restoration of large-scale farming had been solved. More still, for a long time to come this new reform attached most of the peasants in loyalty to the regime.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 190

It is widely supposed that the Russian peasant is against the kolkhozy. That is not so. It may confidently be said that it was just the reform of 1933 that brought victory to Russia in the Second World War, and that in spite of initial failures it was just this happily formulated kolkhoz statute that prevented the collapse of the regime….
It may safely be said that it was thanks to collectivization that the Soviet Union survived the Second World War.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 191

Collectivization now protected the peasant from his rightful primeval enemies: drought, hail, pests, and cattle disease.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 193

Now a new life was introduced, and, need it be said, it seemed marvelous to the peasant. Hence his eagerness to fight for his country in the Second World War, in contrast to the first.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 194

I saw collectivization break like a storm on the Lower Volga in the autumn of 1929. It was a revolution that made deeper changes than did the revolution of 1917, of which it was the ripened fruit. Farmhands and poor peasants took the initiative, hoping to better themselves by government aid. Kulaks fought the movement bitterly by all means up to arson and murder. The middle peasantry, the real backbone of farming, had been split between the hope of becoming kulaks and the wish for machinery from the state. But now that the Five-Year Plan promised tractors, this great mass of peasants began moving by villages, townships, and counties, into the collective farms….
A few months earlier, people had argued calmly about collectives, discussing the grain in sown area, the chances of tractors.. But now the countryside was smitten as by a revival. One village organized as a unit then voted to combine with 20 villages to set up a cooperative market and grain mill…. Then Yelan united four big communes into 750,000 acres. Learning of this, peasants of Balanda shouted in meeting: “Go boldly! Unite our two townships into one farm of a million acres.”…
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 35

What would they [Middle Volga Nationalists] do with the kolkhozes, Belinsky asked. The nationalist’s reply was stereotyped: they would disband them at once. And if the majority of the peasants were against this?–No matter, they would still be disbanded. They conflicted with “national sentiments,” Other industries would remain in State hands; but there was no need to plan all this in detail, all these problems would settle themselves once there was national independence.
We were by no means so sure. We found this to be the prevalent attitude; and yet–the truth must be faced–though we revolutionary democrats detested the kolkhoz system, we were not sure that it was any longer true to say this of the majority of the land workers. The generation who had known the world of independent holdings was dying out. Even those who as small children had witnessed scenes of bloodshed when the farms were being collectivized could hardly remember the earlier order; they had grown up in a different world, with public day nurseries, state schools, state food supplies, state newspapers, magazines, books, films, plays, state training at every stage of mind and body. They had their

dissatisfactions but not consciously with the social structure. To them kolkhoz life was normal, not an innovation.
In this and in other ways, plans for the overthrow of Stalinism and for what was to replace it took a different form from earlier days. The revolution had been made in the name of the workers and peasants against other social classes; today the whole ruling class of the USSR was of worker and present origin. Nor could be the Red Army be regarded as a workers' and peasants' army in opposition to rulers of some other class origin. Both our friends and our enemies were workers and peasants, and the Red Army had become an amorphous, classless, or rather "inter-class" mass, with an altogether different mentality. The new program had to be planned for the whole of society, not for one section. The old worker and peasants slogans have lost their validity in the USSR.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press, 1956, p. 161

The peasants turned more and more in favor of collective farming as a result of seeing the state farms and the machine and tractors stations. The peasants would visit the state farms and the machine and tractor stations, watch the operation of the tractors and other agricultural machinery, admire their performance and there and then resolve to join the collective farm. It was in this manner that the collective farm movement developed, i.e., the peasants were persuaded by superior state farms and agricultural machinery to join collective farms–not my arm-twisting or use of force as is asserted by the paid and unpaid agents of the bourgeoisie–the Trotskyites, the 'learned' bourgeois professors, and bourgeois intellectuals.
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 176

When in the year 1924 Stalin recognized and proclaimed that the Russian peasant had within him the possibility of socialism, that he could, in other words, be national and international at the same time, his opponents laughed at him and decried him as a Utopian. Today [1937] practice has proved Stalin's theory to be correct: the peasant has been socialized from White Russia to the Far East.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 80

The poor peasants saw emancipation in the collective; the richer ones saw the merging of their small fortune and position.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 114

COLLECTIVIZATION OPPOSED ONLY BY A MINORITY

To the London Times correspondent collectivization is one of the blackest spots in his gloomy picture. He writes: "During the last two years 70 million peasants have been driven from 14 million holdings onto 200,000 collective farms. Those who have proved themselves successful farmers, that is the kulaks, are hunted down, exiled to labor and timber camps in the North, massacred, and destroyed." For anyone who knows the situation here, as well as the writer in question clearly does, this is a deliberate and ingenious perversion of fact. The truth is that during the past five (not two) years some 60 percent of the peasant population, which include about 70 million souls, have adopted the new system of combining their individual holdings (nearer 18 million holdings than 14 million) for collective working on modern lines. The kulaks naturally opposed the new system, which if successful would

eliminate all their privileges. Generally, it is true they were the best and most productive farmers, but they were trying to hold back the clock of progress as obstinately as the "homeweavers" in England a century ago, who started riots to break the new power driven machines which ushered in the industrial age of England and gave her economics supremacy and great wealth for many decades.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 336

THE TWO OPPOSING VIEWS OF COLLECTIVIZATION

Wouldn't you get an increased planted area and a larger harvest if you gave the richer peasants, who own more horses and machinery, greater opportunities in the way of leasing and farming land? I inquired.
Lebedev's face grew more tense and his tired eyes flashed as he shot back:
Yes, perhaps we should. But then these richer peasants would grow in wealth and influence like bloated spiders until they had the whole district in their power. We didn't fight through the civil war, we didn't beat the White generals and landlords and capitalists, and Allied troops who came to help them, for this, to let capitalism creep back in veiled forms. Our policy is to unite the poor and middle class peasants in cooperatives and collective farms and raise the living standard of all the peasants gradually, instead of letting a few grow rich while the rest remain poor. As revolutionary Communists that is the only policy we can and shall pursue, no matter how many obstacles we shall have to overcome.
I left Lebedev's office and went into a neighboring Cossack village, which had suffered so severely during the civil war that 30 percent of the homesteads were farmed by women. And one of these Cossack women, burned almost black by the fierce glare of the summer sun over the Don steppes, quite unconsciously gave me the individual peasant's answer to Lebedev.
"What does the state mean by trying to make us all byedniaks [poor peasants]?," she burst out. "We can't all be equal, because some of us will always work harder than others. Let me work as much land as I can with my own arms and I'll gladly pay rent and taxes to the state for it, and sell my grain too, if I get a fair price and some goods to buy with the money. But nothing will ever come out of this idea of making us all byedniaks and calling everyone who is a capable hard worker a bloodsucker and kulak. That sort of thing keeps us poor, and keeps the state poor too."
Here, in a nutshell, are the two viewpoints which are competing for mastery all over the Russian countryside today.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 416

POOR PEASANTS DETERMINED WHO WERE THE KULAKS

The most spectacular act…which occured in those years was the exile of several hundred thousand kulaks–rural property owners who lived by trade, money lending or by exploiting small mills, threshers, and hired labor–from farm homes in European Russia and the Ukraine to Siberia or the northern woods. The usual assumption outside the Soviet Union is that this exiling occurred through arbitrary action by a mystically omnipotent GPU. That organization did of course organize the deportation and final place of settlement in labor camps or on new land. But the listing of kulaks who "impede our farming by force and violence" was done by village meetings of poor peasants and farmhands who were feverishly and not too efficiently

organizing collectively owned farms with government loans of machinery and credits. The meetings I personally attended were as seriously judicial as a court trial in America. One by one there came before the people the “best families,” who had grabbed the best lands, exploited labor by owning the tools of production as best families normally and historically do, and who were fighting the rise of the collective farm–which had the right to take the best lands away from them–by every means up to arson, cattle killing, and murder…. The meeting of farmhands and poor peasants discussed each case in turn, questioned the kulaks, allowed most of them to remain but asked the government to deport some as “trouble-makers.”
It was a harsh, bitter and by no means bloodless conflict, but not one peculiar to Russia. I was reminded of it again in 1933 by the cotton-pickers’ strike in San Joaquin Valley of California. California local authorities deported pickets who interfered with the farming of ranchers; Soviet authorities deported kulaks who interfered with the collectively owned farming of the poor. In both cases central governments sent commissions to guard against the worst excesses. But the “property” which could count on government support was in California that of the wealthy rancher; in the USSR it was the collective property of the poor.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 53

Of the enforced removals there have been two kinds. In 1929 and 1930 drastic measures were taken against those elements in the villages which were seriously interfering with the formation of kolkhosi, often by personal violence, and willful damage to buildings and crops. These disturbers of the peace were in many cases forcibly removed from their homes. “The usual assumption outside the Soviet Union,” writes one who witnessed the proceedings of 1930, “is that this exiling occurred through drastic action by a mystically omnipotent GPU. The actual process was quite different: it was done by village meetings of poor peasants and farm hands who listed those kulaks who ‘impede our collective farm by force and violence,’ and asked the Government to deport them. In the hot days of 1930 I attended many of these meetings. There were harsh, bitter discussions, analyzing one by one the ‘best families,’ who had grabbed the best lands, exploited labor by owning the tools of production, as ‘best families’ normally and historically due, and who were now fighting the rise of the collective farms by arson, cattle-killing and murder…. The meetings I personally attended were more seriously judicial, more balanced in their discussion, than any court trial I have attended in America: these peasants knew they were dealing with serious punishments, and did not handle them lightly…. Those who envisage that the rural revolution which ended in farm collectivization was a ‘war between Stalin and the peasants’ simply weren’t on the ground when the whirlwind broke. The anarchy of an elemental upheaval was its chief. characteristic: it was marked by great ecstasies and terrors: local leaders in village township and province did what was right in their own eyes and passionately defended their convictions. Moscow studied and participated in the local earthquakes; and, out of the mass experience, made, somewhat too late to save the livestock, general laws for its direction. It was a harsh, bitter and by no means bloodless conflict…. Township and provincial commissions in the USSR reviewed and cut down the list of kulaks for exile, to guard against local excesses.”
[From The Soviet Dictatorship by Anna Louise Strong, in, October 1934]
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, p. 205

Today, dekulakizing is being carried out by the masses of poor and middle peasants themselves, who are carrying through mass collectivization.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 177

The procedure on which the kulaks were got rid of was peculiar. Decrees of the USSR Sovnarkom declared that the kulaks as a class were to be liquidated. Up and down the country the batraks and bedniaks, the landless and the poor peasants, with such of the seredniaks (the middle peasants) as chose to attend, held village meetings, and voted that such and such peasants of their village were kulaks, and were to be dispossessed.
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, p. 467

WHAT ARE KULAKS AND WHAT DO THEY DO

Farming, especially, was in the hands of small owners, the strongest of whom were petty capitalists, called kulaks, who profited and grew by exploiting other peasants and cheating the state.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 13

The bourgeoisie has always maintained that the Soviet collectivization `destroyed the dynamic forces in the countryside' and caused a permanent stagnation of agriculture. It describes the kulaks as individual `dynamic and entrepeneurial' peasants. This is nothing but an ideological fable destined to tarnish socialism and glorify exploitation. To understand the class struggle that took place in the USSR, it is necessary to try to have a more realistic image of the Russian kulak.
At the end of the nineteenth century, a specialist on Russian peasant life wrote as follows: `Every village commune has always three or four regular kulaks, as also some half dozen smaller fry of the same kidney…. They want neither skill nor industry; only promptitude to turn to their own profit the needs, the sorrows, the sufferings and the misfortunes of others…
Stepniak's The Russian Peasantry, quoted in Sidney and Beatrice Webb, Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation? second edition (London: Victor Gollancz, 1937), p. 563 [footnote]
…`The distinctive characteristic of this class…is the hard, unflinching cruelty of a thoroughly educated man who has made his way from poverty to wealth, and has come to consider money-making, by whatever means, as the only pursuit to which a rational being should devote himself.'
Stepniak's The Russian Peasantry, quoted in Sidney and Beatrice Webb, Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation? second edition (London: Victor Gollancz, 1937), p. 564
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 62 [p. 52 on the NET]

[December 1929 speech by Gelman to the First Congress of Shock Brigades]
…On the night shift a shock worker fell into the machine, and when he was being beaten by this Jagger, when his legs were being broken, when he was being boiled in the hot dye, a worker standing nearby did not stop the machine. When the matter was investigated, it turned out that [the latter] was a well-to-do kulak.

Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 32

Dr. Dillon, whose testimony is of unimpeachable authority, declared in 1918 that “this type of man was commonly termed a kulak, or fist, to symbolize his utter callousness to pity or ruth. And of all the human monsters I have ever met in my travels, I cannot recall any so malignant and odious as the Russian kulak. In the revolutionary horrors of 1905 and 1917 he was the ruling spirit–a fiend incarnate.”
[The Eclipse of Russia by Dillon, 1918, Page 67]
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, p. 466 & 564

Many illustrative examples of relentless economic oppression by kulaks may be gathered from Russian sources. Yet the kulaks as a class may be said to have done no more than would have been considered “sound business” by the individualist economists of Victorian England; namely, habitually to take advantage of the economic weakness of those with whom they made their bargains; always to buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest market; paying the lowest wage at which they could hire the services of those who begged for employment; and extracting the utmost usury from those who voluntarily accepted their loans.
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, pp. 466 & 565

TWO VIEWS IN PARTY ON COLLECTIVIZATION AND KULAKS

The Right wing of the Communist Party held that kulaks should be allowed to get rich and that socialism could win through state ownership of industries. The left wing was for forcing peasants rapidly into collective farms under state control. Actual policy shifted for several years under pressure of different groups in the Party. The policy finally adopted was to draw peasants into collective farms by offering government credits and tractors, to freeze the kulaks out by high taxes and, later, to “abolish them as a class.”…
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 35

The “Socialized property created by the revolution” could not have triumphed automatically over the capitalist elements. It could only triumph in virtue of planned leadership, carrying through a definite policy, and before that policy could be operated two rival policies had to be brushed aside.
There was the policy of Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky, which meant the abandonment of Socialist attack on the capitalist elements of the country, the slowing down of the rate of development in industry, reliance on the individual rather than the collective farms. If this policy had been carried out, the grain difficulties would never have been overcome, industry would have been poorly developed, and the capitalist elements would have been able to dictate to the Soviet Government.
A still more spectacular fiasco would have resulted had the Party and the Government adopted the proposal of Trotsky and Zinoviev and attacked the rich peasants before the alliance with the middle peasantry had been cemented, and before the grain production of the rich peasant could be replaced by that of the Soviet and collective farms.

If either of those variants had been accepted the “conditions of socialized property” would not have saved the country from disaster.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 82

STALIN DID NOT USE FORCEFUL COLLECTIVIZATION OR CAUSE FOOD SHORTAGES

American commentators usually speak of collective farms as enforced by Stalin; they even assert that he deliberately starved millions of peasants to make them join collectives. This is untrue. I traveled the countryside in those years and know what occurred. Stalin certainly promoted the change and guided it. But the drive for collectivization went so much faster than Stalin planned that there were not enough machines ready for the farms, nor enough bookkeepers and managers. Hopeful inefficiency combined with a panic slaying of livestock under kulak urging, and with two dry years, brought serious food shortage in 1932, two years after Stalin’s alleged pressures. Moscow brought the country through by stern nationwide rationing.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 35

Stalin, half peasant by origin, added: “the peasant is not going to be driven to Socialism by any mystical phrase, but only by his self-interest. If we show him that with commonly owned machines he can harvest more and earn more, he will accept it.”
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam’s sons, 1942, p. 151

As early as March 2, 1930, even Stalin recoiled from the chaos and wrote his famous “Dizziness with Success” article, in which he called for a halt to forced collectivization and ordered a reduction in the use of violence against peasants….
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 109

In view of what followed it is interesting to note that much of his [Stalin] success in the villages, and therefore of his victory over the Opposition, was due to his obstinate refusal to put pressure too soon upon the richer peasants. Patience, willingness to bide his time and await the psychological moment, is another outstanding quality of Joseph Stalin.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 136

The basic success of the collective movement, Stalin said, lies in the fact that it is largely voluntary on the part of the peasants. To force them further would be a fatal and autocratic error and would imply a rupture between the Communist Party and the masses it controls, whereas in reality its strength and its whole reason for existence are based upon a close connection with and work for the masses.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 183

Thus it can be seen, notwithstanding the assertions to the contrary of the Trotskyites and the bourgeois intelligentsia, who are very ‘clever’ and yet stupid, it was Stalin and the Central Committee who were against any form of coercion in the matter of collectivization.
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 180

[Report from the commander of the Siberian Military District to Voroshilov, chairman of the Revolutionary Military Soviet, April 30, 1930, regarding directives forbidding use of the military in operations against the kulaks]
Based on your [Voroshilov] directives of Feb. 2 and 5 of this year, on Feb. 6 the Revolutionary Military Council of the district issued orders to divisional commanders and military divisional commanders categorically forbidding the use of military formations in the dekulakization operations.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 383

[Resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party March 26, 1932]
In many regions we can observe the collectivization of cattle and smaller livestock by forcible means. This practice is a flagrant violation of repeatedly issued directives by the party's Central Committee as well as of the provisions contained in the statute of the agricultural artel.
The Central Committee stresses that only enemies of the kolkhozes would permit forced collectivization of livestock from individual kolkhoz members. The Central Committee emphasizes that forced requisition of kolkhoz members' cattle and smaller livestock is contrary to the party's political program. The goal of the party is that every member of the kolkhoz have a cow, some smaller livestock, and poultry. The further expansion and development of kolkhozes should occur through breeding and raising younger animals and/or by purchasing cattle by the farmers.
The central committee of the All-Union Communist Party proposes to all party, Soviet, and kolkhoz organizations:
1. Cease all attempts of forced collectivization of cattle and small livestock belonging to kolkhoz members and expel from the party those guilty of violating Central Committee directives,
2. Organize aid for the members of the kolkhozes who have no cattle or small livestock to purchase and raise young animals for their own personal needs.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 388

[Minutes of the March 23, 1932, meeting of a Politburo commission and the final version of a resolution on the forced collectivization of livestock]
Resolved: "The practice of collectivizing cattle and small livestock belonging to individual collective farmers by means of actual coercion has been noted in several regions, in flagrant violation of the repeated directives of the Central Committee of the party and the regulation governing agricultural co-operative associations. The Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party most strongly emphasizes that only enemies of collective farms could allow the forced collectivization of cattle and small livestock belonging to individual collective farmers."
The Central Committee would like to clarify that the practice of forced confiscation of cattle and small livestock from collective farmers has nothing to do with the policy; the aim of the party consists in seeing that each collective farmer has his own cattle, small livestock, and poultry. The further expansion and development of collective farms should progress only by means of allowing these collective farmers to rear young animals.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 389

A few facts.
1. The success of our collective farm policy is to be explained, among other things, by the fact that this policy is based on the collective farm movement being a voluntary one and on the recognition of the diversity of conditions existing in the various regions of the Soviet Union. Collective farms cannot be set up by force. To do so would be stupid and reactionary. The collective farm movement must lean on the active support of the basic masses of the peasantry. Forms of collective farm construction in the developed regions cannot be mechanically transplanted to the backward regions. Do so would be stupid and reactionary. Such a "policy" would discredit the idea of collectivization at one blow. In determining the speed and methods of building collective farms we must carefully take into account the diversity of conditions prevailing in the various regions of the Soviet Union….
But what do we sometimes find taking place in practice? Can it be said that the voluntary principle and the principle of taking local peculiarities into account are not violated in a number of regions? No, unfortunately, that cannot be said. It is known, for example, that a number of the northern regions of the grain-importing belt, where favorable conditions for the immediate organization of collective farms are comparatively less than in the grain-bearing regions, not infrequently endeavor to replace the preparatory work for the organization of collective farms by bureaucratically decreeing the collective farm movement, by paper resolutions regarding the growth of collective farms, by the organization of collective farms, "on paper," farms which in reality do not yet exist, but regarding the "existence" of which there is a pile of braggart resolutions. Or, let us take certain regions of Turkestan, where conditions favoring the immediate organization of collective farms are even less than in the northern oblasts of the grain-importing belt. We know that in a number of regions of Turkestan there have already been attempts to "overtake and surpass" the advanced regions of the Soviet Union by resorting to threats of applying military force, by threatening to deprive the peasants who do not yet wish to enter the collective farms of irrigation water and of manufactured goods.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 254

What relation is there between this sergeant Prishibeiev's [a person in one of Chekhov's plays who has the manners of the barracks and the drill ground] "policy" and the policy of the Party, which is based on the voluntary principle and on a regard for local peculiarities in collective farm construction? It is obvious that they have nothing in common.
Who benefits by these distortions, this bureaucratic decreeing of the collective farm movement, this wretched threatening of the peasants? Nobody, but our enemies!
What may be the result of these distortions? The strengthening of our enemies and the discrediting of the collective farm movement idea….
The question arises: who benefits by this stupid and harmful precipitancy? Irritating the peasant-collective-farm member by "collectivizing" living premises, all the milk cattle, all the small livestock and the domestic poultry, when the grain problem is still unsolved, when the artel form of the collective farm is not yet consolidated–is it not obvious that such a "policy" can please and benefit only our sworn enemies? One such fiery "collectivizer" even went so far as to issue an instruction to the artel ordering "that within three days every single head of poultry in every household be registered," that special "commanders" be appointed to register and supervise, "to occupy the key positions in the artel," "to lead the fight for socialism, without quitting their posts," and–of course–to seize the whole artel by the throat.

What do you call that–a policy of leading the collective farm, or a policy of disintegrating and discrediting it?…
How could such blockheaded exercises in collectivization, such ludicrous attempts to lift oneself by one's own bootstraps, attempts the purpose of which is to ignore classes and the class struggle, but which in practice bring grist to the mill of our class enemies, occur in our midst?… They could occur only as a result of the fact that certain of our comrades became dizzy with success, and for a while lost clear-mindedness and sober vision….
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 256

Now he [Stalin] intimated that his instructions had been misunderstood: 'Collective farms cannot be set up by force. To do so would be stupid and reactionary.' He railed at 'opportunists', 'blockheads', 'noisy lefts', 'timid philistines', and 'distortionists ': and he called for a halt to 'excesses'.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 330

Volodya says, "There is the question of the repressions carried out during the time of collectivization; people now put the blame on Stalin. The first thing to say is that the Party fully supported the policy of collectivization. The policy of the liquidation of the kulaks as a class was a policy which Lenin considered to be most correct; he considered the kulak the most malicious enemy of Soviet power beside the capitalist landowner. He considered that as long as the kulaks continued to exist there would be a threat of the restoration of capitalism.
… in the course of this collectivization mistakes were made. But in that case you have to look at the people who were carrying out the policy. Stalin's business was to arrange the general direction, but it was a question of how it was organized locally that affected how it was actually carried out.
… There is probably data on how many were transported to the camps; I would think that far more were transported than perished. As for those who were transported, in the end they did have the possibility of going home! People talk a lot now about how it was not just the head of the family who was transported, but also his family and children. People consider this anti-humanitarian, but from the other point of view, to abandon the children to the vagaries of fate would be far less humane than to exile them and to provide them with a place to live in another region of the country."
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 276

PEOPLE DIFFER WIDELY ON THEIR VIEWS OF COLLECTIVIZATION

Into these discussions penetrated organizers from the Party, sometimes farm experts giving counsel, sometimes workers ignorant of farming but aflame with zeal for collectivization….
Discussions were hot and hostile. Later, Moscow denounced the "disease of giantism." But at first the enthusiasts called all caution "counter-revolution." Families split; the young man followed the enthusiasts, eager for new ways. The old men doubted; they saw themselves losing control of the household along with the acres. The women worried over the fate of the family cow….
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 35

ONLY A MINORITY WERE COMPLAINING ABOUT COLLECTIVIZATION MISTAKES

Toward the end of March, I went south to meet the spring. Twenty-four hours from Moscow I found it, on the line to Stalingrad. When my train set me down after midnight, I was appalled by the crowds of peasants who surrounded me, pouring out bitter words. “A former bandit got into the Party and bossed our village.” Stalin says collectives are voluntary, but they won’t give back our oxen.”

Next morning in the township center, I heard similar complaints heaped on a tired secretary from dawn till long after dark. “The chairman isn’t here,” he explained. “He went to help a village where kulaks last night burned a barn containing 27 horses that were relied on for the sowing. He must organize emergency help.” Meantime the secretary wearily repeated to all comers that of course they would get their oxen back if they decided to leave the collective farm, but they couldn’t disorganize sowing by grabbing the oxen on a day’s notice from field-gangs plowing 20 miles away. Especially, when they kept changing their minds several times a week.

Farms seemed going to pieces under a dozen pressures–violence of kulaks, attacks by priests, official stupidities, and just plain inefficiency of medieval Russia. Yet, as soon as I left the railway and went inland, the chaos was replaced by a spectacular, mass sowing. I saw then that all journalists who judge by the railway and the township center must judge wrongly. All complaints and injustice flowed to the railroad and sought adjustment from the township center. No peasant who could plow went to the railway–he was plowing. Beyond the railroad, men were fighting for a record harvest to establish their right to land and machines.

Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 39-40

A REPORTER NOTES THE GRAIN SHORTAGE BUT SAYS WORKING ALONE WILL BE WORSE

Working out from Stalingrad went the Traveling Struggle, a newspaper published from three railway cars. It journeyed through the spring from township to township, investigated and published abuses, and even summoned judges from the city for special courts. Melnikov, its most energetic reporter, could digest ten shocking cases daily and find in them no discouragement but a call to battle….

Not all the anti-Soviet sheets in America could invent more “Bolshevik atrocities” than Melnikov triumphantly recorded in his routine. This Traveling Struggle had had more than two hundred officials arrested that season for crimes ranging from graft to banditry. But when I asked whether the harvest would be much less because of the turmoil, Melnikov stared as if I were crazy.

“Less? It must be much greater! Have you not seen tractors doubling the sown area? Have you not seen, even without tractors, how farmhands and peasants use kulaks horses to increase area 70 percent? The kulaks sabotaged the harvest, fearing taxes and hating the Soviet power. These new owners drive forward like madmen.”

The hunger of the poor peasants for more life was the power released in that “First Bolshevik Spring.” This power was led by Communists who, despite inexperience and excesses, were a disciplined and tireless group. I could pick them out in field brigades by their tense concern

that everything go well. It is thus I recall Kovalev, Party secretary of a small Tatar district south of Stalingrad, and his talk with ten shiftless, deserting peasants.
These peasants were leaving the collective farm. One said: “I have no warm coat and they make me pasture livestock in the rain.” Another: “They work my camel hungry and he dies before my eyes.” A third: “My wife won’t live with me since I joined the kolhoz.”
The reasons seemed sound to me but not to Kovalev. “These conditions you always had,” he said. “Nobody offered a golden dish in the kolhoz. Faults of management can be corrected. Men working at night must have warm clothes. Hay is scarce from last year’s drought, but it will be no better in individual fields. Who leaves will not better himself, for the whole Soviet power helps the kolhoz. A peasant is not an independent person; his farm depends on the nation and the nation depends on his farm. Our land is surrounded by capitalist lands. We must swiftly build great industry and modern farming or we perish. That great factory in Stalingrad will this summer give tractors to our farms. That great power station, Stalgres, will this autumn give light to your homes. While these are unfinished, they need bread; there must be a great increase in grain. Can this be done if every peasant sits at home, deciding whether to plow? The task of every citizen this year is to strengthen the collective farm.”…
Melnikov guessed right. Though the seed was sown in the chaos of class war–by men who stormed their way out of the Middle Ages in a year–yet such was the drive of their awakened will that when crop returns at last came in, the Soviet Union (and the foreign powers who watched like hawks) knew that the country had achieved the widest sown area and the greatest harvest it had ever known.
That harvest changed the history of farming for the world.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 41

STALIN ARGUES FOR COLLECTIVIZATION AND CONTENDS IT WAS NECESSARY

In Stalin’s words: “The way out is to turn the small and scattered peasant farms into large united farms based on common cultivation of the soil, to introduce collective cultivation of the soil on the basis of new and higher technique. The way out is to unite the small and dwarf peasant farms gradually but surely, not by pressure, but by example and persuasion, into large farms based on common, cooperative, collective cultivation of the soil with the use of agricultural machines and tractors and scientific methods of intensive agriculture.”
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 59

“Tell me,” Churchill inquired, “for you personally is this war as much of a stress as was the burden of collectivization?”
“Oh, no,” the “father of the people’s” replied. “The campaign of collectivization was a terrible struggle.”
“I thought you would have found it rough going. You were not dealing with a few score thousands of aristocrats or big landlords, but rather with millions of small landholders.”
“Ten million!” Stalin exclaimed, raising his hands. “It was fearful! For four years it went on. But it was absolutely necessary for Russia if we were to avoid periodic famines and to supply enough tractors for the countryside.”
Stalin’s figure for the number of farmers repressed during collectivization roughly tallies with the one recently published in the Soviet press. If we assume that about half of the uprooted

villagers, after drifting around the country, eventually joined the kolkhozes or ended up working at construction projects, then about 5 million people perished or were purged, a number close to the 6 million that is a figure accepted by most researchers.
“Were they all kulaks?” Churchill asked.
“Yes,” Stalin replied, and after a pause repeated: “It was very hard, but necessary.”
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin’s Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 299-300

A conversation about the kulaks which Stalin had with Churchill on Aug. 14, 1942 is instructive. The talks had come to an end and Stalin had invited the British leader to dine with him in his Kremlin apartment. Molotov and an interpreter were present during the long conversation. Churchill reproduces the occasion in his memoirs thus:
“Tell me,” [he asked Stalin], “have the stresses of this war been as bad to you personally as carrying through the policy of the Collective Farms?”
This subject immediately aroused the Marshal.
“Oh, no,” he said, “the Collective Farm policy was a terrible struggle.”
“I thought you would have found it bad,” said I, “because you were not dealing with a few score thousands of aristocrats or big landowners, but with millions of small men.”
“Ten millions,” he said, holding up his hands. “It was fearful. Four years it lasted. It was absolutely necessary for Russia, if we were to avoid periodic famines, to plow the land with tractors. We must mechanize our agriculture. When we gave tractors to the peasants they were all spoiled in a few months. Only Collective Farms with workshops could handle tractors. We took the greatest trouble explaining it to the peasants. It was no use arguing with them. After you have said all you can to a peasant he says he must go home and consult his wife, and he must consult is herder.” This last was a new expression to me in this connection. “After he has talked it over with them he always answers that he does not want the Collective Farm and would rather do without the tractors.”
“These were what you call kulaks?”
“Yes,” he said, but he did not repeat the word. After a pause, “It was all very bad and difficult–but necessary.”
“What happened?”
“Well,” he said, “many of them agreed to come in with us. Some of them were given land of their own to cultivate in the province of Tomsk or the province of Irkutsk or farther north, but the great bulk were very unpopular and were wiped out by their laborers.”
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 167

As Stalin looked back in his later years at collectivization and the record of the collective farms, he might well have groaned as he groaned to Churchill. But he might also have had much cause for satisfaction. The agricultural settlement had been difficult, but it did work. The countryside was socialist, the threat of counter-revolution was gone, the regime was getting the lion’s share of the crops. Production was now more scientific, and it was rising, even if it did not outstrip the rise in population. The agrarian surplus appropriated by the regime had proved sufficient to support the new industrial plant that had made the defeat of Hitler possible. Stalin had in the long run secured the essentials of what he wanted from the peasants. The only sufferers were the peasants themselves. Yet theirs was the glory of having toiled and suffered for the benefit of posterity, which would be appropriately grateful to them. In the last analysis, Stalin thought the sufferings of his peasants were unfortunate,

but that they were more than justified by the record of his industry, which the sufferings of the peasants had made possible.
Randall, Francis. Stalin's Russia. New York: Free Press,1965, p. 170

LENIN WOULD HAVE CARRIED OUT COLLECTIVIZATION THE SAME WAY

CHUEV: Some argue that Lenin would have carried it through differently.
MOLOTOV: They are opportunists. They just don't understand. They are obtuse. They are unable to get to the heart of the matter.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 245

KHRUSHCHEV OPPOSES COLLECTIVIZATION

Personally I think Gomulka was absolutely right to oppose collectivization.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 206

BOLSHEVIKS REALIZE POWER RESTS ON A BALANCE BETWEEN THE TOWNS AND PEASANTRY

The Bolsheviks, who are the least blind of men when looking into the future, knew quite well that the future of the socialist State depended upon harmony between the productive economy of the land and that of the towns (in the same way that the Revolution itself, indeed, only succeeded because the peasants as a whole had accepted it–in some cases had even assisted it–or had let it go on).
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 124

WORKING CLASS CONTROL WOULD HAVE COLLAPSED IF THE KULAKS HAD PREVAILED

If the kulaks, who represented already 5 per cent of the peasantry, had succeeded in extending their economic base and definitively imposing themselves as the dominant force in the countryside, the socialist power in the cities would not have been able to maintain itself, faced with this encirclement by bourgeois forces. Eighty-two per cent of the Soviet population was peasant. If the Bolshevik Party had no longer succeeded in feeding the workers at relatively low prices, the very basis of working class power would have been threatened.
Hence it was necessary to accelerate the collectivization of certain sectors in the countryside in order to increase, on a socialist basis, the production of market wheat. It was essential for the success of accelerated industrialization that a relatively low price for market wheat be maintained. A rising rural bourgeoisie would never have accepted such a policy. Only the poor and middle peasants, organized in co-operatives, could support it. And only industrialization could ensure the defence of the first socialist country….
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 65 [p. 52 on the NET]

WHEN COLLECTIVIZATION IS CALLED FOR GROUPS RUSH TO HELP INSTALL IT

Once the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party had called for accelerating the collectization, a spontaneous movement developed, brought to the regions by activists, youth, old soldiers of the Red Army and the local apparatus of the Party.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 65 [p. 53 on the NET]

A Trotskyite capitulator, an engineer of the Putilov factory, mentioned an interesting case to me in which the workers took a favorable attitude towards Stalin's policy of collectivization. One of the 25,000 had been killed; 10 volunteers offered to replace him. Among them was one of the oldest workers in the factory. My informant quoted the case to prove that the mass of the workers was supporting Stalin's policy and that the Opposition should do the same.
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 111

POOR PEASANTS WERE THE PRIMARY IMPLIMENTERS OF COLLECTIVIZATION

Numerous anti-Communist books tell us that collectivization was `imposed' by the leadership of the Party and by Stalin and implemented with terror. This is a lie. The essential impulse during the violent episodes of collectivization came from the most oppressed of the peasant masses.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 66 [p. 54 on the NET]

Lynn Viola continued on page 216 in The Best Sons of the Fatherland:
"The state ruled by circular, it ruled by decree, but it had neither the organizational structure nor the manpower to enforce its voice or to ensure correct implementation of its policy in the administration of the countryside…. The roots of the Stalin system in the countryside do not lie in the expansion of state controls but in the very absence of such controls and of an orderly system of administration, which, in turn, resulted as the primary instrument of rule in the countryside."
This conclusion, drawn from a careful observation of the real progress of collectivization, requires two comments.
The thesis of `Communist totalitarianism' exercised by an `omnipresent Party bureaucracy' has no real bearing with the actual Soviet power under Stalin. It is a slogan showing the bourgeoisie's hatred of real socialism. In 1929–1933, the Soviet State did not have the technical means, the required qualified personnel, nor the sufficient Communist leadership to direct collectivization in a planned and orderly manner: to describe it as an all-powerful and totalitarian State is absurd.
In the countryside, the essential urge for collectivization came from the most oppressed peasants. The Party prepared and initiated the collectivization, and Communists from the cities gave it leadership, but this gigantic upheaval of peasant habits and traditions could not have succeeded if the poorest peasants had not been convinced of its necessity. Viola's judgment according to which `repression became the principal instrument of power' does not correspond to reality. The primary instrument was mobilization, consciousness raising,

education and organization of the masses of peasants. This constructive work, of course, required `repression', i.e. it took place and could not have taken place except through bitter class struggle against the men and the habits of the old regime.
Be they fascists or Trotskyists, all anti-Communists affirm that Stalin was the representative of an all-powerful bureaucracy that suffocated the base. This is the opposite of the truth. To apply its revolutionary line, the Bolshevik leadership often called on the revolutionary forces at the base to short-circuit parts of the bureaucratic apparatus.
`The revolution was not implemented through regular administrative channels; instead the state appealed directly to the party rank and file and key sectors of the working class in order to circumvent rural officialdom. The mass recruitments of workers and other urban cadres and the circumvention of the bureaucracy served as a breakthrough policy in order to lay the foundations of a new system.'
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 67 [p. 55 on the NET]

To understand the Bolshevik Party's line during the collectivization, it is important to keep in mind that on the eve of 1930, the State and Party apparatus in the countryside was extremely weak—the exact opposite of the `terrible totalitarian machine' imagined by anti-Communists. The weakness of the Communist apparatus was one of the conditions that allowed the kulaks to throw all their forces into a vicious battle against the new society.
On January 1, 1930, there were 339,000 Communists among a rural population of about 120 million people! Twenty-eight Communists for a region of 10,000 inhabitants.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 69 [p. 56 on the NET]

The usual assumption outside the Soviet Union is that this exiling occurred through drastic action by a mystically omnipotent G.P.U.. The actual process was quite different; it was done by the village meetings of poor peasants and farmhands which listed those kulaks who "impede the collective farm by force and violence" and asked the government to deport them. In the hot days of 1930 I attended several of these meetings. They were harsh, ruthless discussions, analyzing one by one the "best families," which had grabbed the best lands, exploited labor by owning the tools of production, as "best families" normally and historically do, and who were now fighting the rise of the collective farms by arson, cattle-killing and murder. Meetings of poor peasants and farmhands discussed them, questioned them, passed on them, allowing some to remain but listing others as "dangerous to our peaceful development–should be deported from our village."
It was a harsh, bitter and by no means bloodless conflict. I was reminded of it again in the San Joaquin Valley of California by the cotton pickers' strike in the autumn of 1933. The same gradations from half-starved farmhand to wealthy rancher, though the extremes in California were wider. California local authorities permitted deportation of pickets who interfered with farming of private ranchers; Soviet authorities permitted deportation of kulaks who interfered with the collectively owned farms of poor peasants and laborers. In both cases the central government sent investigating commissions, slightly moderating and therewith sanctioning the local actions. The governor's commission in California threw out a few of the most untenable cases against strikers. In the USSR the township and provincial commissions reviewed the lists of "kulaks for exile" and greatly cut them down, guarding against local spites and excesses. But the active winning will which could count on the

backing of government was in California the will of ranchers and finance corporations; in the USSR, the will of organized farmhands.
Strong, Anna Louise. Dictatorship and Democracy in the Soviet Union. New York: International Pamphlets, 1934, p. 4-5

The traditions of the rural Russian communities and the primitive collectivism of the peasants contributed mightily to the success of collectivization. The Russian villages had never liked the capitalist peasant, the kulak, growing rich at the expense of the mir (village community).
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 101

The dispossession and dispersal of the ‘kulaks’ was, on the whole, a popular policy among proletarians and party activists, by no means something that Stalin imposed on reluctant comrades.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 313

THE KULAK CLASS WAS TO BE ELIMINATED NOT THE KULAKS THEMSELVES

The Soviet term, `liquidation of the kulaks as a class’, indicates perfectly clearly that it is the capitalist exploitation organized by the kulaks that is to be eliminated and not the physical liquidation of the kulaks as persons. Playing with the word `liquidation’, academic hacks such as Nolte and Conquest claim that the exiled kulaks were `exterminated’.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 94 [p. 80 on the NET]

In a “directive circular” Stalin declared: “One must rely entirely on the poor peasants and consolidate the alliance with the moderately prosperous peasants in order to engage in the decisive struggle to annihilate the kulaks as a social class.” Of course, to annihilate them as a social class did not mean the physical extinction of the kulaks.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 162

It is hard and horrible, for twentieth century America to hear this, but facts are facts. Stalinism not only aims but boasts of aiming at the complete smashing of class boundaries, at the death of all distinctions save talent and State service between man and man. Rank may replace class in the Bolshevik cosmogony to satisfy human needs, but rank based on merit, not on wealth or birth.
But what, you may ask, becomes of “the Former People,” or the kulaks or engineers thus doomed apparently to perish? Must all of them and their families be physically abolished? Of course not–they must be “liquidated” or melted in the hot fire of exile and labor into the proletarian mass….
To illustrate–they take a kulak or other type of “former” individualism–a private business man or self-seeking engineer–and send him to the northern woods or Siberian construction camps. Sometimes his family goes too. More generally it remains to be absorbed by poverty into the lower proletarian surroundings.
Then they tell him: “You outcast! You man that was, and now is not! You can get back your civic rights; can be reborn a proletarian; can become a free member of our ant heap by working for and with us for our communal purpose. If you don’t, we won’t actually kill you, but

you won't eat much, won't be happy, will remaini forever an outsider, as an enemy, as we consider it, even if ultimately you return from exile and rejoin your family….
That reduced to its harsh essentials, is Stalinism today. It is not lovely, nor, in the outside world, of good repute, and your correspondent has no brief for or against it, nor any purpose save to try to tell the truth. But truth it is–ant-heap system, ant-heap morality–each for all and all for each, not each for self and the devil take the hindmost.
Duranty, Walter. "Stalinism Smashes Foes in Marx's Name," New York Times, June 24, 1931.

BUKHARIN SUPPORTED THE KULAKS

The next great ideological struggle was led against Bukharin's rightist deviation during the collectivization. Bukharin put forward a social-democratic line, based on the idea of class re-conciliation. In fact, he was protecting the development of the kulaks in the countryside and represented their interests. He insisted on a slowing down of the industrialization of the country. Bukharin was torn asunder by the bitterness of the class struggle in the countryside, whose `horrors' he described and denounced.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 135 [p. 116 on the NET]

"Well," said Okman, "I'll tell you. Bukharin is the leading counsel of the Kulaks; he is always on the side of any opportunist in the communist parties abroad; he is on the side of anyone who's drifting to the Right."
This was a complete surprise to me. Andrey [Tokaev's older brother] had taught me to believe that in the whole Olympus of Bolshevism there was not a man cleverer, better qualified, more honorable or more revolutionary than Bukharin. Yet here he was condemned by someone who knew him personally, and who obviously himself had a considerable standing in the Party–how otherwise would he be touring the Caucasus with his own chauffeur-driven car?
"Shall I tell you what your Bukharin is like?" cried Okman. "He will never come out into the open. He will prove to you privately that Stalin wants to be the leader of an 'autarchic communism'–the communism of a Russia isolated from the rest of the world. He detests both Stalin and Molotov, but he will never publicly oppose their views. He wants others to fight his political battles for him, that's what he's like."
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 64

TROTSKY STARTS BY WANTING TO END THE KULAKS AND LATER DEFENDS THEM

Trotsky, who in December 1925, at the 14th Party Congress of the CPSU, had tried to force on the Party the policy of immediate collectivization of the peasantry, when the conditions necessary for such collectivization were totally lacking, this same Trotsky in 1933, when collectivization was well on the way to completion, comes out in opposition to the policy of liquidating the kulaks as a class, demanding instead the establishment of "a policy of severely restricting the exploiting tendencies of the kulaks."

Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 36

THE PEASANTS SUPPORTED THE BOLSHEVIKS ON ONE ISSUE AFTER ANOTHER

Anyone who thinks that the Soviet peasantry “remained a sullen and disenchanted force,” that it was never won over wholeheartedly for the revolution, let him answer the following questions: How was it possible, without winning the peasantry wholeheartedly, for the Bolsheviks to come to power? How was it possible for them to defeat the combined strength of the Russian Whiteguards and the 14 imperialist and non-imperialist countries who, armed to the teeth, attacked the young Soviet Republic in the period of the Civil War and the War of Intervention? How was it possible for the USSR, possessed of such a “sullen disenchanted force,” namely the peasantry, to have such earth-shaking achievements in the task of building socialism and putting the entire economy of the country, including agriculture, on a new technical basis, the technical basis of modern large-scale production? How was it that this “sullen disenchanted force” joined the movement for collectivization with such enthusiasm? How was it possible for these “sullen”, “disenchanted” and allegedly miserable people to defeat the Nazi war machine? One has only to ask these questions to realize the absurdly counter-revolutionary nature of the charge.
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 499

GOVT COMPROMISED ON COLLECTIVIZATION WITH THE FARMERS IN FAR EAST

During the first years after 1929, when the whole country was in an uproar from so many social upheavals occurring simultaneously, forced laborers were treated worse than they were later. The police simply couldn’t cope with the problem of handling so many people at once, and it took years to build up an efficient organization. Thousands of them didn’t have decent quarters to live in, or sufficient food. But this wasn’t deliberate, as I see it; the police simply were given more to do than they could handle properly. Later, the forced labor camps became better organized, and those I have observed in recent years were orderly and reasonably comfortable. They had schools and cinema theaters, and inmates didn’t live a very different life from ordinary Soviet citizens.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 134

COLLECTIVIZATION COULD ONLY WORK WHEN THE MIDDLE PEASANT WAS READY TO JOIN

There is no industry here. The building of socialism could only be carried through on the basis of decisively attacking the rich peasant, not by tickling him, or irritating him, but by eliminating him. That could only be done on the basis of ruthless class struggle on the countryside, and for the struggle the working class and the poor peasantry required a firm ally –the middle peasant. To have attacked the capitalist peasant in 1925-26 before this alliance had been strengthened would have been a despairing adventure worthy of a Trotsky.
The alliance could only be strengthened and the middle peasant turned towards collectivization when industry was able to give active support to the peasantry, by the

provision of tractors, fertilizers, etc., and when the State was able to advance credits. Further, the middle peasantry had to be led, on the basis of their own experience in agricultural cooperation, to see the possibility of the collective farms. Here the State farms helped the peasantry in the transfer from the individual to the collective working of the soil. The State farm “SHEVSHENKO” established the first machine and tractor station, and helped the surrounding peasantry with the loan of machinery. The success of these and similar measures led to a powerful turn of the middle peasants to the collective farms. It was the extent of this turn and not merely the existence of difficulties on the grain front that led the Soviet Government to accelerate the process of collectivization.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 73

STALIN HOPED TO ENLIST THE LEFT OPPOSITION IN HIS BATTLE WITH THE KULAKS

Stalin needed the assistance of men of ability who would be eager to carry out an anti-kulak policy and would carry it out with conviction and zeal. He could find such men in the Left Opposition. He was therefore anxious to win to his side as much Trotskyist and Zinovievist talent as he could without yielding ground to Trotsky & Zinoviev….
…Another Trotskyist, who was still in Stalin’s diplomatic service, informed him [Trotsky] from Berlin about Stalin’s presumed plan of action. According to this correspondent, Stalin hoped to improve his difficult position by inducing influential banished Oppositionists to recant–with their assistance he expected to put the left course into effect and to give Trotsky the coup de grace.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 410

BUKHARIN OPPOSES COLLECTIVIZATION

He [Bukharin] almost always favored longer postponement of the collectivization drive, slower rates, and, in effect, less collectivization than any other major participant in a given debate. One wonders if Soviet agriculture would ever have been collectivized if Bukharin had gained power.
Randall, Francis. Stalin’s Russia. New York: Free Press,1965, p. 148

COLLECTIVIZATION AND THE SCISSORS CRISIS PRODUCE REAL HARDSHIP

The year 1927 saw the recrudescence of these three elemental powers [the cry for bread, the emergency of war and the economic isolation]. The cry for bread went up once more. The abundance of grain in the village and the famine of goods in the city led the peasant to retain his reserves. The “scissors,” the disparity in prices of manufactured articles and rural produce, grew wider than ever. The state was deprived of its greatest medium of exchange abroad–the export of grain. The city workers suffered intensely. The peasants had no incentive to surrender their bread. The grain collection program of the government showed an enormous deficit. The winter of 1927-28 was ushered in with all the appearances of an internal catastrophe.

“We had but two or three months left before the spring thaw,” declared Stalin several months later in an address delivered at Leningrad. “We therefore faced this alternative: either to make up the losses and reestablish the normal rate of grain collections for the future, or be confronted by the inevitability of a serious crisis in our entire national economy.”
…The grain question, the specter of starvation, was defying all peaceful theories.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 366-367

The crisis atmosphere of the late 1920s precluded moderate approaches to socialist construction.
Viola, Lynne. The Best Sons of the Fatherland. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1987, p. 26

STALIN SAID JOINING KOLKHOZ COLLECTIVES WAS TO BE VOLUNTARY

We had been taught in the Lenin School, and the same had been preached at all the Comintern’s informational gatherings as well as in the press, that joining a collective farm was voluntary; no one was forced to do so. During the early period of setting up the kolkhozes an error admittedly had occurred in that a few polit-commissars had used strong-arm methods and threats, but as soon as Stalin had heard about it he had given the strict order that such threats and force had to be discontinued. The entire kolkhoz system, in other words, was based on volunteerism.
Tuominen, Arvo, The Bells of the Kremlin: Hanover: University Press of New England, 1983, p. 112

INTELLECTUALS SYMPATHIZE WITH THE KULAKS

For the most part, our Russian intellectuals were closely linked with the well-to-do peasants who had a pro-kulak mentality. Ours was a country of peasants.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 309

STALIN REIGNS IN COLLECTIVIZATION EXCESS

At no time did Stalin lose control of the situation.
It had been estimated that by the end of the First Five-year Plan some 30 percent of the farms would be collectivized, but suddenly towards the end of 1929 and in 1930 the process of transformation developed into a mass rush of the poor and middle poor peasants into collectivization, a rush that entirely out-stripped the capacity of the still developing industry to supply the requisite technical equipment. With the characteristic Russian flare for making “the sky limit,” collectivization at all costs and by all means, including compulsory methods, became a universal craze…. Stalin put on the breaks. Standing firmly on the cumulative decisions of the Congresses, he published an open letter telling the Bolsheviks they had become “dizzy with success,” and brought them back to the line of voluntary collectivization.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 177

Kulak opposition is often no less ruthless than the communist hot-heads whom Stalin denounced during March 1930.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 381

0n March 2, 1930, there appeared in all the papers his [Stalin] famous article ‘Dizzy with Success!’ The newspapers were then reporting the complete collectivization of agriculture in European Russia. In this famous article Stalin declared that the success of collectivization had intoxicated the party and government officials in the villages, so that they had lost all sense of proportion. They had shot far beyond the target. It was an entire mistake to aim already at the agricultural commune; it was success enough to have attained the agricultural co-operative, the artel. Associations for common use of the soil would also suffice. In this article Stalin quite openly mentioned the dangers, especially the possibility that the majority of the peasants might turn against the Soviet State.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 185

On March 2, 1930, when the basic grain areas had their “seed collections” made, Stalin issued his famous statement: “Dizziness From Success.” He said that the speed with which peasants joined collective farms had made “some comrades dizzy.” He reminded everyone that membership was voluntary and that the type of collective farm recommended for the present period socialized only the land, draft animals, and larger machinery, but left as personal property such domestic animals as cows, sheep, pigs, chickens. Every paper in the land published the statement in full; millions of copies circulated as leaflets. Peasants road to town and paid high for the last available copy, to wave in the face of local organizers as their charter of freedom. Stalin suddenly became a hero to millions of peasants, their champion against local excesses. Stalin quickly checked this hero-worship by publishing Answers to Collective Farmers, in which he stated: “Some people speak as if Stalin alone made that statement. The Central Committee does not… permit such actions by any individual. The statement was… by the Central Committee.”
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 39

How did Stalin and the leadership of the Bolshevik Party react to the spontaneous and violent collectivization and `dekulakization’ tide?
They basically tried to lead, discipline and rectify the existing movement, both politically and practically.
The Party leadership did everything in its power to ensure that the great collectivization revolution could take place in optimal conditions and at the least cost. But it could not prevent deep antagonisms from bursting or `blowing up’, given the countryside’s backward state.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 68 [p. 56 on the NET]

[Letter from Stalin to Sholokhov, May 3, 1933, on sabotage by the grain growers of the Veshenskii raion]
… I am thankful to you for your letters, as they reveal the open sores in party and Soviet work; they reveal how our officials, in their ardent desire to restrain the enemy, sometimes inadvertently beat up their friends and sink to the point of sadism.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 397

In his article “Dizzy from Success” he was quite frank to admit that the collectivization of the peasants had progressed too quickly.

Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 517

But with all the phenomenal progress of collectivization, certain faults on the part of Party workers, distortions of the Party policy in collective farm development, soon revealed themselves. Although the Central Committee had warned Party workers not to be carried away by the success of collectivization, many of them began to force the pace of collectivization artificially, without regard to the conditions of time and place, and heedless of the degree of readiness of the peasants to join the collective farms….
It was found that the voluntary principle of forming collective farms was being violated, and that in a number of districts the peasants were being forced into the collective farms under threat of being dispossessed, disfranchised, and so on.
Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Ed. History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks): Short Course. Moscow: FLPH, 1939, p. 307

Although the Central Committee had specified that the chief form of the collective-farm movement must be the agricultural artel, in which only the principal means of production are collectivized, in a number of places pigheaded attempts were made to skip the artel form and pass straight to the commune; dwellings, milk-cows, small livestock, poultry, etc., not exploited for the market, were collectivized….
Carried away by the initial success of collectivization, persons in authority in certain regions violated the Central Committee's explicit instructions regarding the pace and time limits of collectivization.
Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Ed. History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks): Short Course. Moscow: FLPH, 1939, p. 307

Take, for example, our mistakes in collective farm construction. You, no doubt, remember 1930, when our Party comrades thought they could solve the very complicated problem of transferring the peasantry to collective farm construction in a matter of three or four months, and when the Central Committee of the Party found itself obliged to curb these over-zealous comrades. This was one of the most dangerous periods in the life of our Party. The mistake was that our Party comrades forgot about the voluntary nature of collective farm construction, forgot that the peasants could not be transferred to the collective farm path by administrative pressure; they forgot that collective farm construction required, not several months, but several years of careful and thoughtful work. They forgot about this and did not want to admit their mistakes. You, no doubt, remember that the Central Committee's reference to comrades being dizzy with success and its warning to our comrades in the districts not to run too far ahead and ignore the real situation were met with hostility. But this did not restrain the Central Committee from going against the stream and turning our Party comrades to the right path. Well? It is now clear to everybody that the Party achieved its aim by turning our Party comrades to the right path. Now we have tens of thousands of excellent peasant cadres for collective farm construction and for collective farm leadership. These cadres were educated and trained on the mistakes of 1930. But we would not have had these cadres today had not the Party realised its mistakes then, and had it not rectified them in time.
Stalin, Joseph. Works, Vol. 14, Speech in Reply to Debate, 1 April 1937, Red Star Press, London, Pravda 1978, pp. 285.

KILLING OF PRIEST WHO SUPPORTED COLLECTIVIZATION

April 4, 1930–The following is an authentic case which recently occurred in a Volga village: The local priest was up-to-date and enthusiastic, which is not always so in Russian villages. He did not fast like many of his colleagues, despair of the church in a communist state, or attempt to engage in futile opposition, but tried to reconcile his congregation to the facts of their present existence.
One Sunday he chose as the theme of his sermon the story of Ananias and Sapphira who fell dead before Peter because they had sold a piece of land, lied about its price, and withheld part of the money from the common fund. This, the priest said, was like the peasant who before joining a collective sold his cow or his horse instead of contributing it for the common weal. He enlarged upon the communism of the early Christians and quoted texts to show the duty of obedience to authority.
The following night the priest was shot dead by an unknown person as the clergyman was entering a barn to see whether it was suitable for the storage of newly collected seed grain. A week later the church “caught fire” and burned to the ground….
No legal proceedings have followed, and the murder of the priest remains unpunished, but it is common gossip in the village that the killing was inspired by kulaks.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 381

Our situation, especially after Lenin was gone, became very dangerous.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 246

HOW KULAKS AND PRIVATE TRADERS WERE TAKING OVER

While, however, Russia had the appearance in 1924 of great prosperity, impressing foreign observers and assisting Russian foreign policy, the NEP faced the country with very serious new problems. In spite of thriving trade and industry there was a certain amount of unemployment. Still more serious was the competition between private and State enterprise. Innumerable small traders, artisans, owners of businesses, and speculative builders, had resumed their past activities in private enterprise….
Meanwhile, private industry was continually growing at the expense of state industry. It was very useful that all these new employers brought gold and securities out of their hiding places in order to open a shop or a small factory. But the capital and goods that thus reappeared were on a much smaller scale than had been expected. And in spite of this the private capitalists were applying through the banks for credits from State resources. These traders and owners of businesses knew just how to corrupt the government officials with whom they had to deal. Their aim was to secure the flow of capital from the money bags of the State into the pockets of private individuals; yet all these traders and businessman made up the typical Russian middle-class, whose initiative and energy were of particular importance in economic life. Even the Communists had to admit that there were capitalists who did good work; after all, the invitation to foreign countries had been inspired by the desire to get hold of capitalists of that sort.
The grasping private traders, however, with their corruption and their speculative business activities at the expense of the State, activities that brought no real benefit to Russia, seemed altogether undesirable as a permanent element in Russian economic life. But the more private enterprise grew fat at the expense of the State and with the resources of the State, the greater became its political demands. It was evident that in the long run private

enterprise would not rest content with its lack of formally established political rights, that it would seek to attain political influence, and that to some extent it had it already in the lower ranks of officialdom. Its ambition was, of course, the breaking of its bonds….
Where the Tsarist Government had not succeeded in forming a class of kulaks in the countryside as bastions of the tsarist regime, the conditions in the Russian market now produced a development of this sort. ‘Kulak’ means ‘closed fist’, and for hundreds of years this had been the name of the village money-lender, who was usually also the village shopkeeper. The village usurer, generally a cunning and close-fisted peasant, knew no mercy, and had a whole village under his thumb. Under the Soviets the meaning of the term was extended to include not merely money lenders or shopkeepers, but every substantial farmer who was prosperous enough to employ male and female labor.
It was found after the Civil War that except for the distribution of the great estates there had been virtually no social revolution in the countryside. The soviet system was to have begun with the village soviets, but for political purposes it really began in the towns. For in the countryside sovietization had been merely a formality. In a very short time the village was entirely under the political influence of the prosperous farmers. They secured election to the Soviets and became their chairmen, thus ruling the village. Party cells were established in villages, but the prosperous farmers smuggled their sons into the cells, so gaining influence there as well. The villages threatened to fall more and more under the sole rule of the well-to-do farmers. What was still worse for the regime was that as early as 1925 it became evident that the private enterprises in the towns were becoming economic allies of the well-to-do farmer class. The peasants paid their income-tax in kind, but the prosperous farmer, the only one who had any surplus yield to sell, sold it to the private dealer, because he offered the highest prices. He preferred also to buy his manufactured goods from the private trade rather than the State or the co-operatives. This intercourse between town & country also promoted all sorts of deals and speculations which associated the private enterprises in the towns more and more closely with the villages.
Moreover, the prosperous farmer was also a voter. He had conquered local power in the village; and already he was demanding from the State not only a reduction of taxation but the abolition of taxes in kind and the introduction of a money tax, which would be greatly to his advantage and also make it more difficult to check his actual crops. This check was always difficult. Stalin said at this time that the village with individual farming bred capitalism and strengthened it every second, and there was some truth in this. If it continued, it was obvious that in time the dictatorship of the party would come to an end. Private enterprise would have achieved what all the armies of the White counter-revolutionaries had failed to achieve–the downfall of Bolshevism. Many foreign observers in Moscow also thought that inevitable. Very many Russians, even members of the Communist Party, hoped for it.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 153-156

It happened in the following way. The New Economic Policy involved a certain growth of the capitalist elements in town and country. In the towns new capitalist middlemen began to appear. In the villages the rich peasants waxed fat and kicked against the policy of the Soviet Government. They began to penetrate into the village Soviets and to win a certain influence over the middle peasants. In certain areas they passed over to the murder of Soviet officials and village correspondents.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 57

KULAKS OPPOSED COLLECTIVIZATION WITH TERROR AND DESTRUCTION

At the time of the collectivization of agriculture, the liquidation of private trade and all private enterprise, and the pushing on with industrialization at an almost intolerable pace, a fearful political slogan was shouted throughout the country: 'Liquidation of the whole class of yeomen farmers.' This at once provoked widespread consequences. In the war on the prosperous farmers thus declared, resort was had to devices of the civil war. At that time [during the civil war] Poor Peasants Committees had played an important part, and now these committees were called into being again. The village party cells were to have control of them. The committees were given vast powers. The Government and the party declared quite officially that in each village 2 to 3 percent of the farms were big farms.
…this new war without visible fronts was much more gruesome and horrible. The big farmers, men of a hard and cruel type, did not give up easily. They, too, had open or secret supporters in the villages. There came the first terrorist acts; Soviet officials, Communist agitators, leaders of the Poor Peasants' Committees, were murdered openly or in secret. The weapons hidden after the First World War and in the civil war were brought out.
A counter-terror began at once, radical and merciless….
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 163-164

This was done and, as more tractors and supplies became available, more and more of the poor and middle peasants flocked to the collectives. The wealthy peasant or kulak was bitterly hostile to the collectivization movement. He was often a man who "lived off the backs of the other peasants" through granting loans, renting out machinery and implements, or by control of local trade. The collective deprived him of these advantages. A kind of civil war broke out between the kulaks and the collectives, the counterpart of the revolutionary battles which had been fought in the cities. Communist leaders of the collectives were murdered or beaten. The kulaks burned collective farm buildings and slaughtered livestock. In some places overzealous communists used coercive measures and turned entire villages against collectivization.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 59

Another thing happened over and over again. Big farmers, and others of those who were determined not to go into the kolkhozy, destroyed the whole of their property and fled. They slaughtered their cattle, cut down their fruit trees, pulled their house to pieces, drove the horse away or killed it and departed.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 165

The most difficult period was from the 1932 to the 1933 harvest when kulak sabotage, added to difficulties of inefficient organization, caused a grain shortage that put the whole country on short rations.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 180

After this resolution, which announced the end of capitalist relations in the countryside, the kulaks threw themselves into a struggle to the end. To sabotage collectivization, they burnt crops, set barns, houses and other buildings on fire and killed militant Bolsheviks.
Most importantly, the kulaks wanted to prevent collective farms from starting up, by killing an essential part of the productive forces in the countryside, horses and oxen. All the work on the land was done with draft animals. The kulaks killed half of them. Rather than cede their cattle to the collectives, they butchered them and incited the middle peasants to do the same.
Of the 34 million horses in the country in 1928, there remained only 15 million in 1932. A terse Bolshevik spoke of the liquidation of the horses as a class. Of the 70.5 million head of cattle, there only remained 40.7 million in 1932. Only 11.6 million pigs out of 26 million survived the collectivization period.
Charles Bettelheim. L'Economie sovietique (Paris: editions Recueil Sirey, 1950), p. 87.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 79 [p. 66 on the NET]

Before joining the collective farms, many peasants slaughtered their livestock: cows, sheep, pigs, even poultry. In February and March 1930 alone, approximately 14 million head of cattle, one-third of all pigs, and 1/4 of all sheep and goats were destroyed.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 225

[Footnote: In 1928 on the entire territory of the RSFSR 1123 terrorist acts by kulaks were recorded.]
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 232

No one doubts that acts of sabotage did take place. Many who have been officers, manufacturers, or large farmers, but were now deposed, contrived to obtain important appointments and carry on sabotage. If, today, the supply of leather for private citizens and of shoes in particular, is inadequate, it is without question the fault of these large farmers who, at the time, sabotaged cattle-breeding. The chemical industry and the transport services, too, suffered for a long time from acts of sabotage. If, today, there is an extremely strict supervision of factories and machines, it can be justified on very good grounds.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 37

The liquidation also caused many of the kulaks to destroy their domestic animals so that now, after almost 10 years, there is still a shortage of meat and dairy products in Russia.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 82

The slaughter of the cattle by the peasants intent on sabotaging collectivization had placed leather at a premium from 1932 to 1935. In 1935 the shortage of livestock had been almost filled. The quantify of leather increased.
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 32

A great deal of trouble is caused by the "kulaks" who not only try to cut down production but terrorize the middle (seredniaks) and poor (byedniaks) peasants in order to bring disaster to all government endeavors. The Soviets are striving to put over a project never before undertaken–complete socialization of agriculture. Every means possible, including large expenditures, is employed. They are counteracting the menace of the "kulaks," who are

withholding and lessening their production, by using every resource available for the completion of the collective and state farm projects.
Wright, Russell. One-Sixth of the World's Surface. Hammond, Ind., The Author, c1932, p. 94

The slaughter of cattle, the fall in grain production are all ascribed to administrative errors of the leadership. That there were administrative errors is undoubted….
But the difficulties of carrying through the first Five Year Plan were not difficulties due to administrative mistakes, they were difficulties created by the resistance of the capitalist elements whom the plan was threatening. The aim of the plan was not merely the reconstruction of the technical basis of the country, but also the transformation of economic and social relations–the progressive elimination of the capitalist elements. To expect the Five~Year Plan to proceed without class struggle, without sabotage, as if it was a question of the new housing estate, instead of the revolutionary transformation of a great country, is indeed to adopt a bourgeois administrative point of view, which ignores the class struggle. To ascribe the relative temporary disorganization caused in certain branches of economy by the fiercely contested class struggle, to the administrative mistakes of the leadership or the lack of foresight, as Trotsky does repeatedly in his book, can hardly be called ignorance. It is calculated misrepresentation.
But because the Communist Party of the Soviet Union had won the confidence of the working class, because it could mobilize the great trade unions and co-operatives, because it had a firm alliance with the middle peasantry, it was able to lead the masses of the Soviet Union in the struggle to break down the class opposition, and to realize the plan. Not by bureaucracy, not by slick administration, but by the struggle of the majority of the Russian people under Communist leadership, were the plans realized.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 80-81

From 1931 till 1932, the struggle of the rich peasants in the Soviet Union grew in intensity, and all kinds of sabotage were resorted to in order to destroy the collective farms from within. Here is a description, from the pen of a Ukrainian counter-revolutionary, of the sabotage that was practiced:
"At first there were mass disturbances in the kolkhozy (collective farms) or else the Communist officials or their agents were killed; but later a system of passive resistance was favored, which aimed at the systematic frustration of the Bolshevik plans for the sowing and the gathering of the harvest. The peasants and workers, seeing the ruthless export by their Bolshevik masters of all food produce, began to take steps to save themselves from starvation in the winter time and to grasp at any means of fighting against the hated foreign rule. This is the main reason for the wholesale hoarding of grain and the thefts from the fields–offenses which if detected are punishable by death. The peasants are passive resisters everywhere; but in Ukrainia the resistance has assumed the form of a national struggle. The opposition of the Ukrainian population caused the failure of the grain storing plan of 1931 and still more so that of 1932. The catastrophe of 1931-32 was the hardest blow that the Soviet Ukraine had to face since the famine of 1921-22. The autumn and spring sowing campaigns both failed. Whole tracts were left unsown. In addition, when the crops were being gathered last year, it happened that, in many areas, especially in the South, 20, 40, or even 50 percent was left in the fields and was either not collected at all or was ruined in the threshing" (Isaac Mazeppa in Slavonic Review, January 1934).
How leaving the harvest to rot in the fields squares with a desire to take steps to save oneself from starvation in the winter time, heaven and the Ukrainian counter-revolutionaries

alone know. But the description of the methods of sabotage, practiced not by the whole population as alleged, but by the kulaks with some misguided middle peasants supporting them, gives a sufficiently clear idea of the situation in some parts of the country, at the height of the resistance to collectivization.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 198

The Ukraine and several of the more distant provinces were in the throes of famine [in 1932]. Drought had nothing to do with it. Food shortage was due entirely to the breakdown of agriculture caused by collectivization, and by the policy of maximum exports.
Barmine, Alexandre. Memoirs of a Soviet Diplomat. London: L. Dickson limited, 1938, p. 264

As a result of deliberations by a Politburo Commission chaired by Molotov, and under pressure from Stalin, in January 1930 the Central Committee passed a resolution "On Measures for Liquidating Kulak Farms in Areas of Full Collectivization"…. Correspondingly, kulak assaults on the Soviet regime rose, at times extending over wide areas. Actions against the better-off section of the peasantry gave rise to a wave of protest, banditry, and armed risings against the authorities.
Grain production immediately went into a slide, soon followed by a decline in stock breeding. The peasants native enterprise was cut down at the root…. The mass order of animals began in many regions: compared to 1928, livestock fell to half or a third in number by 1933.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 169

Rather than allow their cattle to fall into the hands of the state, they had slaughtered half the country's herd. By March it was plain that disaster had overtaken the countryside.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 160

In the case of full-scale collectivization, which commenced in late 1929, resistance was massive. It ran the gamut from insurgencies and other acts of violence, to murders of collectivizers and their local collaborators, to vociferous protests by women, frequently in connection with raion soviet decisions to close churches and/or confiscate church property, to the razbazarivanie ("squandering") of livestock and other property through slaughter and sale, the destruction of collective farm buildings, the liberation of arrested kulaks, the reacquisition of confiscated property, and the disbandment of collective farms.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism as a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 11

Once implemented, collectivization had a catastrophic effect on agricultural production. Animal husbandry suffered more than anything else because of the mass slaughter of cattle when peasants joined collective farms.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism as a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 62

…Masses of kulaks were deported to remote unpopulated lands in Siberia. Their houses, barns, and farm implements were turned over to the collective farms–Stalin himself put the value of their property so transferred at over 400 million rubles. The bulk of the peasants decided to bring in as little as possible of their property to the collective farms which they imagined to be state-owned factories, in which they themselves would become mere factory hands. In desperation they slaughtered their cattle, smashed implements, and burned crops.

This was the muzhik's great Luddite-like rebellion. Only three years later, in January 1934, did Stalin disclose some of its results. In 1929 Russia possessed 34 million horses. Only 16.6 million were left in 1933–18 million horses had been slaughtered. So were 30 millions of large cattle, about 45 percent of the total, and nearly 100 million, or two-thirds of all sheep and goats. Vast tracts of land were left untilled. Famine stalked the towns and the black soil steppe of the Ukraine.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 325

…Between January and March 1930, the number of peasant holdings brought into the collective farms increased from 4 million to 14 million. Over half the total peasant households had been collectivized in five months. And in the countryside the peasants fought back with "the sawed-off shotgun, the ax, the dagger, the knife." At the same time, they destroyed their livestock rather than let it fall into the hands of the State.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 18

Passive resistance became the universal form of resistance. The peasants refused to join kolkhozes as long as they had sufficient strength not to yield to threats and force, and they destroyed their livestock as a sign of protest. Livestock transferred to the kolkhoz died from lack of shelter, fodder, and care.
The statistics demonstrate the disaster that struck the Soviet livestock herd. In 1928 there were 33.5 million horses in the country; in 1932, 19.6 million. For cattle the figures were, respectively, 70.5 million and 40.7 million; for pigs, 26 million and 11.6 million; for sheep and goats, 146 million and 52.1 million. In Kazakhstan the number of sheep and goats fell from 19.2 million in 1930 to only 2.6 million in 1935. From 1929 to 1934 a total of 149.4 million head of livestock were destroyed. The value of these animals and their products (milk, butter, wool, etc.) far exceeded the value of the giant factories built during the same period. The destruction of horses meant a loss of 8.8 million horsepower.
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 237

The peasant thought that if the Government wanted him to go to the kolkhoz it was for the Government to look after him there and, if the stock was to be pooled, he would prefer to go in with as little as possible. There followed all over the country a colossal slaughter of livestock. There was nothing that the peasant regarded as more specially "property" than his cow; and indeed, whatever the advantages of brigades in agriculture, they can hardly replace the individual care of an owner for his cattle. The livestock of the country was reduced to one-third; half the horses, sheep, and goats. The general supply of meat and wool sank to one-third. This was in itself a public catastrophe.
Pares, Bernard. Russia. Washington, New York: Infantry Journal, Penguin books, 1944, p. 162

A few years of non-interference with ordinary normal farming had put money in the hands of the peasantry again, perhaps not very much but enough to be accounted wealth in impoverished Russia. The village Hamptons of Russia refused to give money to the government they detested. All the work of the Right faction of the Party was undone. Stalin sent his underlings to collect contributions by force from the richer peasants and they reverted to boycott. They cut the acreage under cultivation and sold their stock, bringing about in a very short time a food crisis in all the towns. The peasants buried their grain and their potatoes and lived on their secret food hordes while the towns starved.

Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 109

After collectivization was put into effect, agriculture was ruined, production fell off, and there was famine.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 139

The peasants reacted by killing practically all their livestock which, after 1930, resulted in a new period of famine for Russia.
Socialist Clarity Group. The U. S. S. R., Its Significance for the West. London: V. Gollancz, 1942, p. 35

The kulaks responded–fighting against collectivization with an organized campaign of large-scale destruction. The struggle swept through the countryside, approaching civil war scale in many areas, with devastating results particularly in Ukraine.
Frederick L. Schuman, Woodrow Wilson Professor of Government at Williams College at the time of writing, states that he and thousands of other tourists traveled in Ukraine during the famine period. He writes:
“Their [kulak] opposition took the initial form of slaughtering their cattle and horses in preference to having them collectivized. The result was a grievous blow to Soviet agriculture, for most of the cattle and horses were owned by the kulaks. Between 1928 and 1933 the number of horses in the USSR declined from almost 30 million to less than 15 million; of horned cattle from 70 million (including 31 million cows) to 38 million (including 20 million cows); of sheep and goats from 147 million to 50 million; and hogs from 20 million to 12 million. Soviet rural economy had not recovered from this staggering lost by 1941.
… Some [kulaks] murdered officials, set the torch to the property of the collectives, and even burned their own crops and seed grain. More refused to sow or reap, perhaps on the ´assumption that the authorities would make concessions and would in any case feed them. The aftermath was the Ukraine “famine” of 1932-33 … Lurid accounts, mostly fictional, appeared in the Nazi press in Germany and in the Hearst press in the United States, often illustrated with photographs that turned out to have been taken along the Volga in 1921….
The “famine” was not, in its later stages, a result of a food shortage, despite the sharp reduction of seed grain and harvests flowing from special requisitions in the spring of 1932 which were apparently occasioned by fear of war with Japan. Most of the victims were kulaks who had refused to sow their fields or had destroyed their crops.”
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books, 1987, p. 93

The struggle around collectivization was not limited to kulaks. A considerable number of middle peasantry were wrongly treated as kulaks. Instead of being won over to supporting collectivization, they resisted collectivization. Louis Fisher observed: “In my book I quote a violently anti-Bolshevik source to the effect that the difficulty was due to the widespread passive resistance of the peasants, as a result of which “whole tracts were left unsown’ and between 20 and 50 percent of the crop deliberately allowed to rot in the fields. I myself saw, all over the Ukraine in October 1932, huge stacks of grain which the peasants had refused to gather in and which were rotting. This I write ‘was their winter’s food. Then those same peasants starved.’ Mr. Chamberlain has falsely interpreted the famine and some Americans have accepted his interpretation. If the famine was “man-made’ the peasants were the men who made it.”

Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 93

Anna Louise Strong writes (New Republic, August 7, 1935), “There was a serious grain shortage in the 1932 harvest due chiefly to inefficiencies of the organizational period of the new large-scale mechanized farming among peasants unaccustomed to machines.”…
… The point is that the Soviet government was engaged in a tremendous, epochal struggle to socialize the land, for what they claimed to be the eventual good of the peasants; the peasants, however, resisted and–terribly enough– suffered. To balk the government, they refused to harvest grain. Therefore they did not have enough to eat. And died.
The real story of the famine is briefly this. The Five-Year plan included “collectivization” of the peasantry. Russia, overwhelmingly an agrarian country, contained in 1927 almost 25 million peasant holdings; Stalin’s plan was to unite them into socialized collective farms. The peasants would turn over implements and livestock to a farm manager, and work in common on comparatively large rather than very small holdings, assisted by tractors furnished by the state. This was the idea. On it, the future of socialism in the USSR depended.
What happened was that the peasants, bitterly indignant, staged two major resistances to the immense forcible process of collectivization. First, they slaughtered their livestock, rather than turn it over to the collectives. It was an extraordinary and tragic event–though not so tragic as the human starvation later. There was no organization among the peasants, no communication; yet in hundreds of villages, separated by hundreds of miles, a simultaneous destruction of animals began. Rather than turn over their precious pigs, sheep, cattle, to the collective authorities, the peasants murdered them.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 527

[In the Introduction by Adam Ulam]
Unable to counter force with force, the peasants turned to passive resistance. One, and from the government’s point of view the most dangerous, manifestation of it was the villagers slaughtering their livestock rather than surrendering it to the kolkhoz. In 1928, the USSR had 32 million horses; by 1934 the figure stood at 15.5 million. In January and February 1930 alone, 14 million head of cattle were destroyed.
In 1930, with the harvest of 83.5 million tons, the regime extracted from the peasants 22 million and exported 5.5. In the next year the country, largely for reasons already adduced, produced 14 million tons less [69.5], but the regime squeezed out of the… peasantry 22.8 million and exported 4.5.
Dolot, Miron. Execution by Hunger. New York: W.W. Norton, c1985, p. ix-x

A complete turnover of livestock ownership was affected by the collectivization of agriculture. As the farmer joined the collective farm, he was expected to contribute his stock to it. Naturally, he preferred to enter the collective farm with as few animals in his possession as possible. Many, embittered by the policy of collectivization, slaughtered their livestock prior to their forced joining of the kolkhoz`. Others attempted to trade or sell their animals.
Dolot, Miron. Execution by Hunger. New York: W.W. Norton, c1985, p. 116

The rich, and many abused (as well as paranoid) peasants in the winter of 1930 responded by fighting against the organized poor peasants and Party cadre; many Communists and poor peasant leaders were assassinated. In the words of a leading anti-Soviet historian of the CPSU: “There was open war in the villages and the desperate peasants did not hesitate to kill any Communists, regarding them as natural enemies.” Other acts of violence were

committed against government and Party buildings and personnel; and some riots and small-scale insurrections had to be suppressed by the Army. In response to the massive economic sabotage which occurred over the course of a couple of years, as well as violence against the Party and its supporters in the countryside, the Party again adopted extraordinary measures–measures not seen since the Civil War period of 1918-20.
Rich peasants were classified into three categories: (1) 'active counter-revolutionaries' who were subject to criminal proceedings, which sometimes resulted in execution; (2) 'counter-revolutionary elements' who were exiled and re-settled after the confiscation of most of their productive property; and (3) 'those who had to be drawn into socially useful labor and who were given the opportunity for re-education through socially useful production,' a category which covered most of the rich peasants. The total percentage of those classified as kulaks was not to exceed 3-5% in grain areas and 2-3% in non-grain areas. About 20% of kulaks were to be classified in categories (1) and (2).
… Economic sabotage by the rich peasants continued. As a result of these serious problems the great promise of collectivization–the development of a modern efficient agriculture with a rapidly expanding output– remained unfulfilled. By 1932 'vast tracts of land were left untilled. Famine stalked the towns and the black steppe of the Ukraine.'
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 223

The kulaks, and many "middle" and even poor peasants, were implacable in their hatred of the "commissars." Arson and killings of party agents and agitators were daily occurrences in the villages.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 69

While the peasants were being rapidly reduced to this state, they still took a fiercely insane plunge into dissipation. In the first months of collectivization they slaughtered over 15 million cows and oxen, nearly 40 million goats and sheep, 7 million pigs, and 4 million horses; the slaughter went on until the nation's cattle stock was brought down to less than half what it had been. This great shambles of meat was the main dish at the feast with which the smallholder celebrated his own funeral. The kulak began the carnage and incited others to follow suit. Seeing that he had lost all, that he, the nation's provider, was to be robbed of his property, he set out to rob the nation of its food supply; and rather than allow the collectivizers to drive away his cattle to communal assembly stations, he filled his own larders with the carcasses so as to let his enemies starve. The collectivizers were at first taken aback by this form of "class warfare" and watched with helpless amazement as the "middle" presents and even the poor joined in the butchery, until the whole of rural Russia was turned into an abbatoir.
…an epidemic of orgiastic gluttony spread from village to village, from volost to volost, and from gubernia to gubernia. Men, women, and children gorged themselves, vomited, and went back to the fleshpots. Never before had so much vodka been brewed in the country–almost every hut became a distillery–and the drinking was, in the old Slav fashion, hard and deep. As they guzzled and gulped, the kulaks illuminated the villages with bonfires they made of their own barns and stables. People suffocated with the stench of rotting meat, with the vapors of vodka, with the smoke of their blazing possessions, and with their own despair. Such was often the scene upon which a brigade of collectivizers descended to interrupt the grim carouse with the rattle of machine-guns; they executed on the spot or dragged away the crapulous enemies of collectivization….
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 118

Since it was rapidly known that most of the crops and animals would be seized by the regime for its collective farms, most peasants who had such wealth ate as much as possible before it should vanish. Even a kulak can only eat so much, so he often prepared breads from his grain, slaughtered many of his animals, and gave mad, hysterical, gargantuan feasts for family, friends, and often the whole village. These feasts often combined elements of a potlatch, of Nero's banquet while Rome burned, and of an apocalyptic holy communion table. To Stalin's men, however, not only the givers of the feasts but the poorest banqueters were saboteurs, knowing destroyers of the people's food supply.

There was an enormous amount of intentional sabotage as well, especially after the collective farms had actually been formed. Collective fields were fired, collective animals were murdered wholesale by enraged, vengeful, self-destructive peasants. In many villages more than half the grain crops from 1929 to 1932 were destroyed. In the whole USSR, collectivization meant the destruction by peasants of roughly 40 percent of the cattle and hogs, half the horses, and two-thirds of the sheep and goats. The grain losses had a cumulative effect, since seed grains were also involved. All this contributed mightily to the ghastly famine of 1933, which killed perhaps one million people in the Ukraine alone.

Not all animals are merely economic assets to peasants. Many are prized and beloved pets, fellow workers, and friends. The pathos of the peasant who lost his dear horse to the kolkhoz, or who killed it to save it from the Communists, was repeated many thousand times, and often hurt as badly as starvation or arrest.

The course of collectivization was wildly unsteady. An often-published allegation in 1929 was that the regime planned to collectivize 20 percent of the villages during the First Five-Year Plan. In October, 1929, after the harvest, when the big drive began, only some 4% of Russian agriculture seems to have been in any form of socialist farm. By the end of January, 1930, almost 15 percent of the peasants of the USSR were already herded into kolkhozes. In the next five mad weeks, more than another 40 percent of the peasants were gunned into forming collective farms–a rate far more intense than anyone had planned, and one that provoked the major peasant resistance and reprisals that Stalin and other high Communist had feared.

On March 2, 1930, Stalin published his famous editorial in Pravda, "Dizzy with Success…," in which he blasted the Communist organizers of collective farms for using hasty, coercive, and violent methods when they should have persuaded the peasants to join voluntarily on a much slower schedule. Stalin has often been accused by his enemies of blaming his agents for atrocities which he himself had secretly ordered. Certainly Stalin had set forth no detailed schedules, and had made no effective administrative provisions against letting the collectivization drive get out of hand. Yet he certainly felt himself sincerely aggrieved at the incompetence of his agents–he did not yet suggest treason as the explanation. Stalin's dim view of the peasants had led him into authorizing the most forceful measures against them when necessary. But his Bolshevik optimism had led him to expect that these measures would not be so invariably necessary…. He sincerely blamed others.

Stalin's blast sent the entire collectivization drive into chaotic reverse. By May Day, 1930, the percentage of Soviet peasants in collective farms has gone from 58 percent down to 24 percent. Then this wild stampede out of the collectives was reversed by force. Those who had left were made to return, and the formation of new kolkhozes was resumed. The decollectivization of the spring of 1930 was more than made up for by the end of 1932, when roughly 60 percent of the peasants were supposed to be in collectives.

Randall, Francis. Stalin's Russia. New York: Free Press, 1965, p. 159-161

The answer turns on an ominous phenomenon that had already begun in the last quarter of 1929: the mass slaughter of livestock by peasants who were being pressured into joining collective farms….
To various officials, both local and at the center, a logical countermeasure appeared to be to go at once to the "higher forms" of collective farm in which even small animals, poultry, and the family milk cow would be appropriated for the collective before they could be slaughtered by the peasants.
…the peasants' already apparent tendency to slaughter their stock rather than turn it over to the collectives. To strike out the Politburo commission's stipulation on retention of some animals was therefore the only course that Stalin could think of taking.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 144-145

In this his [Stalin] revolutionary motivation was doubtless stiffened by a sense of desperation over incoming information on the spreading peasant slaughter of livestock. By the beginning of 1930, for example, the number of horses in the country–and in the continuing absence of large numbers of tractors, horses were as essential to collective farming as they had been to private farming– had sharply declined due to slaughter, disease, and lack of feeding.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 178

More serious still, the livestock slaughter begun by the peasants in the last quarter of 1929 continued on a steeply rising scale in early 1930, and the regime's frantic effort to forestall it by preemptive seizure proved unavailing: it only turned the collective farm into the thrice-dreaded commune and hardened the peasant's solemn resolve to enter it, if he must, without his livestock….
I [a rural Communist leader] told the people that they had to join the collective, that these were Moscow's orders, and if they didn't, they would be exiled and their property taken away from them. They all signed the paper that same night, every one of them. Don't ask me how I felt and how they felt. And the same night they started to do what the other villages of the USSR were doing when forced into collectives– to kill their livestock. According to the official account, it was during the two months of February and March 1930 that the great bulk of the slaughter of the following totals of livestock lost in the 1929-30 economic year took place: one quarter of all cattle, a third of the country's pigs, and more than a quarter of its sheep and goats. Over the whole period of peasant collectivization (1928-33), the statistics of peasant livestock slaughter, revealed after Stalin died, are: 26.6 million head of cattle, or 46.6% of the total; 15.3 million head of horses, or 47% of the total; and 63.4 million head of sheep, or 65.1% of the total.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 182

There were things the peasants could do in protest, and they were doing them. They were slaughtering their livestock, consuming it, and giving it away rather than surrendering it to the kolkhoz. In January and February alone 14 million head of cattle were destroyed. In 1928 the USSR had 32 million horses; in 1934, after the regime had made some concessions on this issue and the situation improved, the figure stood at 15.5 million. For cattle, the figures are 60 and 33.5 million; for pigs 22 and 11.5 million; for sheep 97.3 and 32.9 million. The peasants' resistance assumed ominous proportions also in a more direct sense–riots and terrorist acts against officials were reaching epidemic proportions.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 331

That many people died in the 1930s is of course certain, but by far the largest number died as a result not of the Stalin purges proper but of the collectivization of agriculture during the earlier part of the decade. In the liquidation of the kulaks many were killed, since they desperately and often violently resisted collectivization, but a far greater number were deported, together with their families, to timber camps. This deportation in itself would not have bought about many deaths had it not been for the deliberate slaughter by the peasants (and not only the kulaks) of an immense proportion of the country's livestock. Together with the chaotic state of agriculture during the few years that followed the collectivization drive (aggravated moreover by some severe droughts), this produced perhaps the worst famine Russia had ever known. It reached its peak in 1931-32 and as a result several million people died of hunger or acute undernourishment, and not just in the timber camps to which the kulaks had been deported, but in the country generally. The consequences of the mass-slaughter of livestock were to be felt for many years after, and by the time the war broke out in 1941 meat and dairy produce were still lamentably short….
Even long after the war, in 1959, there were many fewer cattle in the Soviet Union than there had been in 1916, before the Revolution, and today [1971] their number scarcely exceeds the 1916 figure. This is, of course, in fantastic contrast with industrial production, which, since the Revolution, has increased about 70 times. During the intervening period Russia had developed from a near-undeveloped country to the second-largest industrial power in the world.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; the Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co., 1971, p. 29

The peasants believed they could force the government to stop by destroying their own livestock; the despair that could lead a peasant to kill his own animals, the equivalent in our world of burning down our own house, gives a hint of the scale of desperation; 26.6 million head of cattle were slaughtered, 15.5 million horses. On 16 January 1930, the government decreed that kulak property could be confiscated if they destroyed livestock.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 47

And, in fact, the resistance of the kulaks became increasingly stubborn. They refused en masse to sell to the Soviet state their grain surpluses, of which they had considerable hoards. They resorted to terrorism against the collective farmers, against Party workers and government officials in the countryside, and burned down collective farms and state granaries.
Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Ed. History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks): Short Course. Moscow: FLPH, 1939, p. 292

Furthermore, the kulaks instigated the peasants to slaughter their animals before entering the collective farms, arguing that "they will be taken away anyhow."
Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Ed. History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks): Short Course. Moscow: FLPH, 1939, p. 307

The middle peasants, feeling themselves condemned to a merger that was repugnant to them, in many instances slaughtered, in 1929-1930, their cattle and horses, sheep and pigs, rather than bring them into the common stock. So widespread was the outcry that the central committees were driven to instruct Stalin to issue his manifesto entitled "Dizzy with Success," in which the zeal of the government agents was rebuked; the voluntary character

of membership of the collectives was emphasized; permission to withdraw was conceded; and proper consideration of the varying stock brought in by different members was insisted on. Nevertheless the animals continued to be slaughtered and the total membership to fall off. Partial failures of crop in 1931 and 1932 deepened the discontent.
Footnote: The magnitude of this holocaust of live-stock is seldom realized. The following table shows that in one year, 1929-1930, more than 60 million animals were slaughtered, being one quarter of the whole; and in the course of the next three years 1931-1933, over 80 million more. In 1933 the total livestock was less than four ninths of the total in 1929.

This colossal slaughter, repeated in successive years– has been subsequently excused as having been due to lack of wheat or oats for fodder, owing to government exactions. But why did they slaughter sheep and pigs, and even goats?…
The whole organized movement for an independent Ukraine was, we are told, from 1928 onwards, directed towards stimulating the peasants to resist collectivization. The forms taken by this resistance, it has been frankly stated by one of the Ukrainian emigres, “have greatly varied. At first there were mass disturbances in the kolkhosi, or else the communist officials and their agents were killed; but later a system of passive resistance was favored, which aimed at the systematic frustration of the Bolshevik plans for the sowing and gathering of the harvest….
The peasants are passive resisters everywhere; but in Ukrainia the resistance has assumed the character of a national struggle. The opposition of the Ukrainian population caused the failure of the grain-storing plan of 1931, and still more so, that of 1932. The catastrophe of 1932 was the hardest blow that the Soviet Ukraine had to face since the famine of 1921-1922. The autumn and spring sowing campaigns both failed. Whole tracks were left unsown. In addition when the crop was being gathered last year, it happened that, in many areas, especially in the South, 20, 40 and even 50% was left in the fields and was either not collected at all or was ruined in the threshing.”
Towards the close of 1932, when the extent of this continuous deliberate sabotage had become manifest; when the two persistent rains of the summer had ruined the prospect of an abundant harvest, even where the agricultural operations had been loyally carried out; and when it was realized that the reserves had been specially depleted owing to the measures taken in order to stave off a Japanese invasion, the food situation again looked desperate. There is reason to believe that those in authority did not know where to turn. Finally, in January 1933, Stalin announced an administrative campaign, designed to reach the nerve-centers of every one of the 225,000 collective farms; a campaign which for boldness of conception and vigor in execution, as well as in the magnitude of its operations, appears to us unparalleled in the peace-time annals of any government. The desperate situation had to be saved. And, aided fortuitously by good crops in 1933 and 1934, it was saved. How this was accomplished will appear in the following pages.
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, p. 189-191

In 1930, the Soviet government was driven in its desperate quest for capital to export commodities badly needed at home and to issue paper currency, according to the official figures, six times the amount provided for in the Five-Year Plan.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 382

During 1930, the country was stripped of its elementary food reserves, which were dumped abroad in the frenzied search for capital. At the end of the year, the meager gold reserves of the state were being exported.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 390

The peasants refused to be accommodating and preferred to slaughter their beasts rather than to deliver them up to the kolkhosi. From the new arrivals we learned that both bread and meat were lacking in the towns, especially in Leningrad and Moscow.
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 187

Draft forces declined drastically directly or indirectly as a result of collectivization. In response to collectivization and the socialization of their property in the kolkhosi, many peasants sold or slaughtered their livestock, for a variety of reasons: as a protest against collectivization; because they did not want to surrender their animals to the new collective farms without compensation; because of local officials' unrealistic promises about mechanization. During the initial campaign of 1930, these actions most affected animals used for consumption, especially cattle and pigs. Afterward, when most peasants had already been collectivized and subjected to the procurement demands of 1931, the number of draft animals, especially horses, declined rapidly. Animals were the immediate victims of shortages in 1930-33 since starving peasants had no choice but to feed themselves first from the dwindling reserves, and because peasants frequently expressed their resentment of collectivization by neglect and abusive treatment of socialized livestock. Also, as discussed above, the main grain forage for horses, oats, suffered substantial losses from rust in 1932. As a result, the number of horses declined drastically by 1932. Soviet factories were producing tractors in the early 1930s, but not in sufficient quantity to compensate for the losses of horses.
Tauger, Mark. Natural Disaster and Human Actions in the Soviet Famine of 1931-1933 Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2001, p. 21

On the other hand, in some actions peasants clearly expressed outrage and aimed to take revenge on the regime by reducing the harvest. The most obvious such actions were arson attacks on kolkhoz buildings and fields. In the Middle Volga, Nizhni Novgorod, Ivanovo, and Northern regions, arson destroyed thousands of hectares of unharvested grain and hundreds of tons of harvested grain, in addition to hundreds of thousands of hectares of forests, cut timber, housing, and fuel. In some places peasants attacked officials and other peasants involved in harvest work and destroyed harvest machinery, according to the OGPU, with the goal of hindering the harvest.
Tauger, Mark. Natural Disaster and Human Actions in the Soviet Famine of 1931-1933 Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2001, p. 31

I do not mean to imply that all the OGPU reports, such as those on agriculture cited above, were falsified. Most of those descriptions can be confirmed in other archival and published sources. Many sources, for example, document efforts by peasants to dismantle kolkhosi and restore traditional farming practices during the process of collectivization in 1929-1930 and repeatedly thereafter; the OGPU reports on this cited above confirm these reports and provide important details.
Tauger, Mark. Natural Disaster and Human Actions in the Soviet Famine of 1931-1933 Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2001, p. 41

According to the research reports insofar as they deal with the kulaks, the rich peasants, there were 381,000 families, i.e., about 1.8 million people sent into exile. A small number of these people were sentenced to serve terms in labour camps or colonies. But what gave rise to these punishments?

The rich Russian peasant, the kulak, had subjected poor peasants for hundreds of years to boundless oppression and unbridled exploitation. Of the 120 million peasants in 1927, the 10 million kulaks lived in luxury while the remaining 110 million lived in poverty. Before the revolution they had lived in the most abject poverty. The wealth of the kulaks was based on the badly-paid labour of the poor peasants. When the poor peasants began to join together in collective farms, the main source of kulak wealth disappeared. But the kulaks did not give up. They tried to restore exploitation by use of famine. Groups of armed kulaks attacked collective farms, killed poor peasants and party workers, set fire to the fields and killed working animals. By provoking starvation among poor peasants, the kulaks were trying to secure the perpetuation of poverty and their own positions of power. The events which ensued were not those expected by these murderers. This time the poor peasants had the support of the revolution and proved to be stronger than the kulaks, who were defeated, imprisoned and sent into exile or sentenced to terms in labour camps

Of the 10 million kulaks, 1.8 million were exiled or convicted. There may have been injustices perpetrated in the course of this massive class struggle in the Soviet countryside, a struggle involving 120 million people. But can we blame the poor and the oppressed, in their struggle for a life worth living, in their struggle to ensure their children would not be starving illiterates, for not being sufficiently ‘civilised’ or showing enough ‘mercy’ in their courts? Can one point the finger at people who for hundreds of years had no access to the advances made by civilisation for not being civilised? And tell us, when was the kulak exploiter civilised or merciful in his dealings with poor peasants during the years and years of endless exploitation.

Sousa, Mario. Lies Concerning the History of the Soviet Union, 15 June 1998.

KULAKS OPPOSED THOSE BRINGING IN COLLECTIVIZATION

When the harbingers of such revolutionary ideas arrived in the villages, their observations soon aroused the opposition of the kulaks, who had formerly, by virtue of their wealth, exercised much authority in local affairs. They endeavored at first to smooth out the difficulties, on the ground that Collectivization was a step forward to true Socialism, but soon became aware that the kulaks were far more concerned with defending their own privileged position than pursuing abstractions for the general good.

In many districts the local proprietors took the offensive against the proposals of the Five Year plan and used their money to obstruct the scheme as much as possible.

Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 83

[A May 8, 1933, decree by Stalin and Molotov halting mass arrests states] …the class struggle in the countryside will inevitably become more acute. It will become more acute because the class enemy sees that the kolkhozy have triumphed, that the days of his existence are numbered, and he cannot but grasp–out of sheer desperation–at the harshest forms of struggle against Soviet power. For this reason there can be no question at all of relaxing our struggle against the class enemy.

Getty & Naumov. The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 115-116

Contradicting all his recent statements, Stalin now asserted that, by withholding grain from the government, the 'kulak was disrupting the Soviet economic policy'. In June 1928 new emergency measures were announced; and in July Stalin called upon the party 'to strike hard at the kulaks'. Such injunctions were not willingly followed by Bolsheviks in the countryside: for in the last three years the importance of the 'alliance with the peasantry' had been impressed upon them and they had been taught that hostility toward the muzhik was the distinctive mark of the Trotskyist heresy.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 313

The cost was terrible. Stalin–four years late–admitted it. The agrarian economy of the Soviet Union suffered a blow from which it cannot fully recover till about 1940; it'll take till then to replenish the slaughtered stock. For, once the killing began, it progressed till about 50 percent of the animals in the Soviet Union were killed. Official figures admit that the number of horses in the country diminished from 33,500,000 in 1928 to 19,600,000 in 1932; the number of cattle from 70,500,000 to 40,700,000; sheep and goats from 146,700,000 to 52,100,000; pigs from 25,900,000 to 11,600,000.
The peasants, stunned by this catastrophe, sank into temporary stupor. The government–when the worst of the damage was done–retreated hastily. Probably Stalin had not realized the formidable extent of the slaughter until it was too late…. The tempo of collectivization had been far too rapid. The plan called for full collectivization only after 10 years, but within two years, in 1930, 65 percent of all the farms had been collectivized. So the pace was toned down.
Even so, in 1932, the peasants, stiffening into a final vain protest, rebelled again. As if by government agreement, another psychic epidemic spread through the rich fields of the Caucasus and Ukraine. The farmers, those still outside the collectives, were paid miserable prices; either they could buy no manufactured goods at all, or goods only of indifferent quality. They hit on a plan. They had sowed the crop, which was abundant; but they decided not to harvest all of it. They harvested exactly what they calculated they would themselves need during the winter, and left the rest to rot. "What was the use of slaving to produce a handsome crop, if the state simply seized it all?"
This was, of course, mutiny. But it was not only defiance of Stalin; it was a threat to starve him into submission. The Soviet government needed grain to distribute to the industrial regions, the great cities; it needed grain for export, to pay for the machinery it had to import for the Five-Year plan.
Even the farmers already in the collectives let their grain rot. There were few communist overseers, few trained and loyal farm managers. Word got to Moscow that the harvest, which should have been handsome, was largely lost. Stalin saw that this was a major crisis. If the peasants were permitted to get away with this, the revolution was beaten. ("Obsolete classes don't voluntarily disappear," he told Wells). He had to act. And he acted.
Government grain collectors descended on the farms, tall with weeds, and seized that small share of the crop that the peasants had saved for their own use! One by one, they visited every holding, and took every lick of grain due the government in taxes. If a man's normal crop was, say, 60 bushels, the tax might be 20 bushels. But the farmer had only harvested, say, 25 bushels. So when the government took 20, the farmer and his family had only five–instead of 25–to live on the whole winter and spring.

Russian economy is still extremely primitive. The question of grain, of bread, is a matter of life and death. When there was no grain left, the people began to die. The government might have diverted some grain from the cities–though that was a pinched, hungry year everywhere–to feed the peasants. But the government did not do so. Stalin decided that the peasants must pay the penalty for their rebellion. They had refused, blindly, stupidly, to provide grain; very well, let them starve. And they starved….
The famine broke the back of peasant resistance in the USSR….
The peasants killed their animals, then they killed themselves.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 528-529

STALIN ONLY REACTED AGAINST THOSE OPPOSING COLLECTIVIZATION AS A LAST RESORT

Guerrilla bands roamed the country districts robbing the new Collectives, destroying their buildings and burning their crops. Without any clear objective they descended into thinly disguised banditry, raiding and killing in the way their Mongolian and Tatar ancestors had done under Tamerlane.
For a long time Stalin remained patient. He knew from bitter experience in Georgia, how difficult it is to bring new ideas to a backward people, and he had a sympathetic regard for the sturdy individualism which resists any active authority by force. When finally action was forced upon him, he moved with his usual firmness but not until every other avenue had been exhaustively explored.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 84

STALIN HAD GREAT PATIENCE BUT IT WAS FINALLY EXHAUSTED BY ANTI-COLLECTIVISTS

Where resistance persisted in spite of all efforts, the State began the wholesale deportation of treasonous elements and, if necessary, did not hesitate to remove whole villages to Siberia and the northern wastes.
As had been done many times before, Stalin's training gave him strength to carry on through this period. The man who could pardon Zinoviev and Kamenev, who had three times betrayed him; the leader who let Bukharin live in freedom, though Bukharin had openly proclaimed a determination to kill him, would stop at nothing where his faith was concerned.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 85

KULAKS SPREAD RUMORS ABOUT THE COLLECTIVES AND USE VIOLENCE

Kulaks and priests clouded the issue with rumors, playing on the emotions of sex and fear. Everywhere, I heard of the "one great blanket" under which all men and women of the collective farm would sleep! Everywhere, rumor said that babies would be "socialized." In some places, kulaks joined collectives–to rule or ruin. Elsewhere, they were being expelled from collectives as undesirable. Some collectives took in kulaks horses but not kulaks, as had been done with landlords' equipment in the revolution. Kulaks fought back by burning the collective barns and even by assassination. The trial of 12 kulaks for the murder of a Party secretary was closing in Atkarsk. "He died for all of us," declared the prosecution; the

peasant audience wept. The storm of collectivization rose higher as farms were named in the martyr's honor.
As I left the area, I asked a local official. "What does Moscow say about this, about that?" He replied, hurriedly but proudly: "We can't wait to hear from Moscow; Moscow makes its plans from what we do."
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 35

COLLECTIVIZATION WENT TO EXCESS AT TIMES

The winter of 1929-1930 was a time of considerable chaos. The precise form of the collective was not yet clear. Stalin, also making his plans from the peasants' actions, stated on December 27, 1929, that the time had come "to abolish kulaks as a class." This merely authorized what poor peasants were already doing, but with the authorization they began doing more. Cruel tales came of the unroofing of kulaks' houses, of chaotic deportations. Meantime, organizers, eager for a record, forced peasants into farms by threat of deportation as "kulaks"; they "communized" cows, goats, chickens, even dishes and underwear. Kulaks grossly exaggerated these excesses and incited peasants to kill and eat their livestock and "go naked into the collective where the state supports you all."
"Why doesn't Stalin stop it?" I asked a communist friend. "Has a kulak no rights? This is chaos!"
"There is really too much anarchy," he answered. "It comes from division in the Party; we Communists must take the blame. Stalin has stated the 'line'–'to abolish kulaks as a class.' The Right-wing elements, who control the government apparatus"–I knew he meant Rykov–"delay the formulation in law. So the Left-wing elements among our local comrades, having no law as a guide, do what is right in their own eyes and the eyes of farmhands and poor peasants. This is anarchy. We expect government decrees soon; then there will be more order."
The first decree appeared February 5, 1930–it authorized deportation of kulaks in areas where collectivization was "total" and where peasants meetings asked for the deporting of definite people after hearings. The list must then be checked by the provincial authorities, and arrangements made for the districts to which the kulaks should go. These were usually construction jobs or virgin land in Siberia. After the decree, the anarchy lessened,….
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 38

Problems inherent to the massive introduction of a new, collective system of farming further complicated the situation. The very scale and speed of collectivization was astounding: in the space of four years, over 14 million farms were collectivized, including 70 percent of the farms in Ukraine. Collectivization took place at rates and with methods subject to extreme swings depending on the abilities and attitudes of local and the regional authorities. Careful planning gave way to confusion as even at the top level collectivization schedules and targets were subject to drastic changes and revisions. With limited historical experience to draw upon and in a countryside renowned for backwardness and age-old peasant traditions, millions of small strips and holdings were amalgamated into a few hundred thousand collective farms. Peasants long used to manual labor and working with draught animals were now introduced to tractor ploughs, tractor-drawn seeders, mechanical combines and threshers. Against this background and widespread sabotage, a smooth transition was impossible.

Added to this were errors and excesses committed in the course of collectivization. Contrary to what Nationalist ideologues and “experts” would have us believe, Soviet historiography does not ignore this period, nor does it gloss over errors committed.
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 95

That property expropriated from kulaks was assigned to the new collectives together with the over-zealousness of many Party cadre led poor peasants to take aggressive action against the rich peasants, and treat many recalcitrant middle peasants as kulaks; in some areas 15-20% of peasants were treated as if they were kulaks, contrary both to Party policy and common sense.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 221

Some rich peasants slaughtered their animals rather than contribute them to the collectives, more because the fodder to keep them alive was appropriated to feed the cities. Between spring 1929 and spring 1930 the number of farm animals in the USSR fell by 25%. To have continued the hectic measures of January and February would have resulted in famine and possibly collapse of the regime.
On March 2, 1930, summing up those measures, the Central Committee of the Party issued a statement criticizing its local cadre and poor peasant supporters for becoming ‘dizzy with success,’ ignoring the basic rule that peasants must join the collectives voluntarily, and alienating the majority of middle peasants who, until the winner of 1930, had been undecided about whether or not to join (thus pushing them into the arms of the kulaks). The Party also emphasized that the collective farm socialized only the land, draft animals and larger machinery, leaving cows, sheep, chickens, pigs, and other personal property in the hands of the individual peasants. The decree read in part:
“The Kolkhoz must not be imposed by force. That would be stupid and reactionary. The Kolkhoz movement must be based on the active support of the main mass of the peasantry….
What can these distortions lead to? To the strengthening of our enemies and the complete discrediting of the idea of the Kolkhoz movement….
As a result of the March 1930 decree, the errors of the previous two months were largely corrected and pressure on the rich, especially the middle, peasants considerably relaxed. More than half the peasants who, in January and February, had been induced to join the collectives, left them within a few weeks. By September 1930, the percentage of peasants in collectives had dropped to 21% of the total (from a peak of about 58% in early March). Subsequently subtler incentive structures (and a balance between collective and individual interests) were employed to induce the middle peasants to join the collectives. Private plots, from which peasants could sell their produce on an individual basis, were institutionalized; profit-sharing, rather than set wage payments, became the norm. Most state farms were disbanned and their land and resources given free to the collectives. This more moderate approach after 1930 resulted in a fairly rapid pace of collectivization. By 1933 about 60%, by 1934 about 75%, and by 1940, 97% of peasants were organized in collective or state farms….
The slaughter of farm animals by rich and middle peasants in the winner of 1930 together with the continuingly serious problems of organization of the collectives and motivation of the peasants meant, in Isaac Deutschers’ words, that ‘Rapid mechanization of agriculture now became a matter of life and death.’ The food crisis continued unabated. In 1929 the average

Soviet urban dwellers annual consumption of meat, poultry and fat was 48 pounds, in 1930 it was 33, falling to 27 in 1931, and less than 17 in the famine year of 1932.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 221-222

… since Stalin said he desired a smooth transition to socialist agriculture, the government put out vague and shifting schedules for collectivization, which supposedly spread the process out over 10 years or more. But the local Communist organizers in fact went ahead far more quickly and disruptively, not because Stalin had given them secret hurry-up orders (as his enemies charge) but because schedules were hopelessly vague, and because both idealism and careerism pressed the Communist organizer ahead as fast as possible.
To Stalin the enemy in the villages was above all the kulak, while the poor peasantry and even most of the middle peasantry were merely coerced or misled by the kulaks.
Randall, Francis. Stalin's Russia. New York: Free Press,1965, p. 157

Curiously enough, collectivization which was at first forced has now become more of a response to the exigencies of the situation. Peasants are flocking into the kolhozi as into arks of safety. It is largely a matter of expediency and to that extent voluntary. Thus all Soviet expectations have been surpassed. It was planned to collectivize only as machinery could be supplied and to have 15% of the small-farm holders organized by 1933. But once the backbone of opposition was broken and it became expedient to join, the collectives increased so rapidly that four times the quota has already been reached.
… The crisis that compulsory socialization created in 1930 is forgotten, but its effects are not repaired. When the peasants saw what awaited them, they ate up or killed their livestock rather than let it be collectivized, and by midsummer 1930 from 1/4 to 1/2 of the farm animals had disappeared. The confiscation of grain and property together with the ruthless policy of the proletarian collectivizers had two consequences. It caused acute hunger and dissatisfaction in the cities and rebellious outbreaks in the country. Partisan zeal was jeopardizing the dictatorship. Thereupon Stalin, in the famous letter of March, 1930, called a halt, saying there was "giddiness from success" among the organizers. They were ordered to desist from coercive methods and roundly scored for their excesses. Collectivization was declared to be purely voluntary. Thus a "strategic retreat" was negotiated and the crisis successfully passed with the result that subsequently a policy of modernization has prevailed and socialization has been secured by inducement rather than force. However, the war upon the kulaki has not ceased.
Davis, Jerome. The New Russia. New York: The John Day company, c1933, p. 58

STALIN WAS LESS STRINGENT TOWARD THOSE OPPOSED TO DEKULAKIZATION THAN OTHERS

In some cases, local militants' zeal outstripped the plans of the center, and Moscow often had to rein in excessive dekulakizations, forcible collectivization, and ultraleftist zeal in persecuting religion.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 43

Kuibyshev's terms were tough. Indeed, there is reason to believe that Stalin's lieutenants took a more aggressive stance toward the opposition than he did. One month before Bukharin and Kuibyshev spoke, a Politburo meeting had considered punishments for two

high-ranking Central Committee Members (Syrtsov and Lominadze) who had taken a "right-opportunist" line against the excesses of collectivization. In the Politburo, Stalin proposed demoting them to the status of candidate members of the Central Committee. The majority, however, "strongly" disagreed and voted to expel them from the Central Committee.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 52

TOUGH LAWS PASSED AGAINST DESTROYING KULAKS ARE WEAKLY ENFORCED

[Decree of the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR on August 7, 1932]
…The number of complaints concerning violence and threats directed by kulak elements at kolkhoz members who do not wish to leave the kolkhozy and who are working honestly and selflessly for the consolidation of these kolkhozy has similarly increased….
Based on these considerations and in order to meet the demands of workers and kolkhoz members, the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR decree:
…2. To apply as a measure of judicial punishment for the plundering of rail and border transport cargo the highest measure of social protection, namely, execution with confiscation of all property, with computation of execution under extenuating circumstances to deprivation of freedom for a term of not less than ten years with confiscation of all property.
…2. To apply as a measure of judicial punishment for the plundering (theft) of property belonging to kolkhozy and cooperative societies the highest measure of social protection, namely, execution with confiscation of all property, with computation of execution under extenuating circumstances to deprivation of freedom for a term of not less than 10 years with confiscation of all property.
…1. To wage a resolute struggle against those antisocial, kulak-capitalistic elements which apply violence and threats [of violence] or preach the use of violence and threats against kolkhoz members for the purpose of forcing the latter to leave the kolkhozy, for the purpose of bringing about the violent destruction of the kolkhozy. These criminal acts are to be put on a footing equal to crimes against the state.
2. To apply as a measure of judicial punishment in matters concerned with the protection of kolkhozy and kolkhoz members against violence and the threats on the part of kulak and other antisocial elements, the deprivation of freedom with imprisonment in a concentration camp for a term ranging from 5 to 10 years.
Despite the Draconian nature of this law, its application was uneven and confused. The following month, September 1932, the Politburo ordered death sentences mandated by law to be carried out immediately. Nevertheless, of those convicted under the law by the end of 1933, only 4% received death sentences, about 1000 persons were actually executed. In Siberia, property was confiscated from only five percent of those convicted under the law.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 110

In spite of Stalin's strictures in the original decree against leniency, by August 1936 a secret decree had ordered the review of all sentences under the law of August 7th 1932. Four-fifths of those convicted had their sentences reduced, and more than 40,000 of these were freed at that time.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 110

THE LESSER PUNISHMENT FOR THE FAMILIES OF KULAK SUBVERSIVES

[June 2nd, 1935 extract from Protocol No. 46 of the buro session of the Azov-Black Sea Territorial Committee of the Communist Party]
2) Deporting from our territory 1500 kulaks, counter-revolutionaries who continue to carry on their anti-Soviet, anti-kolkhoz activities and sabotage. The members of their families, on the other hand, may, if they so desire, remain in place.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 180

In many cases the kulak alone was arrested and sent to a labor camp or jailed or shot, while his family was not touched at first. Agents only made an inventory of the property, leaving it in the family care, as it were….
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 237

POLITBURO ORDERS THAT JUSTICE BE DONE TO KOLKHOZ MEMBERS

[Protocol #39 of the Politburo on May 20th 1936]
The Procuracy and the Supreme Court of the USSR are instructed to verify the correctness of rejections of requests to dismiss criminal cases against kolkhoz members in the Ivanovo and Leningrad regions and in the Northern Caucasus Region and to take all necessary measures to rectify any improper decisions made locally….
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 220

COLLECTIVIZATION SOMETIMES REQUIRED HARSH METHODS OF PERSUASION

MOLOTOV: On January 1, 1928, I had to go to Melitopol on the grain procurement drive. In the Ukraine. To extort grain.
CHUEV: From the kulaks?
MOLOTOV: From everyone who had grain. Industrial workers and the army were in a desperate situation. Grain was all in private hands, and the task was to seize it from them…. We took away the grain. We paid them in cash, but of course at miserably low prices. They gained nothing. I told them that for the present the peasants had to give us grain on loan. Industry had to be restored and the army maintained.
…All kinds of rather harsh methods of persuasion had to be applied. We started with the kulak.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 241

We never knew what they hid away, but often they did hold back stocks of grain. “Come on! Give it up! Quick!” Those drives were well warranted then. To survive, the state needed the grain. Otherwise it would crack up–it would be unable to maintain the army, the schools, construction, the elements most vital to the state. So we pumped away. Of course, we did not always succeed. We were sitting targets for criticism. They would say, Look, the center is

demanding the impossible. Such talk was rife. Only the overwhelming authority of the center, with Stalin at the head, enabled us to fulfill the plans.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 243

But this does not mean that the proletarian state used no force against the kulaks and their agents, the saboteurs and wreckers who resorted to murder and terrorism to oppose the building of socialism and who wished to restore capitalism. The dictatorship of the proletariat did exercise its dictatorship over the kulaks, over the minority of exploiters, in the wider interests of the majority of the Soviet people–the workers and peasants–in order to make sure that the vanquished capitalists would not come to power again. The proletarian state exercised its dictatorship because that exactly is the specific purpose for which it does exist. Would we not have complete justification for reproaching it if it did not perform this, one of its main functions?
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 176

KULAKS REFUSED TO HAND OVER THE GRAIN FOR TWO YEARS

Back then our position was restriction of the kulak, not liquidation. Not until the autumn of 1929, in October or November, did Stalin launch the slogan of liquidation of the kulaks as a class…. You see, we would say to the peasants that the grain was needed, neither the working-class nor the army could get along without it. But the kulak would not hand it over. What were we to do? So, a year passed, then another, by which time the liquidation of the kulaks as a class had been prepared. There was no other way.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 245

SOVIET GOVT TRIES TO SAVE FROM EPIDEMIC THE CHILDREN SENT INTO EXILE

Stefan Merl, a German researcher describes the percarious conditions in which the first kulaks were sent to Siberia, during the first wave of collectivization in January-March 1930.
“With the beginning of spring, the situation in the receiving camps aggravated. Epidemics were widespread, leaving many victims, particularly among the children. For this reason, all children were removed from the camps in April 1930 and sent back to their native villages. At that time, some 400,000 persons had already been deported to the North; until th summer of 1930, probably 20,000 to 40,000 persons died.”
Merl, Stefan, “Ausrottung” der Bourgeoisie und der Kulaken in Sowjetrussland? Geschichte und Gesellschaft 13 (1987), p. 376
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp , Belgium : EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 96 [p. 80 on the NET]

MANY DEPORTED PEOPLE DIED BECAUSE PARTY DIRECTIVES WERE IGNORED

…Others, whose case was reviewed, were allowed to return home. An undetermined number, that we have estimated at 100,000, died during the travels, mainly because of epidemics. The considerable number of deaths during displacements must be seen in the context of that epoch: a weak administration, precarious living conditions for the entire

population, sometimes chaotic class struggles among the peasant population overtaken by leftism. Of course, for each death during displacement, the Right affirms that the guilty party is the Party, is Stalin. But in fact the contrary is true. The Party's position is clearly stated in one of the numerous reports about this problem, this one dated 20 December 1931 by the person responsible for a work camp at Novossibirsk.
`The high mortality observed for convoys Nos 18 to 23 coming from the North Caucasus—2,421 persons out of 10,086 upon departure—can be explained by the following reasons:
`1. A negligent, criminal approach to the selection of deported contingents, among whom were many children, aged over 65 years of age and sick people;
`2. The non-respect of directives about the right for deportees to bring with them provisions for two months of transfer.
`3. The lack of clean water, which forced the deported to drink unclean water. Many are dead of dysentery and of other epidemics.'
Werth, Nicolas, "Goulag: les vrais chifres'. L' Histoire 169 (September 1993, p. 44.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 98 [p. 81-82 on the NET]

All these deaths are classed under the heading "Stalinist crimes'. But this report shows that two of the causes of death were linked to the non-respect of Party directives and the third had to do with the deplorable sanitary conditions and habits in the entire country.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 98 [p. 82 on the NET]

RUTHLESS STRUGGLE GAINING MIDDLE CLASS SUPPORT WAS NEEDED FOR COLLECTIVIZATION

Capitalist elements in the countryside–the kulaks–could only be eliminated by a ruthless class struggle. For this class struggle, the proletariat needed a firm alliance with the middle peasantry. This alliance could only be strengthened by turning the middle peasant to collectivization. This in turn could only be accomplished when industry was sufficiently developed to give real, active support to the peasantry by the provision of tractors, other agricultural machinery, fertilizers, and when the state was able to advance credits. Last, though not least, the middle peasantry had to be persuaded on the basis of their own experience, and by example–not by coercion or force–to turn from individual farming to collective farming.
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 168

EARLY REPORT SAYS OPPOSITION TO GRAIN REQUISITIONS CAUSED BY GOVT INEPTNESS

[Party memorandum of May 1929 reporting on resistance in the countryside to grain requisitioning, food shortages, and the closing of religious institutions]

… In his letter Comrade Khataevich arrives at the following conclusions:

“An investigation of the role of local party and Soviet organizations in all the aforementioned incidents which provoked mass uprisings has revealed that, in most cases, party and Soviet organizations were guilty of tactlessness, egregious blunders, and a lack of skill and proficiency in their preparations for vital efforts. This made the anti-Soviet activities of the kulaks and the clergy much easier. The latter were able to respond quickly, flexibly, and skillfully to the blundering, tactlessness, and ineptitude of our local party and Soviet organizations. The kulaks were particularly successful in taking advantage of incidents where local party and Soviet organizations closed churches and so forth by administrative fiat, without careful preparations at the lowest levels and without explaining, persuading, and gaining the support of most of the poor and middle peasants.” Signed Bogomolov, Head of the Information Department
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 378

HUMANE EVICTION OF KULAKS FROM THE POLES REGION OF THE UKRAINE

[Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee resolution, April 1, 1932, on the eviction of kulaks from the Poles’ region]

1. It must be considered essential to purge the Poles’ region of kulak elements, as we have determined the number of families subject to deportation to be 5000.

2. The deportees are to be utilized to develop quarries for stone, clay, etc., and for this purpose permanent kulak settlements are to be established on the left bank of the Dnieper River in regions where quarries are located.

3. It is ordered:

a) organizations which will utilize the labor of the special deportees are to provide fully the food supply, living quarters, and cultural-medical services to the special deportees. In particular, the People’s Commissariat for Supply of the Ukraine must exercise particular supervision and supply food and manufactured goods to the special deportees.

Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 402

These people [kulaks] were obviously small farmers, used to hard work, as we could tell by the rough hands of both men and women, and they had the ruddy complexions of people who work on the land. But at this time they were a bewildered-looking lot. They didn’t seem to know what was happening to them, or why, and neither did the other Russians who saw them being moved about. Well, these people were “kulaks,” and they were being “liquidated.” This was the process which has been described by many an “expert” in many a book about Russia.

I watched the “liquidation of kulaks” before I had read any expert interpretations of the process. It just looked to me as if most of the small farmers in Russia were being moved

from one place to another under police guard. I had no more idea why this was being done than most of the Russians seemed to have. It seemed that orders had come from Moscow to do this, so it was being done.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 73

SOMETIMES FORCE AGAINST THE KULAKS WAS NECESSARY

What must be done in order to obtain grain surpluses? We must, first of all, put an end to the mentality of waiting for the grain to come itself, as a harmful and dangerous one. Grain collections must be organized. We must mobilize the poor and middle peasants against the kulaks and organize their public support for the measures adopted by the Soviet government for increasing the grain collections…. It is true that this method is sometimes coupled with the application of emergency measures against the kulaks, which calls forth the comical wailings of comrades Bukharin and Rykov. But what is wrong with that? Why is it wrong, sometimes, under certain conditions, to apply emergency measures to our class enemy, the kulaks? Why is it permissible to arrest the speculators in the towns by hundreds and exile them to the Turukhan region, and not permissible to take surplus grain from the kulaks–who are trying to take the Soviet government by the throat and enslave the poor peasants–by methods of public coercion, and at prices at which the poor and middle peasants sell their grain to our grain collection organizations. What is the logic of this? Has our Party ever declared itself opposed in principle, to the application of emergency measures against the kulaks? Comrades Rykov and Bukharin apparently are opposed in principle to the application of any kind of emergency measures against the kulaks. But that is a bourgeois liberal policy, and not a Marxist policy.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 170

TRYING TO MERELY PERSUADE SOME KULAKS TO YIELD THEIR GRAIN IS STUPID

Those who support Comrade Bukharin's group, hope to persuade the class enemy that he should voluntarily forego his interests and voluntarily surrender his grain surplus. They hope that the kulak, who has grown, who is able to avoid giving grain by offering other products in its place and who conceals his grain surplus, they hope that this same kulak will give us his grain surplus voluntarily at our collection prices. Have they lost their senses? Is it not obvious that they do not understand the mechanism of the class struggle, that they do not know what classes mean? Do they know with what derision the kulaks treat our people and the Soviet government at village meetings called to assist the grain collections? Have they heard of facts like this, for instance: one of our agitators in Kazakhstan, for two hours tried to persuade the holders of grain to surrender that grain for supplying the country. At the end of the talk a kulak stepped forth with his pipe in his mouth, and said: "Do us a little dance, young fellow, and I will let you have a couple of poods of grain?"…
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 172

Summing up the results of the First Five-Year Plan at the January 1933 plenum, Stalin included a special section on the tasks and results of the struggle against 'the remnants of the hostile classes'. Despite the fact that he was talking about 'remnants', he nevertheless issued a call to 'struggle against them implacably'. And not a word about re-education, or

bringing many ‘ex-people’ and their families into the new life which might the more effectively help to change their outlook and their ‘class instincts’. Depicting the social scene, he said:

“The remnants of the dying classes–industrialists and their servants, private traders and their stooges, former nobles and priests, kulaks and their henchmen, former White officers and NCOs, former gendarmes and policemen–they have all wormed their way into our factories, our institutions and trading bodies, our railway and river transport enterprises and for the most part into our collective and state farms. They have wormed their way in and hidden themselves there, disguised as ‘workers’ and ‘peasants’, and some of them have even managed to worm their way into the party.

What have they brought with them? Of course, they have brought their hatred of the Soviet regime, their feeling of ferocious hostility to the new forms of the economy, way of life, culture…. The only thing left for them to do is to play dirty tricks and do harm to the workers and collective farmers. And they do this any way they can, on the quiet. They set fire to warehouses and break machinery. They organize sabotage. They organize wrecking in the collective and state farms, and some of them, including a number of professors, go so far in their wrecking activities as to inject the livestock in collective and state farms with plague and anthrax, and encourage the spread of meningitis among horses, and so on.”
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 186

IN DIZZY WITH SUCCESS STALIN CRITICIZES THOSE CLOSING CHURCHES

In his article “Dizzy with Success,” published in Pravda on March 2, 1930, Stalin wrote:

“And what about those “revolutionaries,” if one may call them that, who begin the job of organizing collective farms by taking the bells from the churches. To take a bell–just think–how r-r-revolutionary!”

On March 15, 1930 Soviet newspapers published the decree on “distortions” of the party line in the cooperative movement. This decree referred to the administrative closing of churches as an error committed by local officials and threatened severe punishment for anyone offending the feelings of believers…. By the end of 1930 roughly 80 percent of the village churches had been closed and among the “dispossessed kulaks” there were a substantial number of clergymen.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 229

KULAKS IN EXILE SETTLEMENTS WERE GIVEN FREEDOM BECAUSE THEY FOUGHT IN THE WAR

Thousands of kulak special supplements were established in these remote regions. The inhabitants of these exile colonies were denied freedom of movement. The exiles situation changed in 1942, when young men from the special settlements began to be drafted into the Red Army because of the Soviet army’s severe losses in the war. At the end of the war the commandants’ offices for supervising these colonies were closed, and the residents of the

former special settlements obtained relative freedom of movement.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 237

POOR LEADERS OF EARLY STATE FARMS WERE FIRED OR BROUGHT TO TRIAL

The newly formed state farms also experienced repression. A typical example was a decree "On the work of livestock state farms," published in the spring of 1932 and signed by Stalin, Molotov, and Yakovlev, people's commissar of agriculture. The decree named 34 directors of state farms who had tried "to gloss over shortcomings resulting from their own poor leadership by referring to the fact that livestock state farms are in the early stages of construction." The decree "proposed" that these 34 be fired and brought to trial; it also listed 92 other directors, who were only to be fired.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 240

HOW WERE THE KULAKS TREATED DURING COLLECTIVIZATION

And about the time we arrived in Russia, The Communist General Staff in Moscow had decided to reorganize agriculture. They didn't like the idea of small farmers cultivating their little plots and selling their products in bazaars and markets such as the one at Kochkar, just as they didn't like the idea of the nomad herders roaming around on the steppes with their flocks of sheep and cattle and milkmares. These people who somehow derived their living from the land composed about 85 percent of the population of Russia at that time, and the Communists decided they couldn't get ahead with their plans to industrialize and socialize the country so long as these small farmers were left as they were.
So the Communists worked out an ingenious scheme for reorganization of Russian agriculture. They had already confiscated all the largest estates and turned them over to the state, which operated them as huge state farms. Now the Communists got the idea of combining small farmers into "collective farms" under state control. Since the small farmers already lived in villages, as I have explained, and even had a loose kind of co-operative organization in most villages, it would be a simple matter, the Communists decided, to persuade the small farmers to pool their land holdings and domestic animals and thus create thousands of collective farms, in which the small farmers would lose their deep-seated desires to own land on their own and acquire instead the socialist instinct. At the same time, these collective farms could use large-scale agricultural machinery and make use of the latest technical methods.
The scheme had much to recommend it, especially in Russia, where the small farmers already lived in villages and where nothing new would have to be built to install the proposed new system. It seemed to be merely a question of persuading the small farmers to adopt the scheme by showing them it would be to their advantage.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 75

But small farmers are conservative; they are not easily persuading to accept changes, especially changes which affect the whole routine of their daily lives. And some small farmers had managed to accumulate a little more stock than their neighbors; perhaps an extra horse or a couple of cows or even a tractor. These people didn't see why they should turn their things into a collective farm on a basis of equality with those who had nothing to

turn in. To make matters worse, the first collective farms were not run properly, and the people who went into them were miserable.
Some time before this, in order to equalize the holdings of small farmers, the authorities had instructed the farmers in every village to be divided into three classifications: poor peasants, middle peasants, and kulaks. This last name had an unpleasant meaning in Russia, having been used before the Revolution to describe the village moneylenders who charged excessive rates of interest and gradually got hold of most of the land and employed labor to work it. But it couldn't have any such meaning any more, because the Communist authorities didn't allow money-lending or mortgages of any kind. The farmers classified as kulaks were taxed a much heavier percentage of their crops and earnings than the other small farmers. This classification caused much ill feeling in the villages, and aroused one group against the others, which was one purpose the Communists had in mind. By arousing the small farmers against each other, they figured they could reorganize agriculture with less difficulty. At this time the term "kulak" was used concerning any farmer who opposed, generally passively, the collectivization of the farmers.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 76

The Communist General Staff at Moscow had given orders to hurry up the process of collectivization; but officials in the farm villages reported that the small farmers were balking. They especially blamed the kulaks, who, they claimed, were persuading the other peasants not to join collective farms. The people in Moscow decided that something would have to be done to break the log-jam in the villages. They therefore announced one-day that the kulaks must be liquidated as a class.
Several hundred thousand families in the thousands of farm villages were classified as kulaks, and the process of liquidating them began. First, they were driven out of their houses, and their furniture, domestic animals, and all except the few personal possessions were taken away from them. The confiscated houses and goods were turned over to the collective farm to be used for clubs and offices.
Then the dispossessed small farmers and their families were herded into district centers, and arrangements were made to ship them off to some distant part of the country. It can be imagined what scenes of disorder and confusion resulted in all these farm villages. The small farmers who had not been labeled kulaks assisted in the process of liquidation because many of them had been envious of their better-to-do neighbors and others hoped to get something out of it.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 77

The task of handling the kulaks and their families after they had been dispossessed was entrusted to the federal police, who were well organized to take care of it. It is my opinion that the liquidation of kulaks was based as much upon the need for unskilled labor in industry during this period as it was upon the desire to reorganize agriculture. I can testify that we had difficulty keeping enough labor on hand in the mines, and I believe this was also true in the new industrial centers. Housing conditions in those places were still very bad, the shortage of food and other human needs was great, and retail stores were so badly organized that there seemed no immediate prospect of improvement. Free workers therefore were constantly on the move in search of more agreeable living conditions, and the labor turnover was terrific and very bad for production.
It seems to me that a conversation something like the following must have taken place at Communist headquarters in Moscow. One of the big Communists said: "Well, what will we do

about it. We can't put through our plans for industry unless we have a few million workers who will stay put. There will be too much of a howl if we simply make the free workers stay where they are. What can we do?" And someone may have answered: "Why not liquidate the kulaks? We can kill two birds with one stone: get these obstinate small farmers away from the villages, where they obstruct our scheme for collectivization, and at the same time get plenty of industrial labor which will stay put because it is under police guard." At any rate, the dispossessed small farmers were rapidly converted into forced labor in mines, factories, and forests.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 78

One-day several train-loads of men, women, and children arrived at these mines, consisting of dispossessed small farmers and their families under police guard…. This group was assigned to one mine for work, thus making it easier for the police to keep track of them and avoiding any conflict between these people and the free miners. I saw quite a lot of these kulaks [at the mines] from the beginning, since it was my job to teach them how to mine. Being farmers, they naturally knew none of the processes.
The newcomers all seemed to be completely bewildered by what had happened to them, and very few of them ventured to make complaints of any kind….
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 79

They lived very much the same as other miners, whose standards of living at that time [1931], from the American viewpoint, were unbelievably low. This was the period when the food shortage was most acute, partly because these kulaks were no longer working their land. But they got their share of what was available. They occupied old houses which had been used by the miners before the Revolution, and by our standards, were hovels of the worst type. Eventually, however, some of them put up better houses of their own.
The working hours and rates of pay for the kulaks were the same as for the other miners, with the exception that the kulaks paid out a portion of their wages into a fund to look after old and disabled persons in their own group. They were free to move around within the district, an area of several miles, so long as they reported once a week to the chief police officer.
Very few of these people made any effort to escape; their experiences seemed to have broken up any spirit of defiance they may have had before. Once in a while two or three of them walked off and didn't come back; I never learned what happened to such people. The authorities from the beginning tried to encourage them to submit promptly to circumstances; those who buckled down to work were soon given their lost citizenship rights and other little privileges.
Later, I ran up against similar groups of ex-farmers engaged in forced labor in gold, copper, and zinc mines in which I worked in several parts of the country. Usually, they were kept at work separately, for purposes of convenience, although they were not isolated in ordinary life, and mixed as much as they liked with the free miners.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 80

When they were brought into a mine, production ordinarily fell off for six months or longer, and then gradually climbed up again. The kulaks, who had been the most intelligent and ambitious small farmers, became superior miners too, once they had learned the trade.
I don't know how many of these kulaks were put at forced labor; I have run across them all over the eastern districts of Russia, not only in mines, but in factories and forests and at

work on dams, railways, canals, and powerhouses. There were so many of them that they converted the federal police into the largest single employers of labor in Russia, and gave the police a great reputation with the Communist General Staff for getting things done. … The kulaks formed the backbone and basis for the great forced labor army which has worked in Russia ever since. This army of forced labor mixes up murderers, thieves, and other ordinary criminals with such groups as kulaks, whose offense was of a different nature. The Communist authorities probably are well pleased with the results of the liquidation of the kulaks. It worked out about as they had figured, in that it broke up the opposition to collectivization in farm villages, and at the same time provided plenty of much-needed fixed labor in new industrial centers.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 81

On the basis of resolutions passed by the Central Committee of the party, the government's Central Executive Committee, and the Council of People's Commissars on January 3 and February 1, 1930,…all kulaks and podkulachniki were divided into three categories. "Organizers and perpetrators of terrorist acts, and those engaged in active anti-Soviet work, were isolated and sent to concentration camps. Kulaks who demonstrated the slightest active resistance were deported to remote regions of the country, where they were put to work cutting down the forests, doing farm labor, etc. The other kulaks remained where they were, but they could not have any land allotments from within the bounds of the kolkhozes."
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 235

… for instance, in the Donetz Coal Basin no fewer than 40 percent of the miners were, in 1930, expropriated kulaks and other peasants.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 115

Later, when the sabotage took the form of a widespread "general strike" against even cultivation of the collective farms, the Soviet Government found itself on the horns of the same dilemma that perplexed the administrators of the English Poor Law. To provide maintenance for able-bodied men whose refusal to work had brought them to destitution would merely encourage them, and their families, and eventually countless others, to repeat the offense. Yet deliberately to lead them to starve was an unacceptable alternative. The English Guardians of the Poor, early in the 18th century, invented the device, which was readopted in 1834, of relieving the able-bodied and their families only on condition that they entered the workhouse, and there performed whatever tasks of work could be set to them. The Soviet Government had no workhouses available and no time to build them. It's device was forcibly to remove the peasants who were found to be without food from the villages which they were demoralizing to places at a distance where they could be put to work at the making of railways, roads or canals, at the cutting of timber, or at prospecting or mining for mineral ores–all tasks of discomfort and occasionally of hardship, by which they were enabled to earn the bare subsistence wage of relief work. It was a rough and ready expedient of "famine relief," which undoubtedly caused much suffering to innocent victims. But candid students of the circumstances may not unwarrantably come to the conclusion that, when the crisis of possible starvation arrived, as the result largely of deliberate sabotage, the Soviet Government could hardly have acted otherwise than it did.
Footnote: The enforced expropriation of these peasants has seemed to foreign critics as extreme injustice. Were not the peasants, in limiting their production, merely doing what they liked with their own? In fact, the peasants in the USSR are not owners of the land they till,

but merely occupants of nationalized land, for the purpose of cultivating it. But whether or not they are in the same position as the peasant proprietors of France or Flanders, there seems nothing unreasonable or inequitable in the view that, wherever the land is entrusted to a peasant class by the community, it is on the paramount condition that they should produce, up to their ability, the foodstuffs required for the maintenance of the community. Any organized refusal to cultivate must inevitably be met by expropriation.
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, p. 206

WIVES AND DAUGHTERS OFTEN ACCOMPANIED KULAKS IN LABOR CAMP WORK

The wives and daughters of kulaks usually accompanied them at forced labor in some of the mines I supervised, and they sometimes also worked in the mines. These women had worked hard in the fields, and thought nothing of performing manual labor. They were not compelled to work in the mines, but were permitted to do so, and preferred to eke out their husbands' modest earnings. In this way thousands of Soviet peasant women got their first training for industry, and many of them later went into mills and factories as operators.
My wife and I can testify, from our own experience, that many people in the outside world have an exaggerated impression of the relations between men and women in Russia. THE OLD STORY ABOUT THE "NATIONALIZATION" OF WOMEN, STARTED SOON AFTER THE REVOLUTION, HAS BEEN KEPT IN CIRCULATION EVER SINCE, AND OTHER EQUALLY FALSE REPORTS HAVE SOMEHOW GOTTEN AROUND.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 234

DEKULAKIZATION WAS DONE POORLY AT THE LOCAL LEVEL NOT FROM THE CENTER

(Lynn Viola)
Although the center equipped local officials with the legislative powers necessary for de facto dekulakization, many regional party organizations, particularly those in grain-producing regions, went one step further and issued orders for the expropriation or exile of kulaks on a relatively large scale from the fall of 1929. In the Lower Volga, Middle Volga, Siberia, and Ukraine, thousands of peasants were expropriated and/or exiled on the basis of regional party decisions made prior to the adoption of the central decree on dekulakization on Jan. 5, 1930. By the time of the central decree, the center was recognizing and endorsing what had already become a reality in many parts of the countryside.
Implementation of dekulakization following the central decree spread far beyond the grain-producing regions into grain-deficit and national minority regions in spite of the center's directives not to implement dekulakization outside of regions of wholesale collectivization, which was then limited mainly to grain-producing regions. The result was massive violations that soon led the center to issue more precise directives in late January and early February, in hope of establishing control over the campaign and standardizing and regulating procedures.
…Finally, the center issued a strict warning that dekulakization was to occur only in regions of wholesale collectivization and that dekulakization should not be considered an end in itself. These directives represented the center's belated attempt to re-gain the initiative in

policy implementation. The directives, however, failed to stem the tide of violence and anarchy unleashed in the countryside, and the center was finally forced in early March to signal a retreat with the publication of Stalin's famous article, "Dizziness with Success," and the Central Committee decree of March 14, 1930.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 67

The regions acted first in the campaign to eliminate the kulak as a class and in so doing forced the hand of the center in this issue. Dekulakization began on local and regional initiative in late 1929 and early 1930, … The 5 January decree on collectivization, which made the new policy toward the kulaks official, provided encouragement for the actions and initiative of local and regional authorities.
Viola, Lynne. The Best Sons of the Fatherland. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1987, p. 96

Moreover, to view the retreat as an act of total cynicism would be to deny the very fact that rural cadres had indeed become "dizzy from success," and, despite the central impetus of the campaign, had carried the campaign beyond the control of the center.
Viola, Lynne. The Best Sons of the Fatherland. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1987, p. 116

This first phase of dekulakization led to repressive mayhem and massive peasant discontent. The center had unleashed its cadres in the field from the time it adopted extraordinary measures to deal with the grain procurement crisis and quickly discovered that it was no easy task to bring them back under control. The center was not prepared to deal with either the army of recently dekulakized or the peasant unrest thus generated. The first consequence of this lack of preparation was the March retreat. The second consequence was the formation of commissions to review complaints from dekulakized peasants seeking redress. According to Soviet data, in the Central Black Earth Region alone, some 32,583 peasants were rehabilitated in 1930; an additional 5000 in the Middle Volga and 5500 in the Lower Volga were also said to have been rehabilitated in 1930.
Dekulakization resumed in late 1930 and the first half of 1931…. It appears to have been less anarchic and more subject to central control…. Elsewhere, dekulakization resumed in late 1930 and extended into the early summer of 1931. After this second phase of dekulakization, the state claimed that dekulakization was basically accomplished a in the major grain-producing regions.
Another form of dekulakization, perhaps better called simple repression, occurred in conjunction with the notorious tikhaia sapa (on the sly) activities of the kulak and included civil and criminal penalties for a large range of offenses, such as infiltration of collective or state farms and MTS (Machine-Tractor Stations) units, theft of socialist property… and so on. In reference to kulak work on the sly, Soviet sources generally stress the frequency of such activities in Ukraine and North Caucasus, in particular, and the Volga regions as well–the prime areas hit by the 1932 famine…. The final phase of dekulakization tapered off after 1934 and was followed by several amnesties for an undetermined part of the repressed.
…Repression, however, should not be mistaken for central control. Although the center was responsible for setting policy, the cadres in the field were responsible for interpreting and implementing policy. The vague and frequently contradictory directives of the center, as well as the very broad official definition of the kulak, allowed local cadres great latitude in labeling peasants kulaks, resulting in an explosion of local proizvol or arbitrariness.

Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 68-69

CENTER OPPOSED LOCAL USE OF GENEALOGIES TO DETERMINE WHO WAS A KULAK

Local cadres and activists, however, carried the manhunt further than the center wished in their zeal for genealogical purity. Central authorities and legal officials, in particular, often inveighed against the extremes that the genealogical craze assumed. The problem with these protests was that they were seldom consistent and often contradicted one another. There were some genuine concerns, however, that some of the activities of local cadres, the collective farm expulsions in particular, were getting out hand. For example, in one district in the Ivanovo Industrial Region, collective farm expulsions were condemned because they were implemented “formally” on the basis of prerevolutionary social and economic status, including information on the property holdings of parents and even grandparents. In Ordinskii district in the Sverdlov Region, local authorities suggested purging from the collective farms all those with even the most distant kulak relatives and all those who served in the White Army; as a consequence, there were massive illegal expulsions in this district, later condemned by the center.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 79

CENTER ORDERS NO DEKULAKIZATION OF TEACHERS BY LOCAL OFFICIALS

The government consistently noted and condemned the repression of rural school teachers. The dekulakization of teachers (along with other rural specialists) was expressly forbidden. Also forbidden was expulsion of teachers from collective farms in the collective farm purges of the famine years. According to the central authorities, teachers could not be subject to repression regardless of their social origin.
The government’s directives to stem the tide of repressive measures aimed at teachers and other rural specialists were prompted by an unanticipated rash of attacks on teachers. Yet the directives and the constant appeals of the center appear to have had little effect on alleviating the victim’s plight.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 82

CENTER CONDEMNS LOCALS MISTREATING & CONDEMNING UNFORTUNATES AS KULAKS

Divisions within the village may also explain the repression of another group of unexpected targets among the so-called class enemies of this time. These targets were economically marginal households or individuals, who were needy, incapable of contributing their fair share of work in the collective farm, or entitled to collective farm privileges. This category included Red Army families, the elderly and ill, the families of exiled or rehabilitated kulaks, and women of special repute. These individuals and households were subject to expulsion

from the collective farm and taxation as kulaks. Less frequently, they were subject to dekulakization. In all cases, the state condemned their persecution.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 90

NUMBERS GIVEN FOR REPRESSED KULAKS ARE FAR TOO HIGH

But he [Conquest] does seem altogether too high in his estimates of the number of dead kulaks and of those shot and incarcerated in the great purge.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 274

It is, we think, to be regretted that no statistics are accessible, and not even a descriptive report has been published, as to the manner in which this enforced diaspora of probably some hundreds of thousands of persons was effected. We can form no estimate of the number of cases in which practically the whole property of these families was confiscated, or was simply taken over by the kolkhosi, which, as kulaks, they were not allowed to join, or membership in which they stubbornly refused. We can form no idea as to how many of them could accurately be described as kulaks, or persons guilty of economic oppression of their less successful neighbors; and how many were merely obstinate individualists who, whether or not their separate cultivation of their little holdings had been successful, resolutely declined to merge these in the collective farms. We do not know to what extent or by what means their cases were investigated, before they were forcibly ejected from their homes. We have been unable to learn how many of these peasants were removed to prison, or (as is specifically alleged) deported to the lumber camps in the northern forest areas, or employed on public works of railway or canal construction, or taken on as laborers at such gigantic industrial enterprises perpetually hungry for men as Magnitogorsk or Chelyabinsk, or sent to the Donets Basin to work in the coal mines, which had been equally suffering from a shortage of labor force. Nor is there any account known to us of the conditions under which these hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children have had to live in this process of arbitrary removal and resettlement, nor any estimate of the mortality involved in their displacement. So far as we are aware the Soviet Government has not deigned to reply to the numerous denunciations of the cruelty on a gigantic scale alleged to have been perpetrated by its agents; nor published any explanatory account of its proceedings in this summary “liquidation” of so large a proportion of its citizens….
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, p. 467

How many kulaks were summarily expropriated in this way, stripped of all their possessions, and turned out of the villages, we cannot say. But this was not the only cause of their “liquidation.” In 1931 and 1932, concurrently with the widespread partial failure of the harvest that we have described, many peasants, both members of the new kolkhosi and non-members, obstinately refused to cultivate their holdings; limited their sowing to a small proportion of their land which they thought would yield a crop large enough for their own maintenance; wholly neglected the weeding, and when the grain ripened limited their reaping to the minimum that they required, and left the rest of the harvest to rot on the ground. The result was that, when the drought interfered with their estimates of yield, many peasants in

Ukraine and in the North Caucasus found that they had nothing to live on during the winter and spring. The Soviet Government, after remitting taxes, and in some cases bringing grain to the starving, decided that it was impolitic to feed these recalcitrants in the holdings which they had refused to cultivate. They were deported, either as individual families or, in some cases in the North Caucasus, as whole villages, to places in which they could be saved from starvation by being employed, as on “relief works,” at bare subsistence wages. Tens of thousands of the men were put to work on the construction of the White Sea Canal. Others were sent to swell the labor force building the new cities of Chelyabinsk and Magnitogorsk. How many hundreds of thousands of families were thus, between 1930 and 1934, forcibly torn from their holdings, losing all that they possessed, we are unable even to estimate.
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, p. 470

STALIN DENIES BEING THE ONLY AUTHOR OF DIZZY WITH SUCCESS

…For instance, he [Stalin] wrote to some collective farmers: ‘Some people think the article “Dizzy with Success” represents the result of Stalin’s personal initiative. That’s nonsense, of course. It was the result of reconnaissance by the Central Committee.’ And further: ‘It is hard to stop people when they are on a wild stampede towards the abyss, and to head them off on to the proper path in time.”
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 168

April 1930: “There are some who think that the article ‘Dizzy with Success was the result of Stalin’s personal initiative. That, of course, is nonsense. It is not in order that personal initiative in a matter like this be taken by anyone, whoever he might be, that we have a Central Committee”.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 12, p. 218

WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A KOLKHOZ LEADER AND WHAT SUBVERSION YOU MUST LOOK FOR

[Oct. 15, 1933 letter from Soviet chairman Onishchenko to Kalinin]
I am 40 years old and have been working for 28 years. I was mobilized by the town party committee to go to the country as chairman of the rural Soviet of Tsvetnoe village and have served in this post since January 1, 1933. This work was completely unfamiliar to me, but after nine and a half months I’ve become somewhat familiar [with it].
To be a worker and to work as an executive are two quite different things. Since 1913 I’ve worked as a loader with interruptions caused by the imperialist and civil wars. It was easier for me then than it is now. The work I’m doing now requires that you know how to work yourself and to teach others to work, to give sensible answers to kolkhoz members, to be conversant with all the laws, to know the psychology of the village in all matters, to study the people you work with. You have to know how to skillfully expose everything that causes harm, to conduct a daily battle with the kulak element, to study his tactics, to unmask him, and expel him from the kolkhoz ranks. You have to know how not to violate revolutionary legality and order and acquire a lot of other knowledge and sensitivities. You have to know how to forge a new group of party activists, to learn to teach them how to work–to work in a practical way to fulfil the General Line of the party in the countryside.

So, when I came there, everything, as they say, was in a complete shambles, and I have put it all back together solidly.
On the rural soviet's territory there is a fishing kolkhoz which numbers 774 households; the total population here is 3,740 persons, making it the largest rural soviet in the raion. Before the revolution the residents had a substantial fishing industry and caught primarily sturgeon. During the Civil War a quarter of them participated actively in the White Army and were infected to the core with acquisitive greed.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 130

UPON ENTERING KOLKHOZES KULAKS OFTEN WERE JUST PLAIN LAZY

[Excerpts from a secret report by an instructor named Kheilo…dated August 21, 1940 describes the everyday life of exiled Poles: Report on exiled Poles in Kustanai Oblast]
On the Demoralizing Influence on Kolkhoz Labor Discipline of Kulaks and Bourgeois Exiled from the Former Poland to Kustanai Oblast in the Kazak SSR…. Exiled kulaks are put up in the homes of kolkhoz farmers, often without the latter's consent. There have been cases in which one kolkhoz arranged such a cordial welcome for exiles that it gave them a day's milk yield from the dairy section, so that the kolkhoz farmers' children at the open-air kindergarten were left without milk. There have been cases in which certain kolkhoz chairmen have taken exiles into their apartments. Combine and tractor operators and other kolkhoz activists have married exiles.
Exiles are credited with labordays and paid on an equal footing with kolkhoz farmers for their work on the kolkhoz.
In the vast majority of cases these bourgeois and kulaks don't do anything on the kolkhoz. Many of them arrived with enough money, clothing, and other belongings, and some of them receive money transfers of 2000 to 3000 rubles each, evidently from relatives.
They buy foodstuffs from kolkhoz farmers, but they don't want to work and nobody makes them.
Twenty families of exiles [in Karabalyk raion] did not do anything, explaining that they were not used "in the vocation"….
At a Magnai MTS in the same raion, a former officer arrived with his orderly, and the latter continued even here to make coffee for him and to polish and remove his boots, and when the NKVD transferred his former orderly to another kolkhoz, the officer did not take off his boots for a week, and when his feet became swollen, he took the boots off and has not put them on for two weeks….
There are many exiles in Fyodorovka Raion, in the raion center itself, who have also been placed in kolkhoz farmers' homes, who don't do anything, spend entire days sitting in a restaurant and strolling around a market and around offices….
There are cases in the oblast center itself, the city of Kustanai, when exiles are hired as office typists and clerks and are even hired to work in such organizations as the All Union Bureau for Grain Procurement and Sales, where possible acts of sabotage by them are not out of the question….
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 264

GOVT OFFICIALS WERE ATTACKED AND KILLED FOR IMPLEMENTING COLLECTIVIZATION

These were, we knew, serious accusations, for attached to them was Comrade Zeitlin's statement that the assaults on the officials "took place while the latter were performing their official duties." The circumstances surrounding these events were not mentioned.
Dolot, Miron. Execution by Hunger. New York: W.W. Norton, c1985, p. 59

"Where are those cutthroats?" was a question one could often hear muttered, or exhortations like, "Let's get those damned cutthroats!" "Let's get our horses and cows back from that cursed collective farm!"
No one would have dared to utter such words before; now they could be heard everywhere. The villagers were ready to fight and even kill if necessary. Indeed, a few days later, we saw two fires a distance away from the other end of the village. Later we learned that the headquarters of the Seventh Hundred had burned to the ground. Then the news spread that the villagers were storming the homes of the activists and village officials. We also heard that somebody had attempted to burned down the building of the village Soviet; that windows had been smashed in the village club (the propaganda center); and that the telephone connection with the county center had been cut off. More than a kilometer of telephone wire was missing.
Then one night, the first murder occurred. Someone ambushed Comrade Judas and beat him to death. Curious, as teenagers are, I ran to the place where his body had been discovered. It was still there. He was lying in a shallow gutter at the village main road. His priestly beard was singed, and his face was badly burned. The chasuble he always used to wear was missing. On a piece of newspaper attached to his chest, scrawled in slanting capitals, were the words: "A CUR'S DEATH FOR A CUR!"
Dolot, Miron. Execution by Hunger. New York: W.W. Norton, c1985, p. 76

KULAKS ADMIT THEY HID GRAIN FROM THE GOVT AND BROKE THE LAW IN 2 WAYS

After much worried thinking and discussion, our mother finally hit upon an idea: it was very simple, but extremely risky.
"Why not enlist the help of the government?" she remarked, as if it were obvious.
We did not understand what she had in mind.
"What do you mean?" I asked, completely baffled. "You mean to ask the government for help? You know that instead of helping us they have already taken everything we have!"
"No, not that," she answered quietly, as was her way. "I mean we should hide whatever food we have in a pit on government land."
We had to agree with her. It was an excellent idea. Its logic was clear: no official would even think of someone daring to hide food from the government on the government's own land. Any personal use of government property was severely punished by law, but we dared to defy that law, and by doing it we saved our lives.
As we anticipated, the Bread Procurement Commission searched all over our backyard and garden, but did not bother to cross the boundary to the government property–the adjacent sand dunes.
Dolot, Miron. Execution by Hunger. New York: W.W. Norton, c1985, p. 170

We took the road along a strip of sand dunes that separated the woods from our neighborhood. It was here we had hidden some of our food.
Dolot, Miron. Execution by Hunger. New York: W.W. Norton, c1985, p. 209

SOVIET LEGAL TREATMENT OF REBELLING KULAKS WAS FAIR

The standard penalty for peasants accused of counter-revolutionary activity was confiscation of property and re-settlement. Between 300,000 and 380,000 peasant families (1,200,000-1,500,000 individuals) were exiled to distant locations during the 1930-33 collectivization drive (mostly in 1930 and 1931)…. The majority of displaced peasants were deprived of their voting rights and sentenced to exile without confinement and allowed to keep an essential minimum of agricultural implements to begin life anew as poor/middle peasants. The most active opponents, however, were sentenced to exile with forced labor; most of these served sentences of five years, after which their voting rights were restored. Special settlements were organized for the resettled rich peasants in the virgin lands of the east (in Kazakhstan, Siberia, and the Urals).
Some left the virgin lands after their period of forced exile was over, but the bulk of them were not allowed to return to their native regions. In late 1941 there were still approximately 930,000 former kulaks settled where they had been relocated in the early 1930s. That the number of kulaks still in their places of exile both in 1935 and 1941 was approximately the same number as the number forcibly relocated in the 1930-33 period, indicates that most of them survived the often harsh conditions of transit and beginning a new life.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 224-225

PEASANT REVOLTS IN THE EARLY 1930'S

Nor was peasant resistance passive only. There took place during February and March 1930 what Soviet historians after Stalin have called "anti-kolkhoz" and even "anti-Soviet" peasant outbreaks, and the atmosphere in the countryside grew tense in the extreme. Not only were peasants engaging in arson; here and there they were rising up in armed rebellion. There were 38 armed outbreaks in the Central Black Earth province between 17 December 1929 and 14 February 1930.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 182

Peasants responded to forcible collectivization with a new wave of uprisings, and by murdering local leaders.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 4

The most important document is a long OGPU report from March 1931, which lists 13,754 peasant protests during 1930. The document specifies that the OGPU had data on the number of people involved in only some 10,000 of these events, and these data totaled approximately 2.5 million people….
Yet the rural population in the USSR, according to the 1926 census, exceeded 120 million, of whom more than 70 million people, approximately 60%, were over 15 years of age, and these numbers increased by 1930. The approximately 3.3 million protesters attested in the

OGPU document thus comprised about 5% of the adult rural population…. What happened to the other tens of millions of households already collectivized and the nearly 50% outside the kolkhozy? To the extent that this document is correct, and even if it understates the total number of protesters, it indicates that the vast majority of Soviet peasants, some 95% based on the data in this document, did not engage in protests against collectivization. In this way, in other words, this key document actually supports Viola's point that resistance was 'likely a small part' of a continuum of societal responses to Soviet policies.
…Even in regions where protests were more widespread, with few exceptions protests involved a small minority of villages, and even of peasants in many rebellious villages.
Tauger, Mark. "Soviet Peasants and Collectivization, 1930-39: Resistance and Adaptation." In Rural Adaptation in Russia by Stephen Wegren, Routledge, New York, NY, 2005, Chapter 3, p. 71-72

As noted above, my argument is not to deny that resistance took place, but to deny that it was the only or even the main peasant response to circumstances in these years: such resistance as did occur must be understood accurately and in context.
Tauger, Mark. "Soviet Peasants and Collectivization, 1930-39: Resistance and Adaptation." In Rural Adaptation in Russia by Stephen Wegren, Routledge, New York, NY, 2005, Chapter 3, p. 84

STALIN SAYS SON DOESN'T ANSWER FOR THE FATHER WITH REGARD TO KULAKS & WHITES

Stalin again presented himself as a peasant's advocate when, during a Kremlin conference of combine drivers in December 1935, one of them complained that the local authorities hadn't wanted to send him to Moscow to attend the conference because he was the son of a kulak. That was when Stalin said: "The son doesn't answer for the father." Soon afterward, his Central Committee headquarters sternly–on Pravda's front page –overruled the refusal of a Machine Tractor Station deputy director for political matters to permit a young collective farm woman to take a tractor drivers course on the ground that she was the daughter of a deported kulak. The accompanying editorial pointed out that following Stalin's just-quoted statement, the government, on 29 December 1935, had repealed restrictions on entry into higher education or vocational schools on grounds of social origin or parents' deprivation of rights. All citizens, irrespective of social origin, had an equal right to education.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 329

STALIN WANTS TOUGHER LAWS ON STEALING BY KULAKS

[In a letter to Kaganovich and Molotov on 20 July 1932 Stalin stated] Recently there has been an increase in the frequency, first of all, of thefts of freight on railroads (the thefts amount to tens of millions of rubles), and secondly, of thefts of property belonging to cooperatives and collective farms. The thefts are mostly organized by kulaks (dekulakized persons) and other antisocial elements who are trying to undermine our new system. Under the law these gentlemen are viewed as common thieves, they get two or three years in prison (nominally!), but in reality they are amnestied 6 to 8 months later. This kind of procedure with regard to these gentlemen, which cannot be called socialist, merely encourages what is essentially their real counterrevolutionary "work." It is unthinkable to

continue tolerating this situation. I propose that we promulgate a law (while withdrawing or repealing current laws) that would:
a) confer the same status on railroad freight, collective-farm property and cooperative property as on state property
b) make the theft (or stealing) of property in the above-mentioned categories punishable by a minimum of 10 years' imprisonment, and as a rule, by death;
c) revoke the use of amnesty for criminals in such "professions."
Without these (and similar) Draconian socialist measures, it is impossible to establish a new social discipline, and without such discipline, it is impossible to uphold and strengthen our new system. We must not delay, it seems to me, the promulgation of such a law.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 164

[In a letter to Kaganovich and Molotov on 24 July 1932 Stalin stated] If there are any objections to my proposal on promulgating a law against the theft of cooperative and collective-farm property and freight on transport, give the following explanation. Capitalism could not have smashed feudalism, it would not have developed and solidified if it had not declared the principle of private property to be the foundation of capitalist society and if it had not made private property sacred property, with any violation of its interest strictly punished and with the creation of its own state to protect it. Socialism will not be able to finish off and bury capitalist elements and individualistic, self-seeking habits, practices, and traditions (which are the basis of theft) that shake the foundations of the new society unless it declares public property (belonging to cooperatives, collective farms or the state) to be sacred and inviolable. It cannot strengthen and develop the new system and socialist construction, unless it protects the property of collective farms, cooperatives, and the state with all its might, unless it prevents antisocial, capitalist-kulak elements from stealing public property. That is why a new law is needed. We don't have such a law.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 166

[In a letter to Kaganovich on 26 July 1932 Stalin stated] I think it would be more expedient to combine in a single law the issue of protecting the collective-farm and cooperative property and railroad freight with the issue of protecting the collective farms themselves, i.e., combating the elements that use violence and threats or preach the use of violence and threats to collective farmers in order to make them quit the collective farms, in order to bring about the forcible destruction of the collective farms. The law can be broken down into three sections, of which the first section will cover railroad freight and water-transport cargo with the respective punishments specified, the second section will cover collective-farm and cooperative property with the respective punishments, and the third section will cover the protection of the collective farms themselves from acts of violence and threats by kulaks and other antisocial elements, and will specify that crimes in such cases, i.e. in the latter cases, will be punishable by imprisonment for 5 to 10 years, with subsequent confinement in a concentration camp for three years and without the possibility of amnesty. I think that on all three of these points we must act on the basis of a law ("the peasant loves legality"), and not merely in accordance with the practice of the OGPU, although it is clear that the OGPU's role here will not only not diminish but, on the contrary, it will be strengthened and "ennobled" (the OGPU agencies will operate "on a lawful basis" rather than "high-handedly").

…As for the struggle against profiteers and resellers both at bazaars and markets and in the countryside, what is needed here is a special law (here, too, it will be better to operate on the basis of a law) that, while referring to the previous law on collective-farm trade, which points to the eradication of resellers and profiteers, will order OGPU agencies to exile profiteers and resellers to a concentration camp for five to eight years without the possibility of amnesty.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 169

COLLECTIVES MADE MANY MISTAKES AT FIRST AND HAD LOTS OF KULAK SABOTAGE

But the progress of the collective-farm movement was so far to be measured in breath rather than in-depth: the collective farms were increasing in number and were spreading to district after district, but there was no commensurate improvement in the work of the collective farms or in the skill of their personnel. This was due to the fact that the growth of the leading cadres and trained personnel of the collective farms was not keeping pace with the numerical growth of the collective farms themselves. The consequence was that the work of the new collective farms was not always satisfactory, and the collective farms themselves were still weak. They were also held back by the shortage in the countryside of literate people indispensable to the collective farms (bookkeepers, stores managers, secretaries, etc.), and by the inexperience of the peasants in the management of large-scale collective enterprises. The collective farmers were the individual peasants of yesterday; they had experience in farming small plots of land, but none in managing big, collective farms. This experience could not be acquired in a day….
The first stages of collective farm work were consequently marred by serious defects. It was found that work was still badly organized in the collective farms; labor discipline was slack. In many collective farms the income was distributed not by the number of work-day-units, but by the number of mouths to feed in the family. It often happened that slackers got a bigger return than conscientious hard-working collective farmers. These defects in the management of collective farms lowered the incentive of their members. There were many cases of members absenting themselves from work even at the height of the season, leaving part of the crops unharvested until the winter snows, while the reaping was done so carelessly that large quantities of grain were lost. The absence of individual responsibility for machines and horses and for work generally, weakened the collective farms and reduced their revenues….
The situation was particularly bad wherever former kulaks and their toadies had managed to worm their way into collective farms and to secure positions of trust in them. Not infrequently former kulaks would betake themselves to districts where they were unknown, and there make their way into the collective farms with the deliberate intention of sabotaging and doing mischief. Sometimes, owing to lack of vigilance on the part of Party workers and Soviet officials, kulaks managed to get into collective farms even in their own districts. What made it easier for former kulaks to penetrate into the collective farms was that they had radically changed their tactics. Formerly the kulaks had fought the collective farms openly, had savagely persecuted collective farm leading cadres and foremost collective farmers, nefariously murdering them, burning down their houses and farms. By these methods they had thought to intimidate the peasantry and to deter them from joining the collective farms. Now that their open struggle against the collective farms had failed, they changed their

tactics. They laid aside their sawn-off shotguns and posed as innocent, unoffending folk who would not hurt a fly. They pretended to be loyal Soviet supporters. Once inside the collective farms they stealthily carried on their sabotage. They strove to disorganize the collective farms from within, to undermine labor discipline and to muddle the harvest accounts and the records of work performed. It was part of their sinister scheme to destroy the horses of the collective farms by deliberately infecting them with glanders, mange and other diseases, or disabling them by neglect or other methods, in which they were often successful. They did damage to tractors and farm machinery….
The kulaks were often able to deceive the collective farmers and commit sabotage with impunity because the collective farms were still weak and their personnel still inexperienced.
Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Ed. History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks): Short Course. Moscow: FLPH, 1939, p. 315

PARTY LEADERS OF COLLECTIVES SUCCUMB TO BAD KULAK INFLUENCE AND DO BAD THINGS

“The village Party and Young Communist organization,” declared Kaganovich in January 1933, “including the groups in state farms and machine-tractor stations, frequently lack revolutionary feeling and vigilance. In many places they not only do not oppose this anti-soviet work of hostile elements with class alertness and an everyday Bolshevik drive to strengthen soviet influence over the broad non-Party masses of the collective farmers and state farm-workers, but they themselves sometimes fall under the influence of these sabotaging elements; and some members of the Party, who entered for careerist purposes, line up with the enemies of the collective and state farms and the Soviet Government, and join with them in organizing thieving of seed at sowing time, grain at harvesting and threshing time, hiding grain in secret granaries, sabotaging state grain purchases, and really draw certain collective farms, groups of kolkhozniks and backward workers of state farms into the struggle against the soviet power. It is particularly true of state farms, where frequently the directors, under the influence of anti-soviet elements, undergo a bourgeois degeneration, sabotage the tasks set by the Soviet Government, enter upon out and out treachery to the Party and Government, and attempt to dispose of state farm products as if they were their own personal property.”
But with no less characteristic Bolshevist persistence, the occasion was taken to intensify the campaign, so as to ensure that 1933 and 1934 should see better results than 1931 or 1932. It was recognized, and frankly confessed, that a serious error had been made, often owing to the mistaken zeal of local agents, in making successive levies on the successful kolkhosi, when these were found in possession of unexpectedly large crops. Many peasants had lost confidence in the government’s financial measures, always fearing that the results of their labors would be taken away from them. Hence the whole system was changed. The Government relinquished all right to take produce by contract any more than by requisition. Henceforth nothing more was to be exacted from the collective farms by way of agricultural tax (apart from the agreed payment for the use of the tractors) than the one official levy of grain, meat, milk, and other produce, definitely fixed in advance, in exact proportion so far as arable produce was concerned, to the normal harvest on the number of hectares that had to be sown and weeded and reaped. Similar assessments were made for other produce. However great might prove to be the yield, the government would claim no more. Even if a larger area were sown than had been required, the government pledged itself not to increase

its demand upon the zealous kolkhos. As soon as this definitely fixed levy had been paid for the whole district, each kolkhos was to be free to sell the surplus to outsiders as it pleased; even to selling it, in the open market, to the highest bidder. At the same time the whole organization was drastically overhauled. Many hundreds of local officials were, during 1932, found guilty of gross neglect, or wanton mishandling of machinery, stores, and crops. These were severely reprimanded and in many cases dismissed from office. Hundreds of the worst offenders were sentenced to imprisonment, and at least several dozens to be shot. The members of the kolkhosi themselves, including the managers and accountants, were also faithfully dealt with. What was most difficult to cope with was the deplorable general sullenness, in which many, and sometimes most, of the peasants had ceased to care whether or not the normal harvest was reaped. Where the plowing had been only feebly performed; the weeding left undone; and the scanty growing grain filched from the fields by night, the whole kolkhos was drastically shaken up; the most guilty of the sabotagers, often ex-kulaks, were expelled; the negligent managers and peasant accountants were dismissed from office; collective farms which had willfully neglected or refused to till the land were sternly refused relief when they found themselves without food, so as not to encourage further recusancy; and in some of the worst cases the inhabitants of whole villages, if only in order to save them from starvation, were summarily removed from the land that they had neglected or refused to cultivate, and deported elsewhere, to find laboring work of any sort for bare maintenance. It is not denied that in these summary removals, as in those of individual kulaks who had refused to conform to the government's requirements, great hardship was inflicted on a large number of women and children, as well as on the men. Without such costs in suffering, it is argued, the rapid reorganization of peasant agriculture, which seemed the only practicable means of solving the problem of the national food supply, could not have been affected.
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, p. 207

Because the early collective farms had been organized spontaneously–that is, without Moscow's direct supervision or the guiding force of the party and proletariat–they were vulnerable to class alien influences. The lack of central control in the collectivization campaign spanning the summer and fall of 1929 and the problems associated with the cadre crisis had led to this.
Viola, Lynne. The Best Sons of the Fatherland. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1987, p. 32

IN EARLY COLLECTIVIZATION CENTER UNLEASHED FORCES AND LOST CONTROL

The center was both all-powerful and completely helpless. It was confounded in its every step by the realities of fortress storming in rural Soviet Russia. In its rapid drive to collectivize agriculture, the center had unleashed a storm upon the countryside; it could not as easily rein in the forces as it had unleashed them.
Viola, Lynne. The Best Sons of the Fatherland. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1987, p. 89

From 1928 to 1933 bureaucrats and peasants waged one of the most grandiose class-conflicts human history has known. It was complicated by struggles between bureaucracy and proletariat, between Communist bureaucrats and non-Party technicians,

and lastly by an internal struggle between the various sections of the Communist bureaucracy. One can say that the Five-Year Plan, as it was carried out, represented to a certain extent the expression of a terrifying conflict between all classes and all social groups of modern Russia. Stalin's victory was a solution by means of the average, as it were, the resultant of all of the social forces at work. Stalin was the product of the events more than he was their cause.
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 90

SOVIET GOVT CRACKS DOWN ON KULAKS DESTROYING LIVESTOCK

Finally, on 16 Jan 1930, the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR issued the decree "On Measures of Struggle with the Rapacious Destruction of Livestock." This decree was issued in response to the wholesale waves of slaughters and sales of livestock which occurred in this period as peasants attempted to avoid classification as a kulak. The decree entitled district soviet executive committees to arrest, expropriate, and exile kulaks guilty of the destruction of livestock….
Viola, Lynne. The Best Sons of the Fatherland. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1987, p. 96

He [Stalin] accused the kulaks, as a class, of living off the fat of the land, and of hoarding grain for themselves at the expense of the nation. Five million of them were dispossessed; the kulaks' vengeful response was to slaughter their livestock. Mass deportation to Siberia ensued as punishment, and any active resistance was met with the same sentence. The carnage included the slaughter of 14 million cattle, one third of the nation's pigs, and a quarter of its sheep and goats.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 120

APPEARS LOCAL PEASANTS RATHER THAN THE RED ARMY CRUSHED MOST KULAK REVOLTS

There is scant evidence with which to judge the degree of Red Army involvement in crushing anti-collective farm resistance, but it appears that in most cases the revolts were suppressed by local forces (including OGPU forces) or fizzled out on their own with the collapse of the collective farm.
Viola, Lynne. The Best Sons of the Fatherland. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1987, p. 125

STAIN WAS NOT THE CAUSE OF THE COLLECTIVIZATION EXCESSES

If this interval [May to October 1929] he was directing from behind the scenes the early phase of the vast agrarian upheaval that soon was to engulf Russia, no evidence to this effect has turned up in the extensive and relatively forthright post-Stalin scholarship in the Soviet Union on the subject of collectivization. This research generally has not attempted to protect Stalin's reputation, and for a time even sought to emphasize his responsibility for the 'excesses' of the campaign. What has come out of Soviet research is a substantial body of evidence that the enthusiasm for collectivization and the destruction of the kulaks had generated considerable momentum on the lower levels before Stalin visibly attempted to intervene in the administration of the campaign. Part of this revitalized radical trend seems to have derived from the lower levels of party membership, among people whose zest for class

war probably had been encouraged by Stalin's pronouncements but was not simply his creation. Then there was the class hatred of the poor peasants for the relatively well-all ones, a potent force that cannot be discounted merely because Soviet historians have emphasized it excessively. An added factor in the intensification of the conflict was the active and not infrequently violent resistance by kulaks to collectivizers, who were often erstwhile factory workers.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 124

There is no reason to believe that Stalin in June 1929 compelled the state agency 'Kolkhoztsentr' (Collective Farm Center) to decide that it was necessary drastically to increase the goal of the Five-Year Plan for collectivization, embracing seven or 8 million families in 1930 alone. Nor that Stalin was involved in the decision of the Khoper district, a large area in the former Don Cossack land, to declare that they would achieve complete collectivization by the end of the plan period. Nor is it plausible to attribute directly to Stalin the eviction of a substantial number of kulak families from their farms during 1929, which is to say before he had announced the drive to 'liquidate the kulaks as a class'. Yet the best Soviet study on the subject estimates that about 30,000 families or over 200,000 people were evicted in 1929.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 125

Thus in November 1929, when Stalin decided to break his silence concerning the agrarian upheaval, a strong radical movement already was in motion, involving elements of the peasantry, middle-level party officialdom and the central administration of the state. On the anniversary of the October Revolution, an occasion associated with class warfare, Stalin applauded this upsurge. The year 1929, he said, taking stock of the changes of the few months preceding, was 'a year of great change'. He called for an end to the retreat that was embodied in the New Economic Policy and for a resumption of the attack on capitalist elements in both industry and agriculture. But he was non-committal on the extent and nature of collectivization in the immediate future and on the fate of the kulaks.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 125

Since he [Stalin] did not choose to intervene in this debate, the resolutions that emerged from it were generally enthusiastic about the socialization of agriculture, but did not settle the question of tempo. Some passages spoke of various organizational measures, such as the establishment of a central school for collective farm organizers or the building of tractor factories, which seemed to imply a relatively long-term approach to the transition. However, the decision of the committee at this time to send 25,000 industrial workers into the countryside within a few months to push collectivization seemed to imply a frantic campaign. So did some of the rhetoric of the resolution, particularly a favorable reference to 'complete collectivization of entire districts', marking 'a new stage, a new phase in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism'.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 126

Such ambiguous marching orders invited confusion among the middle-and lower-level party officials and the disruption of agriculture. Even by the time of the Central Committee session, and especially in its wake, there was increasing evidence that chaos was brewing. On the one hand, radical zealots on the lower levels were in many areas deciding on their own to push for a high level of collectivization within a year or less. For example, at the opening of

December 1929 the party leadership of the vast Lower Volga region decided to aim at 80% collectivization by the spring of 1930 and 100% by the autumn. Fearing expropriation of the recent harvest by grain procurement teams, and incipient collectivization, many of the more prosperous peasants resisted the authorities by non–co-operation, and sometimes violence.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 126

On 15 December 1929, the Politburo concluded that the situation could not be allowed to drift any longer, that some order had to be imposed on an agrarian transformation that had departed entirely from the moderate goals of the plan and threatened not only agricultural production but the very existence of the regime…. In any case, there is no evidence that Stalin acted unilaterally or imposed his will on a reluctant Politburo. Had he been high-handed in this matter, Soviet historians of the early 1960s would have been quick to use this to bolster their argument that he and not the party was responsible for the 'excesses' in the early 1930s.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York : New York University Press, 1988, p. 127

Soviet historians who were allowed to sift the archives to construct this narrative deserve credit for beginning the illumination of the vast suffering and economic dislocation engendered by the crash campaign of collectivization in 1929-30. But they were supposed to demonstrate that the wisdom and rectitude of the party was never tarnished, that the 'excesses' were Stalin's responsibility. The distinction between the good ongoing institution and the fallible transitory leader is a familiar apologia in the history of many institutions in the world. But with respect to Stalin and the 'excesses' of rapid collectivization it does not bear examination. Although the Soviet historians tried to saddle him with responsibility for making rash changes in the resolution of 5 January 1930, transforming a prudent and humane plan into a drastic and excessive one, the evidence that they present scarcely sustains this contention. True, Stalin revised the schedule for the collectivization of 'the overwhelming majority of collective farms', as provided by the commission's draft, but his changes were slight, and not always in favor of higher goals. For example, the Lower Volga region was to be collectivized by the autumn of 1930 according to the draft. Stalin changed this to read 'the autumn of 1930, or at any rate the spring of 1931', a reduction of tempo, if anything. For the Middle Volga and North Caucasus he changed the target from 'Spring 1931' to 'autumn 1930 or Spring 1931', which merely raised the possibility of an increase in tempo.
Stalin was criticized in the 1960s for removing from the draft of the resolution an article that exhorted the lower officials not to treat the drive 'with the excitement of a sporting event', replacing collectivist spirit from below with bureaucratiism. But the same sentiment ended up in condensed form in the published version as the parting shot of the whole decree. As his latter-day Soviet critics asserted, Stalin did delete an article that permitted the collectivized household to retain some animals and implements. But this was merely an attempt to delay a decision on a disputed point until the commission on the draft statutes of the collective farm could reach a conclusion. In it's draft statutes published in March 1930, no doubt with Stalin's approval, the right to possess such modest capital was restored.
The fate of five or 6 million kulaks, as their number was estimated by the commission, raised such complexities that the commission could not agree on any formulation. There were, however, no tender hearts among these committed Bolsheviks, and Stalin was well within the limits of commission opinion went on 27 December he delivered his famous address 'On Questions of Agrarian Policy in the USSR' to a conference of some 300 Marxist students of the agrarian problem. The party, he announced, had passed from the policy of restricting the

exploiting tendencies of the kulaks to the policy of eliminating the kulaks as a class'. The same violent phrase appeared in the party decree of 5 January 1930, and this double authority of the General Secretary and Central Committee may well have accounted for much of the chaotic, destructive, sometimes deadly attack on peasant families deemed by somebody to be kulaks. Stalin did not add any detailed instructions on the handling of the elimination of kulaks, nor their disposition after they had been stripped of their possessions. In late December 1929 and early January 1930 he was aware that the commission had been unable to reach agreement on this topic, and evidently he did not want to settle it on his own responsibility. But the matter could not wait, for there were widespread attacks on alleged kulaks. Thus on 15 January the Politburo appointed Molotov to head a new commission that included many of the members of the previous one. By the 26th, they had prepared a decree entitled 'On the Means for the Liquidation of Kulak Farms in Areas of Complete Collectivization', which the Politburo passed on the 30th.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 128

By the time the decree on the deportation of kulaks appeared at the end of January the Soviet countryside was in a state of calamitous and violent chaos as peasants, willing and unwilling, were enrolled in collective farms, real and fictitious. The most prosperous 15-20% were swept from their homes, their possessions transferred with great wastage to the new collectives. As early as 30 January Stalin showed some apprehension concerning excessive rates of collectivization, wiring orders to Central Asia to reject the request of local authorities for permission to complete the collectivization of 32 districts. This was 'mistaken', he said. His telegraphic order was to 'advance the cause of collectivization to the extent that masses really involved.'. In early February his office ordered the Moscow region to cease the deportation of kulaks. This measure had been ordered only for regions of complete collectivization, which did not include Moscow. By the opening of March he had concluded that some degree of order and relaxation was essential before the spring planting if crop failure were to be avoided in 1930. His relative moderation owed something to the fact that he was the person best placed to learn of the destruction and disorder that collectivization was inflicting on the Soviet countryside. Stalin received weekly reports from the information section of the Central Committee, based on regional offices, and about 50,000 letters from the populace in general, which his staff presumably summarized for him. On this basis, he concluded that a pause was necessary, and on 2 March he published in Pravda, over his own name, the famous short article 'Dizzy with Success'. While praising the great 'achievements' of the campaign, he called for consolidation rather than expansion of collectivization and sharply criticized violations of the voluntary character of the process and such excesses as the socialization of poultry and the removal of church bells.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 130

It is customary to say that Stalin's article 'Dizzy with Success.' was hypocritical in blaming lower officials for their own excessive enthusiasm for collectivization. The point has some merit. Stalin's general encouragement of renewed class war in 1928-29 had contributed to the stimulation of zest for the agrarian debacle of 1929-30. By approving the party decree of 5 January 1930 on the tempo of collectivization he contributed to the chaotic and destructive events of the next two months. But the evidence does not sustain the notion that a single dictator was forcing his program on a hierarchy of reluctant or intimidated officials. Stalin was slow to commit himself to any specific program of agrarian transformation, even though an increasingly ardent radical movement was in progress. Even after he threw his support

behind rapid collectivization and dekulakization his main role was to approve the plans that his colleagues on the commissions quickly put together. And in March, when the resulting possibility of economic disaster faced the regime, Stalin was ahead of the Politburo in calling for temporary retreat.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 130

This is not to conclude that Stalin was an innocent bystander to the waste and carnage of the time, nor that he was moderate in his conception of class war. But opposing political camps have unwittingly conspired to sustain the conclusion that Stalin was the main force behind collectivization. First the Stalinists, pretending that collectivization was a great triumph for socialism, credited it to their all-wise leader. The anti-Communists, more realistically treating collectivization as a human and economic disaster, agreed that it was his personal work, a great crime. After his death they were gratified to find Soviet historians, agreeing that the 'excesses' of collectivization were Stalin's fault. But the substantial evidence provided by Soviet research actually presents a more complex case. What emerges is a Stalin, who was at this stage of his career a 'chairman of the board', delegating most of the crucial work to commissions, listening to opposing viewpoints and acting to cut his losses when it appeared that the program was headed for disaster.
In the party the decision to pause and allow unwilling peasants to withdraw from the collective farms produced a serious wave of indignation among lower officials. Some of this anger was directed at Stalin for passing the blame for 'excesses' onto the lower echelons. But the main grievance, which was widespread, was simply that the leadership had interrupted and retarded the process of collectivization. In one district, for example, Stalin's article was treated as 'a retreat to capitalism.'; in another as 'a backward step in the rates and methodology of collective farm construction…crawling to the policy of the Right wing'. This was the most persuasive of all evidence that Stalin had not invented and foisted on a passive or unwilling bureaucracy the policies of class war and collectivization. His article of 3 April, 'Reply to the Collective Farm Comrades', tried to placate some of the irate zealots. Stalin addressed 10 questions that, he said, had been raised in a number of inquiries addressed to him by 'practical workers', meaning organizers, in the collective farm movement. First he asserted that the main error had been that the movement at some point 'began imperceptibly to slip from the path of struggle against the kulaks onto the path of struggle against the middle peasant'. Then he went on to deny that the turn to moderation was 'a step backwards, a retreat', as some of his incoming mail, no doubt said it was. This explanation, and other official publications, was not enough to eliminate the possibility that the 16th Party Congress, scheduled for 15 June 1930, might be marred by protests from the zealots, so it was postponed for 10 days.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 131

COLLECTIVIZATION HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL

December 16, 1933–in the latter respect it is noteworthy that the proportion of wheat in this year's collections is half as large again as that of last year.
This result fully justifies the optimism expressd to me by local authorities during my September trip through the Ukraine and North Caucasus–optimism that contrasted so strikingly with the famine stories then current in Berlin, Riga, Vienna and other places, where

elements hostile to the Soviet Union were making an 11th hour attempt to avert American recognition by picturing the Soviet Union as a land of ruin and despair.
Second, it is a triumph for Joseph Stalin's bold solution a year ago of the collective farm management problem–namely, the establishment of political sections in the tractor stations, a step that future historians cannot fail to regard as one of the major political moves in the Soviet Union's second decade.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 324

Collectivization is nevertheless Stalin's life's achievement, and probably his greatest. It solved Russia's age-long agrarian problem. Collectivization prevented hostile economic forces from springing ever anew from the soil of the countryside to attack the Soviet economic system.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 195

In a December 5, 1929, letter to Molotov Stalin stated, "The collective farm movement is growing by leaps and bounds. Of course there are not enough machines and tractors–how could it be otherwise?–but simply pooling the peasant tools results in a colossal increase in sown acreage (in some regions by as much as 50 percent!)…. The eyes of our rightists are popping out of their heads in amazement…."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 183

In four earth-shaking years, the Soviet Union changed from a country of tiny, badly tilled holdings, worked with wooden plow and hand sickle, to the largest scale farms in the world. The initiative was taken by the poorer peasants and farm hands, urged and organized by the Communists, and assisted by government credits and machines. When the five-year plan swiftly increased the farm machinery available, the new collective farm proved able to attract ever wider and wider groups of farmers. The movement was bitterly fought by the small rural capitalists known as kulaks, who farmed with hired labor, lived by money-lending, or owned small mills, threshers and other means of production and used these facilities to exploit their neighbors.
[Footnote]: Writers unacquainted with Russian rural life often confuse kulaks with peasants generally, which leads them to describe the whole collectivization movement as an attack on the peasants. But for half a century students of Russian rural districts have spoken of kulaks. In 1895 Stepniak wrote that "hard unflinching cruelty" was their main characteristic; in 1904 Wolf von Schierhand wrote of the kulak as a "usurer and oppressor in a peasant's blouse." In 1918 Dr. E. J. Dillon, in The Eclipse of Russia, said: "Of all the human monsters I have ever met in my travels, I cannot recall any so malignant and odious as the Russian kulak.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 178

But anyone in a position to compare a Russian farmstead of 1910 with one of 1930 must confess that the latter guarantees more of two all-important elements: human happiness and dignity.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 147

Despite all the bourgeoisie's hue and cry about the repression suffered by the rich peasants during the collectivization, in less than one decade, the Russian peasants left the Middle

Ages and joined the twentieth century. Their cultural and technical development was phenomenal.
This progress properly reflected the sustained rise in investment in agriculture. It increased from 379 million rubles in 1928, to 2,590 million in 1930, to 3,645 million in 1931, stayed at the same level for two years, reaching its highest levels at 4,661 million in 1934 and 4,983 million in 1935.
Charles Bettelheim. L'Economie sovietique (Paris: editions Recueil Sirey, 1950), p. 74.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 86 [p. 77 on the NET]

After the success of the collectivization of 1932–1933, Bukharin's defeatist theories were completely discredited.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 136 [p. 117 on the NET]

I heard incredible stories of the hopes raised among peasants by collectivization. With collectivization, technical civilization penetrated into the backward rural districts of Russia. Wireless and cinema came to villages that were without a school the day before; where the plough was still unknown and the earth was broken with the aid of the ancestral hoe, tractors made their appearance. The people were dazzled. Countless factories were rising, armies of tractors, cars, unheard-of agricultural machines were to make their appearance in the village, along with piles of artificial manure. Postal and telephone service, medical service, agrarian experts, machinery and tractor stations, all sorts of courses and schools were introduced. All this could not fail deeply to impress the creative instinct of the masses, to fan the ancient hope of a better life in those villages that had suffered so much during the NEP.
Ciliga, Ante. The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 100

COLLECTIVIZATION AND MODERNIZATION WERE DEFINITELY NEEDED

For, in 1928, the old-style Russian farming could not even feed the cities; it could never provide food for rapid industrialization or for expanding education and culture. Farming, along with industry, had to be modernized.
Russian peasants, in 1928, farmed by methods of the Middle Ages, methods that even went back to Bible times. They lived in villages and walked long distances to fields…. One-fourth of the peasants did not own a horse; less than half had a team of two horses or oxen. So plowing was seldom and shallow, often by homemade wooden plow, without a metal share. Sowing was by hand, the seed cast from an apron to the earth, where birds and winds carried much away….
Social life was equally medieval. The Old Man ruled the home. Sons married, brought their wives to the patriarchal homestead and worked the farm that their fathers still bossed. So farm practice remained old-fashioned, unchanged by young views. Much of it was determined by religion. Holy days fixed dates for sowing, religious processions sprinkled fields with holy water to insure fertility, rain was sought by processions and prayers. The ultra-pious regarded tractors as "devil machines"–priests actually led peasants to stone them. Any fight for modern farming thus became a fight "against religion."…
By 1928, the farms had recovered from war devastation; the total crops equaled those before the war. Far less grain, however, was reaching the cities.

Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 34

Life magazine said, March 29, 1943, in a special number: “Whatever the cost of farm collectivization…these large farm units…made possible the use of machinery…which doubled output…(and) released millions of workers for industry. Without them… Russia could not have built the industry that turned out the munitions that stopped the German army.”
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 46

They say Lenin would have accomplished collectivization with fewer victims. But how could it have been done any other way? I renounce none of it. We carried out collectivization relentlessly; our measures were absolutely correct.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 146

CHUEV: Some writers now argue that Stalin and Molotov declared they would not rush ahead with collectivization, but as a matter of fact they…
MOLOTOV: We couldn’t have delayed it any longer. Fascism was emerging. Soon it would have been too late. War was already looming on the horizon.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 245

I believe our success in collectivization was more significant than victory in World War II. If we had not carried it through, we would not have won the war. By the start of the war we already had a mighty socialist state with its own economy, industry, and so forth.
I personally designated districts where kulaks were to be removed….
We exiled 400,000 kulaks. My commission did its job….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 248

Molotov asserts that the members of the former employing and exploiting classes are still numerous, a fact that is indisputable when we remember that there were millions of rich peasants exploiting hired labor in the Soviet Union in 1928, in addition to millions of merchants and shopkeepers.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 139

This was a crisis in grain farming which was bound to be followed by a crisis in livestock farming….
The only escape from the predicament was a change to large-scale farming which would permit the use of tractors and agricultural machines and secure a several-fold increase of the marketable surplus of grain. The country had the alternative: either to adopt large-scale capitalist farming, which would have meant the ruin of the peasant masses, destroyed the alliance between the working-class and the peasantry, increased the strength of the kulaks, and led to the downfall of Socialism in the countryside; or to take the course of amalgamating the small peasant holdings into large Socialist farms, collective farms, which would be able to use tractors and other modern machines for a rapid advancement of grain farming and a rapid increase in the marketable surplus of grain.
Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Ed. History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks): Short Course. Moscow: FLPH, 1939, p. 287

Land redistribution greatly multiplied the number of small-farm holders till they aggregated 25 million by 1928. Although possessed of land and relieved of rents they did not prosper, for in fact they had no more land to use than under the Czar. They produced no more. The government in consequence failed to get grain for export or to feed the cities properly. Their own area had not increased under the new system and the small farmers had proved to be less efficient producers than the landlords. Thus the proletarian dictatorship faced a serious crisis created by the peasants.
It met it by decreeing what it had hitherto avoided, the extensive socialization of agriculture. Not that Marxianism did not require it, but a situation dominated by peasants had been too difficult. Now, however, action was imperative. As Stalin put it, they could not continue part socialistic and part capitalistic. The individualistic peasant had to be proletarianized or the revolution lost. So the Five-year Plan was launched with agricultural reconstruction as its most audacious and difficult task.
Davis, Jerome. The New Russia. New York: The John Day company, c1933, p. 54

We have no wish to minimize, still less to seek to justify, this ruthless expropriation and removal of the occupiers and cultivators who were stigmatized as kulaks, any more than we do the equally ruthless expulsion, little over a century ago, of the crofters from so much of the Scottish Highlands, or the economic ruin of so many small-holders that accompanied the statutory enclosure of the English commons. The policy of compulsorily substituting sheep-runs and large farms for tiny holdings may have been economically sound in the one case as in the other. The Soviet Government may well have been right in concluding that only by a wide-spread amalgamation of the independent peasants holdings could any general mechanization of agriculture be made practicable; and that only by such mechanization could the aggregate production of foodstuffs be made equal to the nation's requirements. In fact, the partial failure of crops in 1931 and 1932 (though, as we have already explained, far removed from anything to be properly called a famine) brought many thousands of small peasants within reach of actual starvation; and it may well have seemed that, in these cases at any rate, nothing but removal could save them from death at the next failure of crops, or even before the next harvest. It is, indeed, not so much the policy of removal that is open to criticism, as the manner in which it appears to have been carried out, and the unsatisfactory conditions of life into which the victims seem to have been, without judicial trial or any effective investigation, arbitrarily deported.
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, p. 471

FOR SOCIALISM KOLKHOZES MUST EVOLVE INTO SOVKHOZES

…the kolkhozes [collective farms] must evolve so as heighten the very level of socialization, that is, to be transformed into sovkhozes [state farm's]. There is no other way. That was stated by Marx, Engels, and Lenin.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 252

STATE FARMS CHANGED INTO SOVKHOZ AND PRIVATE FARMS INTO KOLKHOZES

So, whilst the large unoccupied estates were transformed into sovkhoz or pure and simple State farms, the private individual exploitations must be changed into kolkhoz, or co-operative farms.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 220

STALIN FAVORS THE ARTEL FORM OF KOLKHOZ RATHER THAN THE COMMUNE

There are two forms of kolkhoz: the Commune and the Artel.
In the commune, the kolkhosians own the entire concern in common, but that is all that they do possess, and they live in communities. In the Artel, each kolkhosian has his own house, his own farmyard and, if necessary, his own cow; he retains private ownership of a very small portion of the vast area whose cultivation he shares in other respects with the others. The Artel form is the one which Stalin very strongly recommends. “Concessions! NEP! Abandonment of socialism!” people cried, or wanted to cry.
But wait one moment. Socialism, contrary to the legend which those to do not wish to know the truth spread about among those who are ignorant, was not invented just to annoy people, and to pursue them perpetually with cries of “You must!” like a creditor, but, quite on the contrary, to get them out of a mess. Its object is by no means arbitrarily to deprive every man and every woman of everything that gives them satisfaction and thus to make them pay too dearly, by personal restrictions, for the political equality, the social justice, and the security of livelihood which it brings them. Restriction on private property is not an end in itself, but a means of arriving at the state which is much more advantageous, everything concerned, for everyone. It is not a question of multiplying these restrictions indiscriminately, but of reducing them to the necessary minimum. The means of production are to be socialized, so let us socialize them. And then what?
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 223-224

STALIN SAYS THE APPEARANCE OF VILLAGES HAS BEEN IMPROVED GREATLY

The appearance of the villages has also changed. Stalin has said: “The old village, dominated by its church, and with the fine houses of the chief of police, the priest, and the kulak in the foreground, and its tumbledown mud huts in the background, is beginning to disappear. In its place the new village is springing up, with its public and economic service buildings, its clubs, its wireless station, its cinema, its schools, its libraries and its nurseries; with its tractors, it’s reaping-machines, its threshing-machines, and its motor-cars. The old silhouettes of the notables, the slave-driving kulak, the blood-sucking usurer, the produce-speculator, the ‘little father’–the chief of police–have all disappeared. The notables, nowadays, are the men of the kolkhoz and of the sovkhoz, of the schools and the clubs, the foremen tractor- and reaping- machine-drivers, the chiefs of the shock-brigades for work in the fields and for breeding, the best brigandiers, male and female, of the kolkhosian village.”
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 229

FARMS GIVEN TO MILLIONS OF PEASANTS IN 1933

Dec. 24th, 1933 was suitably chosen for a lavish gift to millions of peasants. When their holdings were originally grouped into collective farms, the State had issued loans to the collective farmers which had since become a millstone around the farmers' necks. Now, all loans issued before 1933 and not yet repaid were simply wiped out. "Such benevolence only Comrade Stalin has shown," said the papers. "Such a step could only have been taken in the Soviet Union where the workers are the ceaseless and supreme concern of the Party and the Government."
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 280

One of the early signs of the new direction was that rationing was abolished (Nov. 26, 1934). This was decreed direct from the Communist Party, which could not have done it unless it had been in a position to do it. But the most material changes were mainly focused on the peasantry. It began with a remission of arrears of taxes (December 11, 1933), significantly enough for districts closest to the Far East frontier, but this was soon extended to the whole country (Feb. 27, 1934).
By a most important decree of February 18, 1935, the peasants of the collective farms got a considerably greater share in the management of their own affairs, which brought them closer to the popular ideal of free agricultural co-operation. Their houses and kitchen gardens, as in the times of the Tsars, together with all household articles, were declared to be individual property; but besides that they were given allotments–very small, it is true–on which they could labor for their own profit. This was immensely popular;…
Individual property had to be the result of one's own work, but it was now recognized as property, including all earnings, and was guaranteed by the State. Earnings could be invested in the national savings banks, which very soon were full, and could also be bequeathed. Horses were regarded as means of production and therefore remained nationalized, but in principle every family was to possess a cow, and a large household two, if possible (it was just in the immediately preceding period of harsh legislation that all cattle had been socialized). Pigs, poultry, bees could be personal property.
One specially popular decree was that which declared that the limits of the domain of each collective farm could not be reduced. This the peasants regarded as satisfying their claim that the given holding belonged to these and to no other peasants–the principle which they had always maintained, and on which they had acted when they seized the squires' land in 1917. They looked upon it as their charter, and in many villages showed it with genuine pride to Sir John Russell.
Pares, Bernard. Russia. Washington, New York: Infantry Journal, Penguin books, 1944, p. 196

In May 1932, the grain procurement plan for 1932-33 was somewhat reduced, and free trade in grain was permitted, provided that deliveries to the state had been completed; and, a matter of considerable significance, the state control of prices on the markets was abolished. These and related measures became widely known at the time as "neo-NEP," though this characterization was vigorously rejected by the authorities.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 105

HOW DID COLLECTIVIZATION WORK

There have been many books describing this period, and telling just how and why the kulaks were being liquidated in this manner. The authors disagree considerably on many points, but I have combined the most plausible explanations together with what I saw for myself to give an idea of what actually happened.
In the previous chapter I have described this period as the Second Communist Revolution, and have said it was aimed principally at the small farmers, who had hung on to their small plots of land and small collections of domestic animals through the first Revolution. In 1917 and the years following, these small farmers had gladly helped the Communists to take away the land held by large landowners, because they were promised the privilege of dividing such lands among themselves, and that is what they had done.
When I came to Russia in 1928, there wasn't a single large land owner in the country except the state itself. The land was broken up into little plots, each cultivated by a small farmer and his family. The small farmers lived in villages together, often at some distance from their land, as they have done in Russia for centuries. You couldn't see in the length and breath of the country a single farm such as we have in America.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 74

In 1929, five years after Lenin's death, Soviet Russia embarked upon her second revolution, which was directed solely and exclusively by Stalin. In its scope and immediate impact upon the life of some 160 million people the second revolution was even more sweeping and radical than the first. It resulted in Russia's rapid industrialization; it compelled more than 100 million peasants to abandon their small, primitive holdings and to set up collective farms; it ruthlessly tore the primeval wooden plow from the hands of the muzhik and forced him to grasp the wheel of a modern tractor; it drove tens of millions of illiterate people to school and made them learn to read and write;….
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 294

Neither Lenin nor Stalin ever had any illusions that any single country, even one as vast and potentially rich as the Soviet Union, would ever be able to establish a stateless, classless society while capitalism still had power in the rest of the world. But Stalin, like Lenin, did believe that the Soviet Union could eliminate capitalism, industrialize, extend the power of the working class, and wipe out real material privation all during the period of capitalist encirclement.
To do this, Stalin held, the proletariat would have to rely on the peasantry. He rejected Trotsky scorn for the Russian peasants and saw them, rather than the European proletariat, as the only ally that could come to the immediate aid of the Russian workers.
When the Civil War ended, in 1921, with most of the Soviet Union in chaotic ruin, Lenin won a struggle against Trotsky within the Party to institute what was called the New Economic Policy (NEP), under which a limited amount of private enterprise based on trade was allowed to develop in both the cities and the countryside. NEP was successful in averting an immediate total catastrophe, but by 1925 it was becoming clear that this policy was also creating problems for the development of socialism. This brings us to the first great crux of the Stalin question.
We have been led to believe that in order to industrialize at any price, Stalin pursued a ruthless policy of forced collectivization, deliberately murdering several million peasants known as kulaks during the process. The truth is quite different.

When the Bolsheviks seized power, one of their first acts was to allow the poor peasants to seize the huge landed estates. The slogan was “Land to the tiller.” This, however, left most land in the form of tiny holdings, unsuited for large-scale agriculture, particularly the production of the vital grain crops. Under NEP, capitalism and a new form of landlordism began to flourish in the countryside. The class known as kulaks (literally “tight-fists”), consisting of usurers and other small capitalists including village merchants and rich peasants, were cornering the market in the available grain, grabbing more and more small holdings of land, and, through their debt holdings, forcing peasants back into tenant farming and wage labor. Somehow, the small peasant holdings had to be consolidated so that modern agriculture could begin. There were basically two ways this could take place: either through capitalist accumulation, as the kulaks were then doing, or through the development of large-scale socialist farms. If the latter, there was then a further choice: a rapid forced collectivization, or a more gradual process in which co-operative farms would emerge first, followed by collectives, and both would be on a voluntary basis, winning out by example and persuasion. What did Stalin choose? Here, in his own words is the policy he advocated and that was adopted at the 15th Party Congress, in 1927:

“What is the way out? The way out is to turn the small and scattered peasant farms into large united farms based on the cultivation of the land in common, to go over to collective cultivation of the land on the basis of a new and higher technique.

The way out is to unite the small and dwarf peasant farms gradually but surely, not by pressure, but by example and persuasion, into large farms based on common, co-operative, collective cultivation of the land with the use of agricultural machines and tractors and scientific methods of intensive agriculture.

There is no other way out.”

To implement this policy, the capitalist privileges allowed under NEP were revoked. This was known as the restriction of the kulaks. The kulaks, whose very existence as a class was thus menaced, struck back. They organized terrorist bands who attacked the co-operatives and collectives, burning down barns when they were filled with grain, devastating the fields, and even murdering Communist peasant leaders. Even more serious than these raids, the kulaks held back their own large supplies of grain from the market in an effort to create hunger and chaos in the cities. The poor and middle peasants struck back. Virtual open civil war began to rage throughout the countryside. As a collective farm movement spread rapidly, pressure mounted among the poor and middle peasants to put an end to landlordism and usury in the countryside for good. In 1929 Stalin agreed that the time had come to eliminate the kulaks as a class. He led the fight to repeal the laws that allowed the renting of land and the hiring of labor, thus depriving the kulaks both of land and of hired workers. The ban on expropriation of the large private holdings was lifted, and the peasants promptly expropriated the kulak class. The expropriation of the rural capitalist in the late 1920s was just as decisive as the expropriation of the urban capitalist a decade earlier. Landlords and village usurers were eliminated as completely as private factory owners. It is undoubtedly true that in many areas there was needless violence and suffering. But this did not originate with Stalin. It was the hour of Russia’s peasant masses, who had been degraded and brutalized for centuries and who had countless blood debts to settle with their oppressors. Stalin may have unleashed their fury, but he was not the one who had caused it to build up for centuries. In fact it was Stalin who checked the excesses generated by the enthusiasm of the collective movement. In early 1930 he published in Pravda “Dizzy with Success,” reiterating that “the voluntary principle” of the collective farm movement must under no circumstances be violated and that anybody who engages in forced collectivization objectively aids the

enemies of socialism. Furthermore, he argues, the correct form for the present time is the co-operative (known as the artel), in which “the household plots (small vegetable gardens, small orchards), the dwelling houses, a part of the dairy cattle, small livestock, poultry, etc., are not socialized.” Again, overzealous attempts to push beyond this objectively aid the enemy. The movement must be based on the needs and desires of the masses of peasants. Stalin’s decision about the kulaks perfectly exemplifies the limits under which he operated. He could decide, as he did, to end the kulaks as a class by allowing the poor and middle peasants to expropriate their land. Or he could decide to let the kulaks continue withholding their grain from the starving peasants and workers, with whatever result. He might have continued bribing the kulaks. But it is highly doubtful, to say the least, that he had the option of persuading the kulaks into becoming good socialists.

There can be no question that, whatever may be said about its cost, Stalin’s policy in the countryside resulted in a vast, modern agricultural system, capable, for the first time in history, of feeding all the peoples of the Soviet lands. Gone were the famines that seemed as inevitable and were as vicious as those of China before the revolution or of India today. Meanwhile, Stalin’s policy of massive industrialization was going full speed ahead. His great plan for a modern, highly industrialized Soviet Union has been so overwhelmingly successful that we forget that it was adopted only over the bitter opposition of most of the party leaders, who thought it a utopian and therefore suicidal dream. Having overcome this opposition on both the right and the “left,” Stalin in 1929 instituted the first five-year plan in the history of the world. It was quickly overfulfilled. By the early 1930s the Soviet Union had clearly become both the inspiration and the main material base area for the world revolution. And it was soon to prove much more than a match for the next military onslaught from the capitalist powers, which Stalin had predicted and armed against.

Franklin, Bruce, Ed. The Essential Stalin; Major Theoretical Writings. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p. 16-19

This was a profound revolution, a leap from an old qualitative state of society to a new qualitative state, equivalent in its consequences to the revolution of October 1917….

The distinguishing feature of this revolution is that it was accomplished from above, on the initiative of the state, and directly supported from below by the millions of peasants, who were fighting to throw off kulak bondage and to live in freedom in the collective farms.

Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Ed. History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks): Short Course. Moscow: FLPH, 1939, p. 305

SUCCESS OF COLLECTIVIZATION ENERVATED AND WEAKENED THE OPPOSITION

A lot has been said about the hardships of the Kulak during the period of collectivization. The Kulak had the opportunity of joining the collective farm. When he refused to do so and thus positively hindered collectivization, he was deported. The history of the Kulak money-lender is too full of brutality and mercilessness [committed by the kulaks] for one to waste sympathy on his hardships which he could have avoided.

…the Opposition leaders waited patiently for their turn, as Radek confessed at his trial, in the expectation that the Five-Year Plan would fail, involving the overthrow of Stalin.

The Five-Year Plan succeeded and the Second Five-Year Plan, accompanied by a series of bumper harvests, was already on the way when Kirov, the chief of the Leningrad Soviet, was

assassinated. In 1934 the mood of the country had changed. The former “neutrals,” who had been critical of the Stalin policy and resentful of privations, were now wholeheartedly on his side. Rationing was being abolished; light industry was turning out large quantities of consumable goods; the standard of life, in short, had risen and with it the popularity of Stalin himself. The assassination of Kirov seemed a desperate stroke aimed at a member of the Politburo which had been responsible for the country’s success. His assassin, Nikolayev, had been influenced by the Social Revolutionaries, but there were threads leading from his practice to the theories of the Opposition leaders. The strategic position was now reversed. Whereas, during the difficult years of the First Five-Year Plan, the Opposition had been waiting as a nucleus to seize on mass dissatisfaction as an opportunity for action, now that there was no discontent, they were leaders without even a potential following. This is extremely significant when one asks why at the Moscow Trials Zinoviev and Kamenev did not make a bold stand and invoke the support of the masses or send a message to them by declamation to the Press of the world.
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 214

The former political opposition had changed to organised violence. Having been defeated in the party referendum about the political line of the party, whereby the opposition got less than one per cent of the votes, the accused saw violence and a coup d’etat as the only possibility for grabbing the political power in the Soviet Union. The fantastic production results from the first five year plan and the collective farms had even more squeezed out those accused. The production results did not leave space any more for a political platform against the government.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

COLLECTIVIZATION WAS THE SECOND REVOLUTION AS IMPORTANT AS THE FIRST

The country was undergoing a second economic, social, and political revolution [via collectivization, the First Five-Year Plan, and industrialization].
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 22

From mid-1928, however, Stalin’s group ordered Communists throughout the continent to adopt the stance taken by the Bolsheviks in 1917. Extreme radicalism became dominant again and the Comintern, at the Politburo’s instigation, purged the doubters and vacillators,as well as the Trotskyists,from the ranks of its parties. World communism was being readied for the eminent revolutionary upheaval.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 261

SOVIET FARMING MORE SUCCESSFUL THAN CRITICS ARE WILLING TO ADMIT

Conclusion: the Diversity of Rural Responses to Collectivization

The “resistance interpretation” has dominated recent literature on peasants. These studies have made a valuable contribution by presenting and analyzing new evidence of some of the

peasants' responses to collectivization and related policies. According to the studies, the peasants resisted and tried to undermine the collective farm system, and the result was famine and failure. Yet these studies minimize or ignore the actual harvest data, the environmental factors that caused low harvests, the repeated recovery from the famine and crop failures, the large harvests of the 1930s, the mechanization of Soviet farms in these years, Soviet population growth, and the long-term increases in food production and consumption over the Soviet period. It is an overstatement to describe the Soviet agricultural system as a failure….
Tauger, Mark. "Soviet Peasants and Collectivization, 1930-39: Resistance and Adaptation." In Rural Adaptation in Russia by Stephen Wegren, Routledge, New York, NY, 2005, Chapter 3, p. 87.

SOVIETS DID NOT INTENTIONALLY PRODUCE BOGUS HARVEST STATISTICS

This paper employs new archival sources to examine the origins of the "biological yield" system of harvest estimates, considered one of the most notorious examples of Soviet statistical falsification, in light of harvest statistics in the United States and Germany in the early 20th century. It also argues that the Soviet Union's shift to the biological system took place in the midst of a crisis analogous to crises in the United States and German harvest statistics a few decades earlier. The Soviet regime, introduced this new system, I argue, not in order to falsify harvest information, but rather to respond to problems similar to those faced by United States and German statistical agencies. In particular, Soviet statisticians sought to overcome what they perceived as the persistent falsification of harvest projections by farmers and local officials–a pattern dating back to the beginning of the Soviet regime, if not earlier–and also to end disputes between state agencies over the harvest. The regime resorted to the "biological harvest" because statisticians saw it as a more accurate method of harvest projection on the basis of pre-revolutionary Russian precedents.
Tauger, Mark. "Statistical Falsification in the Soviet Union: a Comparative Case Study of Projections, Biases, and Trust." The Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington, 2001, p. 8

I argue below that in introducing the biological method in 1933, Soviet statisticians did not intend to create a system of falsification, but rather to overcome what they considered inherent inaccuracies and uncertainties in their pre-existing systems of harvest projections. These uncertainties derived from the fact that Soviet statisticians from 1918 onward had to rely on the peasants for their basic data on crop conditions and harvests. The statisticians assumed, in part on the basis of concrete evidence, that the peasants substantially understated their actual production because they feared that the estimates derived from their statements would serve as the basis for requisitions and, during the New Economic Policy, taxation. This distrust culminated in a series of efforts to transfer responsibility for estimating harvests from the farmers to the government in the early 1930s.
Tauger, Mark. "Statistical Falsification in the Soviet Union: a Comparative Case Study of Projections, Biases, and Trust." The Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington, 2001, p. 15.

SOVIET GOVT AIDED THE UKRAINE IN ITS TIME OF NEED IN 1928-29

In the end, grain procurements in Ukraine in 1928-29 greatly declined from previous years, totaling 1.59 million tons. Only about 1/10 of this, 171,389 tons, was sent outside of Ukraine. Ukraine received from other republics more than 320,000 tons of grain, in other words, nearly twice as much as the republic exported, and was authorized to use (from both internal and imported sources) some 520,000 tons of grain as seed, about two thirds of total seed loans for the entire Soviet Union.
Tauger, Mark. “Grain Crisis or Famine?” in Provincial Landscapes, Local Dimensions of Raleigh, Don. Soviet Power, 1917-1953, Univ. of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, Penn., 2001, Chapter 7, p. 157.

…the Ukrainian famine of 1928-29 resulted from a genuine decline in food availability and was not an “entitlement” famine due exclusively to market forces.
Second, the regime undertook a concerted relief effort to feed several hundred thousand peasants. By reaching fewer than 20% of the overall population in the crop-failure regions, it obviously did not include all those who needed food, evidenced by efforts of local personnel to stretch resources to aid more people than planned. Bureaucratic delays, unanticipated interventions by central Soviet authorities, and of course the crop failure itself all obstructed relief efforts; yet agencies and officials at all levels did respond rapidly and in an organized manner, and did do a reasonable job of setting targets they could meet and meeting targets they set. Among these targets were measures to increase farm production, which were frustrated not by peasant resistance in the form of reduced sowings–as noted, peasants actually sowed substantially larger areas in fall 1928 and spring 1929 than previously–but again by extreme weather conditions.
Third…as already noted, Ukraine received more in food supplies during this famine crisis than it exported to other republics…. Soviet authorities made substantial concessions to Ukraine in response to an undeniable natural disaster and transferred resources from Russia to Ukraine for food relief and agricultural recovery.
Many studies of the Soviet regime and the peasantry emphasize the punitive and exploitative character of government policies and officials’ implementation of them. They argue that these practices took root during the Civil War and declined during the NEP, but revived during the grain crisis to become almost the exclusive pattern in state-peasant relations, a basic part of Soviet totalitarianism and fundamentally different from a “normal” state. The evidence presented here reveals another side of the Soviet regime, one concerned with alleviating suffering rather than creating it, specifically during the grain crisis. It is true that the relief agencies in 1928-29 tried to limit aid to the poorest peasants and nursing mothers and babies. While on one level, this seems harsh, some Western relief agencies during the 1921-23 famine maintained the same principles: Mennonite relief in Ukraine, for example, refused to aid anyone who had even such assets as a horse. Such policies reflected the food shortages that relief agencies faced to, and that prevailed in the country as a whole, in both periods. Governments today employ various “means test,” what the Soviets called balances, before allowing people access to welfare and other benefits for the poor; the criteria employed–comparison of income and assets with established statistical norms such as the “poverty line”–resemble, for example, the standards of the Uriadkom employed to determine whether a region qualified for relief.
Tauger, Mark. “Grain Crisis or Famine?” in Provincial Landscapes, Local Dimensions of Soviet Power, 1917-1953 by Don Raleigh, Univ. of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, Penn., 2001, Chapter 7, p. 169

The agencies involved in relief in 1928-29 functioned like bureaucracies in “normal” states in other ways as well. They had certain conflicting goals and interests, and they demonstrated patterns of bureaucratic rigidity, but similar examples can be found in any country, including United States, in both the public and private sectors. Despite these problems, these agencies also had common goals of providing aid, and they achieved a substantial portion of these goals. It seems clear from the sources that their efforts saved many lives. In this context, the “extraordinary measures” that the regime carried out during the grain crisis take on a different meaning: they created food shortages in some regions and for some peasants, but they also substantially alleviated a genuine famine in a large region of Ukraine (to say nothing of the rest of the country). Certainly, the results of these efforts, including the extraordinary measures, were superior to what would have happened had nothing been done and the regime simply relied on the market. The situation in that case would have resembled, for example, the Indian famines in which millions died of starvation and related epidemics, in some cases, as in Bengal in 1943, right in front of shops stocked with food they could not afford, while British colonial authorities asserted on the basis of classical political economy that the market would solve the problem. As already noted, many groups in Ukraine and elsewhere in the Soviet Union during the grain crisis faced the same situation as market prices for food spiraled out of reach.
…The Ukrainian famine of 1928-29 was the third famine in the Soviet Union in seven years due to a natural disaster and was the most extreme part of a broader food-supply crisis that affected most of the country. This crisis did not result exclusively or even mainly from price policies. The Soviet Union clearly had an extreme vulnerability to natural disasters, and Soviet leaders interpreted this vulnerability in comparison to the West as a sign of agricultural backwardness.
Tauger, Mark. “Grain Crisis or Famine?” in Provincial Landscapes, Local Dimensions of Soviet Power, 1917-1953 by Don Raleigh, Univ. of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, Penn., 2001, Chapter 7, p. 169.

KOLKHOZES HAD GOOD LIVING CONDITIONS

I had visited [in 1934] a number of kolkhozes around Moscow with foreigners’ excursions as well as with my school, and they were positively model establishments. The kolkhoz peasants lived in passably good rooms; one could find no fault with the tools, the sanitary conditions and social welfare as a whole were amazingly well organized. My visits left me with the impression that, while not everything in Russia was perhaps so well off, conditions nevertheless were bearable and assuredly much better than before.
Tuominen, Arvo, The Bells of the Kremlin: Hanover: University Press of New England, 1983, p. 105

PERSONAL PROPERTY RIGHTS OF THOSE IN COLLECTIVES

The political privileges guaranteed by the Constitution….
Every household in a collective has a plot of land, including house, livestock, poultry, and tools, as its private property for family use (article seven)
“Alongside the socialist system of economy,” every citizen has the right to carry on personal labor, “precluding the exploitation of the labor of others.” (Article 9)

He likewise has a right to inherit personal property and is entitled (Art. 10) to personal ownership of income from work, savings, homes, furniture, and articles of personal use and convenience….
Soviet citizens have as much right as people of other lands to cultivate the joy, pride, and responsibility which are commonly supposed to attend individual ownership of apartments, homes, and gardens.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 335-36

Soviet Society

VAST STRENGTH OF SU

The first mighty stimulus to the Soviet people's courageous fighting is the public ownership of all the vast resources of 1/ 6 of the world.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 28

GROUPS ARE NEEDED TO MAKE DECISIONS

Single persons cannot decide. Experience has shown us that individual decisions, uncorrected by others, contain a large percentage of error.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 53

Indeed, Stalin's stock phrase at the time was that not a single one of Lenin's disciples was worthy of Lenin's mantle and that only as a team could they aspire to leadership.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 298

The famous article by Stalin entitled "Dizziness from Success," which appeared in Pravda on March 2, 1930, two months after the address to the Agrarian Marxists, and which called a sudden halt to the widespread excesses of Communist action in rural districts, was regarded by foreign correspondents and wide masses of peasants alike as an "order by Stalin." Stalin himself immediately disclaimed any personal prestige therefrom accruing, stating publicly in the press: "Some people believe that the article is the result of the personal initiative of Stalin. That is nonsense, of course. The Central Committee does not exist in order to permit the personal initiative of anybody in matters of this kind. It was a reconnaissance undertaken by the Central Committee." There is no need to assume, as many foreigners did, that this was a disingenuous disclaimer of personal rule. It was a very exact statement of fact.
Strong, Anna Louise. Dictatorship and Democracy in the Soviet Union. New York: International Pamphlets, 1934, p. 18

SOVIETS TREAT WOMEN AS EQUALS

…The famous "Red Amazons" and "Death Battalions" are fiction, not fact. But the Army medical services is full of women.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 115

Stalin took over a Party with scarcely 5% women–including a handful of real distinction, such as Krupskaya and Kollontai. He left the Party with over 21 percent women, all of them politically faceless.
Randall, Francis. Stalin's Russia. New York: Free Press,1965, p. 104

The wife of our host listened to her husband and made timid protests. One day when he was out, she opened her heart to us. "The Bolsheviks want to build up a new life; that can't be done in a day.. But look, in the past women had no rights at all, they were proper slaves; the Bolsheviks have given us liberty, have made us the equals of men. That is what annoys my old man."
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 42

MENNONITES PERSUADED TO LEAVE SU

Later the local farmers told me that German agents had been a factor in the sudden decision which seized large numbers of Mennonite farmers, German by descent, to "flea from the accursed atheist land." Whole villages sold or merely abandoned their houses and cattle and came in hordes to Moscow, demanding the right to go abroad.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 124

CATHOLIC CHURCH SERVES REACTION

Third Meeting of Hoxha with Stalin
November 1949
"The Vatican is a centre of reaction," Comradely Stalin told me among other things, "It is a tool in the service of capital and world reaction, which supports this international organization of subversion and espionage. It is a fact that many Catholic priests and missionaries of the Vatican are old-hands at espionage on a world scale. Imperialism has tried and is still trying to realize its aims by means of them."
Then he told me of what had happened once in Yalta with Roosevelt, with the representative of the American Catholic Church and others. During the talk with Roosevelt, Churchill and others on problems of the anti-Hitlerite war, they had said: We must no longer fight the Pope in Rome. What have you against him that you attack him?!
"I have nothing against him," Stalin had replied.
"Then, let us make the Pope our ally," they had said", let us admit him to the coalition of the great allies."
"All right", Stalin had said, "but the anti-fascist alliance is an alliance to wipe out fascism and nazism. As you know, gentlemen, this war is waged with soldiers, artillery, machine-guns, tanks, aircraft. If the Pope or you can tell us what armies, artillery, machine-guns tanks and other weapons of war he possesses, let him become our ally. We don't need an ally for talk and incense."
After that, they had made no further mention of the question of the Pope, and the Vatican.
"Were there Catholic priests in Albania who betrayed the people?" Comrade Stalin asked me then.
"Yes," I told him. "Indeed the heads of the Catholic Church made common cause with the nazi-fascist foreign invaders right from the start, placed themselves completely in their

service and did everything within their power to disrupt our National Liberation War and perpetuate the foreign domination."
"What did you do with them?"
"After the victory," I told him, "we arrested them and put them on trial and they received the punishment they deserved."
"You have done well," he said.
Hoxha, Enver. With Stalin: Memoirs. Tirana: 8 Nentori Pub. House, 1979.

SOME CLERGY ARE PROGRESSIVE

Third Meeting of Hoxha with Stalin
November 1949
"But were there others who maintained a good stand?" he asked.
"Yes," I replied, "especially clergymen of the Orthodox and Moslem religion."
"What have you done with them?" he asked me.
"We have kept them close to us. In its First Resolution our Party called on all the masses, including the clergymen. to unite for the sake of the great national cause, in the great war for freedom and independence. Many of them joined us, threw themselves into the war and made a valuable contribution to the liberation of the Homeland. After Liberation they embraced the policy of our Party and continued the work for the reconstruction of the country. We have always valued and honored such clergymen, and some of them have now been elected deputies to the People's Assembly or promoted to senior ranks in our army. In another case, a former clergyman linked himself so closely with the National Liberation Movement and the Party that in the course of the war he saw the futility of the religious dogma, abandoned his religion, embraced the communist ideology and thanks to his struggle, work and conviction we have admitted him to the ranks of the Party.
"Very good," Stalin said to me. What more could I add? "If you are clear about the fact that religion is opium for the people and that the Vatican is a centre of obscurantism, espionage and subversion against the cause of the peoples, then you know that you should act precisely as you have done."
Hoxha, Enver. With Stalin: Memoirs. Tirana: 8 Nentori Pub. House, 1979.

ANTI-RELIGION BATTLE SHOULD BE KEPT ON POLITICAL PLANE

Third Meeting of Hoxha with Stalin
November 1949
"You should never put the struggle against the clergy, who carry out espionage and disruptive activities, on the religious plane," Stalin said, "but always on the political plane. The clergy must obey the laws of the state, because these laws express the will of the working class and the working people. You must make the people quite clear about these laws and the hostility of the reactionary clergymen so that even that part of the population which believes in religion will clearly see that, under the guise of religion, the clergymen carry out activities hostile to the Homeland and the people themselves. Hence the people, convinced through facts and arguments, together with the Government, should struggle against the hostile clergy. You should isolate and condemn only those clergymen who do not obey the Government and commit grave crimes against the state. But, I insist, the people

must be convinced about the crimes of these clergymen, and should also be convinced about the futility of the religious ideology and the evils that result from it.
Hoxha, Enver. With Stalin: Memoirs. Tirana: 8 Nentori Pub. House, 1979.

“You should never put the struggle against the clergy, who carry out espionage and disruptive activities, on the religious plane,” Stalin said, “but always on the political plane. The clergy must obey the laws of the state, because these laws express the will of the working-class and the working people…. But, I insist, the people must be convinced about the crimes of these clergymen, and should also be convinced about the futility of the religious ideology and the evils that result from it.”
Hoxha, Enver. The Artful Albanian. London: Chatto & Windus, 1986, p. 134

BOLSHEVIKS RULE BY MASS SUPPORT

This position of Stalin in relation to the Party was matched by the position of the Party in relation to the masses…. Since the moment when they [the Bolsheviks] first secured a majority in the Soviets prior to the November Revolution they have retained the confidence of the majority, or they could not have maintained power.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 173

“But if you take the progressive peasants and workers, not more than 15 percent are skeptical of the Soviet power, or are silent from fear or are waiting for the moment when they can undermine the Bolsheviks state. On the other hand, about 85 percent of the more or less active people would urge us further than we want to go. We often have to put on the brakes. They would like to stamp out the last remnants of the intelligentsia. But we would not permit that. In the whole history of the world there never was a power that was supported by nine tenths of the population as the Soviet power is supported.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam’s sons, 1942, p. 175

These characteristics of a Bolshevik party are far from being fully understood by supporters of the Soviet Union today. The Communist Party is continually being described as a small disciplined elite, ordering the people of the Soviet Union hither and thither for their own good. In short, the Soviet regime is pictured as the dictatorship of a Party.
This is a travesty which is unfortunately accepted by friends, as well as by enemies. In the remarks we have quoted above, Lenin is explaining to the Socialists of Western Europe that the Communist Party could only function on the basis of the confidence of the workers; that this confidence was not created by propaganda, but by people testing from their own experience the quality of the political leadership of the Party; that before any policy could be carried out, the Communist Party had to secure the co-operation of millions of people who were not Party members, who were not under Party discipline, who could not be coerced into co-operation, but who could only be convinced on the basis of their experience; and that further, if in the progress of the struggle a change of direction was necessary, not only the Party, but tens of millions of non-party people had to be convinced of the need for this change of direction and had to understand the methods of carrying it through.
In carrying out its activities, the Party rests on the trade unions and on the Soviets. Without the support of the 20 million trade unionists, without the support of the peasantry, organized in the Soviets and in the collective farms, the Party could not last for a week, for it is not the

dictatorship of the Party, but a dictatorship of the working-class, in alliance with the peasantry.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 15-16

The British War Cabinet scheduled a meeting for July 29, 1919 to discuss the Russian situation. The news of Kolchak's reverses emboldened those who had all along wanted an accommodation with Lenin. Their thinking was reflected in a memorandum submitted to the Cabinet by a Treasury official and banker named Harvey. The document grossly distorted the internal situation in Russia to press the argument for abandoning the White cause. Its basic premise held that in a Civil War the victory went to the side that enjoyed greater popular support, from which it followed that since Lenin's government had beaten off all challengers it had to have the population behind it [the document stated]:
"It is impossible to account for the stability of the Bolshevik Government by terrorism alone…. When the Bolshevik fortunes seemed to be at the lowest ebb, a most vigorous offensive was launched before which the Kolchak forces are still in retreat. No terrorism, not even long suffering acquiescence, but something approaching enthusiasm is necessary for this. We must admit then that the present Russian government is accepted by the bulk of the Russian people."

The pledge of the Whites immediately after victory to convene a Constituent Assembly meant little since there was no assurance that " Russia, summoned to the polls, will not again return the Bolsheviks." The unsavory aspects of Lenin's rule were in good measure forced on him by his enemies:
"Necessity of state enables him to justify many acts of violence whereas in a state of peace his Government would have to be progressive or it would fall. It is respectfully contended that the surest way to get rid of Bolshevism, or at least to eradicate the vicious elements in it, is to withdraw our support of the Kolchak movement and thereby end the Civil War."

Although the author did not explicitly say so, his line of argument led to the inescapable conclusion that support should also be withdrawn from Denikin and Yudenich.
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 96

The very small number of active dissidents against the Soviet system has reflected their lack of support in the general population. All active dissidents have generally acknowledged that their ideas and activities are unpopular and elicit no responsive chords in the Soviet population. The Soviet system has a high degree of legitimacy among almost all of its citizens, as is readily admitted by virtually all of its critics both inside and outside the USSR. The legitimacy of the regime was greatly enhanced by the trauma of World War II and the heroic, and very bloody, victory over the Nazi invaders (which not only generated great feelings of solidarity and sacrifice, but also confirmed the national fear of foreign intervention which has lasted until today). The Communist Party's successful industrialization and modernization program has also generated massive support for the Soviet system, as has the high rate of upward mobility and the considerable Soviet achievements in science, education, public-health, and other welfare services. Western Sovietologists (most of whom are not sympathizers of the Soviet system) essentially concede that there is widespread support for Soviet institutions among the Soviet people as a whole.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 274

UNDER STALIN STUDENTS GOT INTO UNIVERSITIES BY ABILITY ONLY NOT WEALTH

Students were admitted to the universities on the basis of ability only, and paid while they studied.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 176

CRITICS OF SU GET THEIR INFO FROM SOVIET SOURCES

Moreover, when these criticisms are published in the press, they provide the hostile foreigner with evidence of the apparent failure of Soviet communism. Indeed it is amusing to discover that nearly all the books that are now written proving that there is corruption, favoritism, and gross inefficiency in the management of industry and agriculture, are taken from reports of these discussions in the Soviet press, in Pravda, the organ of a Communist Party; in Isvestia, the organ of the government; in Trud, the organ of the trade union movement, and in many other local and specialist newspapers.
Webb, Sidney. The Truth about Soviet Russia. New York: Longmans, Green, 1942, p. 34

CRITICISM IS ENCOURAGED

As we have described previously, free criticism, however hostile it may be, is permitted, even encouraged, in the USSR, of the directors of all forms of enterprise, by the workers employed, or by the consumers of the commodities or services concerned.
Webb, Sidney. The Truth about Soviet Russia. New York: Longmans, Green, 1942, p. 74

Moscow, August 16, 1930–although “free speech” and a “free press” in the western sense are unknown in Soviet Russia, Moscow newspapers are now indulging in such a loud chorus of complaints, rebukes, and pessimism as has probably not been equaled since Jeremiah was the “official spokesman” of Israel. To read the newspapers one would suppose the country was headed straight to perdition.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 369

But it must not be assumed that the press is barren of criticism of the regime. Indeed, it is full of it–from Party meetings and in letters from the thousands of worker and peasant correspondents all over the Union. But it must all be helpful criticism, attacking bad administration or ill-advised regulations, and directed toward the upbuilding of Russia according to Soviet objectives. No criticism in opposition to the regime itself or its general program is tolerated.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 152

Former Mensheviks or Social Revolutionists, still numerous in the unions, are now not expelled even when critical. But their criticism must be “constructive,”–intended to remedy the evils and defects of the accepted system and program, not to attack its purposes….
But the general policy is to encourage “helpful” criticism and the fullest rank and file participation in solving industrial problems, a process not altogether easy in view of the relations of the unions to the State.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 169

I happened upon a village meeting way out in Moscow province called to receive the tax bills for the year brought over by a messenger from the county seat. For two hours I listened to as bitter and excited a denunciation of the government as I ever heard anywhere. The regime was roundly scored as a robber of peasants. There was not the slightest fear or limitation in speaking out. It even looked for a while as if the young messenger were to be mobbed. When they calmed down, with the appointment of a committee to take up their grievances, they found enough hope for the village solvency to vote money for new a fire apparatus and a new village bull. The meeting was convincing evidence of the lack of any fear of the government or of the police, and of a healthy resistance to what was to them injustice.
The offenses which the GPU controls have little relation to peasant life. I speak of that at the start to make it clear that the terrorism charged to the GPU does not exist for the masses of the Russian people.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 178

Thus, side-by-side with all the self-praise and glorification I have mentioned, the Soviet press throughout the war period carried sharp criticisms of party and state officials. Over a period of months I collected literally hundreds of items of this nature, covering a wide variety of activity. Probably the most numerous reprimands and warnings were addressed to officials responsible for weaknesses in the production system.
Slipshod methods of harvesting, which resulted in great losses of grain, were continuously criticized in specific regions. Individual officials caught in the wrongful use or appropriation of state property were singled out as examples. Instances of losses due to poor packing and shipment of manufactured goods were frequently cited, and engineers responsible for waste of metals and materials were upbraided. Outright thefts of materials and embezzlement of funds were exposed and cases of bribery of state employees were frequently reported in the Government and party press.
Blockheadedness, indifference to duty, and evasion of responsibility by officials and bureaucrats were the subject of many editorials and newspaper stories, in which individuals and localities were often mentioned by name. The detail into which these criticisms enter is frequently surprising….
…Other town fathers were rebuked for failing to provide adequate living quarters, for inhuman bureaucracy, for falsifying reports, for neglecting improvements in the school system, and so on.
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 205

…Open criticism of different party branches for failure to accomplish their educational and organizational duties, in the rear and at the front, also, usually preceded or coincided with dismissals and new appointments. And from the extent of such criticism in the press it was evident that a process of change and reform was going on all the time.
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 207

Stalin continued his criticism of party leaders by discussing another familiar topic: the “verification of fulfillment of decisions.”… Stalin stated, “There is still another kind of verification, the check-up from below, in which the masses, the subordinates, verify the leaders, pointing out their mistakes, and showing the way to correct them. This kind of verification is one of the most effective methods of checking up on people.”

Stalin stated, “Some comrades say that it is not advisable to speak openly of one’s mistakes, since the open admission of one’s mistakes may be construed by our enemies as weakness and may be used by them.
This is rubbish, comrades, downright rubbish. The open recognition of our mistakes and their honest rectification can, on the contrary, only strengthen our party, raise its authority in the eyes of the workers, peasants, and working intellectuals…. And this is the main thing. As long as we have the workers, peasants, and working intellectuals with us, all the rest will settle itself.”
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 146

That this Soviet patriotism excludes all criticism is, moreover, by no means the truth. “Bolshevist self-criticism” is certainly no empty expression. One reads in the newspapers a succession of most bitter attacks on numerous real or imaginary grievances and on prominent individuals, whose fault, allegedly, these grievances are; I was astonished at industrial meetings by the strength of the criticisms leveled at the managers of the industries, and I stood amazed before news posters which attacked or caricatured principals and responsible people with positive savagery. And foreigners are not prohibited from expressing their honest opinions. I have already mentioned that not only did the national newspapers leave my articles uncensored, even when I deplored certain intolerances or excessive Stalin-worship, or when I demanded more light on the conduct of an important political trial; what is more, they took pains to reproduce as faithfully as possible in the translation every nuance of these very passages, negative as they were. The prominent national personalities whom I met were without exception more interested in criticism than in indiscriminating praise. They like to measure their own achievement with that of the West, and they measure accurately, often all too accurately, and when their own work falls short of that of the West, they do not hesitate to admit it. Indeed they often overrate Western achievements to their own disadvantage. But when a foreigner indulges in petty and inconsequent fault-finding and loses sight of the value of the whole achievement in unimportant shortcomings, Soviet people quickly lose patience, while empty hypocritical compliments they can never forgive.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 40

Of course, criticism had been strongly encouraged during the purges, and local records contain plenty of it. The press strongly endorsed criticism from below at the end of 1938.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 161

The regime regularly urged people to criticize local conditions as well as leaders, at least those below an exalted level…. Pravda went so far as to identify lack of criticism with enemies of the people: “Only an enemy is interested in saying that we, the Bolsheviks… do not notice actual reality…. Only an enemy… strives to put the rose-colored glasses of self-satisfaction over the eyes of our people.” As the Zawodny materials and a mass of other evidence show, these calls were by no means merely a vicious sham that permitted only carefully chosen, reliable individuals to make “safe” criticisms.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 185

National authorities took a different view and encouraged criticism from below, primarily for three reasons. First, it was a check on the pretensions and behavior of local officials. Second, it was a way of getting some reliable information about performance. Given the penchant of Soviet administrators to lie about what was happening, frank statements were highly prized at the upper levels of government. Third, workers' ability to criticize made them feel that they played a significant role in their own affairs and that their views were taken seriously. In short, the opportunity to express grievances increased workers' sense that the Soviet system was legitimate. At the same time, national figures and institutions could convey the sense, not without reason, that they defended ordinary people against local despots.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 188

These criticisms and threats from below challenged newly appointed administrators, undercutting the assertion that criticism was allowed only against those the regime had already decided to remove. In another case, speakers at a union election meeting heavily scolded one of their officials, yet he received the most votes of anyone present in the selection of an important commission. Criticism was encouraged and sometimes staged from above, but it was also an everyday occurrence that came from the workers themselves.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 190

In these and many other cases, workers behaved proudly and aggressively toward superiors; they stood firmly on their rights.
… But like this book, the same investigation also shows that workers constantly took the trouble to protest to various organizations and periodicals, from which they demanded a thoughtful response. Alienated people do not bother to express their grievances in this way any more than they bother to vote.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 196

Nowhere in the world outside the USSR is there such a continuous volume of pitiless criticism of every branch of government, every industrial enterprise and every cultural establishment. This perpetual campaign of exposure, which finds expression in every public utterance of the leading statesmen, in every issue of the press, and in every trade union or corporate meeting, is not only officially tolerated, but also deliberately instigated, as powerful incentive to improvement, alike in direction and in execution. Thus, the public speeches by Stalin, Molotov, Kaganovich, and other Soviet statesmen–in striking contrast with those of British, French or American statesmen–nearly always lead up to a tirade of criticism of some part of soviet administration. They usually begin with a glowing, and, as we may think, an optimistic account of the successful progress of the department or institution under discussion, of its remarkable achievements and of the valuable services of those working in it towards the "building of the socialist state." This is rendered all the more alluring by a vision of the dismal failure of capitalism in Europe and America. But invariably the speaker descends presently to an outspoken criticism of the technical shortcomings of the particular enterprise, with a detailed exposure of its partial or temporary failures, and often a scathing denunciation of particular cases of slackness or waste or other inefficiency, and similar criticism is invited from below. Official speakers will often blame conferences and

congresses for their failure to criticize their own superior councils and committees, as well as their own officials, for their shortcomings and their failures.
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, p. 628

Stalin, the press, and the Stakhanovite movement all regularly encouraged ordinary people to criticize those in authority. At the very top, Stalin was certainly an unassailable figure, but during the Ezhovshchina anyone several rungs below him was fair game. If the citizenry was supposed to be terrorized and stop thinking, why encourage criticism and input from below on a large scale?
Thurston, Robert W. “On Desk-Bound Parochialism, Commonsense Perspectives, and Lousy Evidence: A Reply to Robert Conquest.” Slavic Review 45 (1986), 239.

it cannot be said, however, that the Kremlin abuses the terrific power of the press, the radio and Communist party effort. Stalin may not be one of the world’s great men in the sense that Lenin was, but he certainly “knows his politics” and has been careful to correct the dangers of unchallenged authoritative and unified control of public opinion by what is known as “self-criticism,” which is not the least interesting feature of the Stalinist system.
Self-criticism is the salt in the Soviet home propaganda pie. It enables any writer or speaker, high or low, to take a violent and enjoyable crack at almost any one or anything, provided he sticks to concrete facts or remains “objective,” as the Russians call it, and refrains from the unwisdom–or positive danger–of ideological criticism or covert attacks on the “party line” which will brand him with heresy and disgrace.
The Russians by nature have a streak of anarchic iconoclasm…and “self-criticism” gives then welcome relief from the stark rigidity of Stalinism, a relief no less delightful because it is apt to be dangerous. There has been cases when overzealous critics have been compelled to make ignominious retractions or have lost their jobs or even been expelled from the party. But it is a splendid safety valve, none the less, and so widely used by the Moscow press in particular, which is closest, of course to the Kremlin, that a foreign observer often wonders whether everything is “going to the bowwows,” so long and grievous is the tale of mismanagement, waste and bureaucratic error…. The Communist Youth Pravade or an illiterate worker can sling a pebble at the Railroad Commissariat and get away with it if he only has got facts to back his charge.
Duranty, Walter. “Soviet Fixes Opinion By Widest Control,” New York Times, June 22, 1931.

SU CONSTITUTION GUARANTEES A JOB WHICH CAPITALISTS DON’T

Article 118: citizens of the USSR have the right to work, that is, the right to guarantee employment and payment for their work in accordance with its quantity and quality.
Constitution of the USSR. Moscow: Co-operative Pub. Society of Foreign Workers in the U.S.S.R., Chapter 10, 1936

The idea of the Soviets is founded on the right to work and the duty to work.
This categorical obligation, up to now imposed by no state on its citizens, is balanced through the equally new duty of the state: “The citizens of the union have the right to work, the right to be guaranteed a job and pay for their work, according to it’s value and amount. The right to work is assured through the socialistic system of economics.”

Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 164

The Constitution also exacts certain duties from citizens. Every able-bodied citizen must work. The new Testament principle of "he who does not work shall not eat" is rigidly observed….
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 34

SU CONSTITUTION GUARANTEES A RIGHT TO REST

Article 119: citizens of the USSR have the right to rest.
The right to rest is insured by the reduction of the working day to seven hours for the overwhelming majority of the workers, the institution of annual vacations with pay for workers and other employees, and the provision of a wide network of sanatoria, rest homes, and clubs serving the needs of the working people.
Constitution of the USSR. Moscow: Co-operative Pub. Society of Foreign Workers in the U.S.S.R., Chapter 10, 1936

SU CONSTITUTION GUARATEES SECURE RETIREMENT AND MEDICAL CARE

Article 120: citizens of the USSR have the right to material security in old age, and also in case of sickness or loss of capacity to work.
This right is insured by the wide development of social insurance of workers and other employees at state expanse, free medical service for the working people, and the provision of a wide network of health resorts at the disposal of the working people.
Constitution of the USSR. Moscow: Co-operative Pub. Society of Foreign Workers in the U.S.S.R., Chapter 10, 1936

SU CONSTITUTION GUARANTEES FREE EDUCATION AND STIPENDS

Article 121: citizens of the USSR have the right to education. This right is insured by universal compulsory elementary education, by education free of charge including higher education, by a system of state' stipends for the overwhelming majority of students in higher schools, by instruction in schools in the native language, and by the organization in factories, state Farms, machine tractor stations, and collective Farms of free industrial, technical, and agricultural education for the working people.
Constitution of the USSR. Moscow: Co-operative Pub. Society of Foreign Workers in the U.S.S.R., Chapter 10, 1936

SU CONSTITUTION GUARANTEES WOMEN EQUAL RIGHTS AND CHILD CARE

Article 122: Women in the USSR are accorded equal rights with men in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social, and political life.
The realization of these rights of women is insured by affording women equality with men, the right to work, payment for work, rest, social insurance and education, and by state

protection of the interests of mother and child, pregnancy leave with pay, and the provision of a wide network of maternity homes, nurseries, and kindergartens.
Constitution of the USSR. Moscow: Co-operative Pub. Society of Foreign Workers in the U.S.S.R., Chapter 10, 1936

SU CONSTITUTION GUARANTEES SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

Article 124: in order to insure or to citizens freedom of conscience, the church in the USSR shall be separated from the state, and the school from the church. Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda shall be recognized for all citizens.
Constitution of the USSR. Moscow: Co-operative Pub. Society of Foreign Workers in the U.S.S.R., Chapter 10, 1936

SU CONSTITUTION GUARANTEES FREEDOM OF PRESS AND SPEECH TO WORKING CLASS

Article 125: in accordance with the interests of the working people, and in order to strengthen the socialist system, the citizens of the USSR are guaranteed by law: freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly and meetings, (freedom of street processions and demonstrations.
These rights of citizens are insured by placing at the disposal of the working people and their organizations printing shops, supplies of paper, public buildings, the streets, means of communication, and other material requisites for the exercise of these rights.
Constitution of the USSR. Moscow: Co-operative Pub. Society of Foreign Workers in the U.S.S.R., Chapter 10, 1936

(Foreign Delegation's Interview with Stalin on November 5, 1927)
QUESTION: Why is there no freedom of the Press in the USSR?
ANSWER: What freedom of the Press have you in mind? Freedom of the Press? For which class –the bourgeoisie or the proletariat? If it is a question of freedom of the Press for the bourgeoisie, then it does not and will not exist here as long as the Proletarian Dictatorship is in power. But if it is a question of freedom of the Press for the proletariat, then I must say that you will not find another country in the world where such broad and complete freedom of the Press exists as in the USSR. Freedom of the Press for the proletariat is not an empty phrase. And without the greatest freedom of assembly, without the best printing works, the best clubs, without free organizations of the working class, beginning with the narrow and ending with the broad organizations, embracing millions of workers, there is no freedom of the Press. Look at conditions in the USSR, survey the workers' districts, and you will find that the best printing works, the best clubs, entire paper mills, entire ink factories, producing necessary material for the Press, huge assembly halls–these and many other things which are so necessary for the freedom of the Press of the working class, are entirely and fully at the disposal of the working class and the toiling masses. This is what we call freedom of the Press for the working class. We have no freedom of the Press for the bourgeoisie. We have no freedom of the Press for the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries, who represent the interests of the beaten and overthrown bourgeoisie. But what is there surprising in that? We have never pledged ourselves to grant freedom of the Press to all classes, and to make all

classes happy. Taking power in October, 1917, the Bolsheviks openly declared that this Government is a government of one class, a government of the proletariat, which will subdue the bourgeoisie, in the interests of the toiling masses of town and country representing the overwhelming majority of the population of the USSR. How can one, after this, demand from the Proletarian Dictatorship freedom of the Press for the bourgeoisie?
Stalin, Joseph. The Worker's State. London: Communist Party of Great Britain. 1928, p. 6

STALIN SAVED THE SOVIET PEOPLE BY PUSHING THEM

Had the party under Stalin not driven the Soviet people, by terrific pressure and incessant appeals, to prodigious and costly feats of construction and production, and had it not smashed ruthlessly the conspiracies of the 1930's, the Soviet Union and all the United Nations would have suffered irreparable defeat in World War II at the hands of insanely savage foes who in the end would have left the vanquished without eyes for weeping and without tongues for protest or lamentation.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 198

The Communists do not merely reflect the will of the masses, as a ballot might, or a showing of hands. They do not merely analyze what the "majority want" and hand it out. It is their job to lead, to organize the people's will. No group of unurged soldiers would ever vote to storm a trench. Certainly the workers of the Soviet Union would not have voted, un urged, unled, for the hardships of the Five-Year Plan of rapid industrialization taken out of their own food and comforts, for the painful speed of farm collectivization without adequate machines or organizers. But when the Communist Party analyzed, urged and demanded, showing the world situation and the need of making the USSR well prepared industrially and for defense, showing the enemy classes which must be abolished to attain the goal of a socialist state, they were able to find, organize and create, deep in the heart of the masses, a will that carried through. Without that will in tens of millions, the 3 million [party members] could have done little.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 104

During the decade from 1930 to 1940 some 200 industrial aggregates of all kinds were constructed and put into operation in the Urals. This herculean task was accomplished thanks to the political sagacity of Joseph Stalin and his relentless perseverance in forcing through the realization of his construction program despite fantastic costs and fierce difficulties.
Scott, John. Behind the Urals, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1942, p. 256

…The reconstruction effort, added to the increased capacity which had been developed in the Urals and Siberia during the war, insured that by the time of Stalin's death the Soviet industrial infrastructure had recovered from the ravages of the war.
Gill, Graeme. Stalinism. Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press International, 1990, p. 43

MOLOTOV: We demanded great sacrifices from workers and peasants before the war. We paid little to peasants for bread or cotton or their labor–we simply had nothing to pay with! What to pay? We are reproached–we didn't think of the material interests of the peasants.

Well, if we had, we would have wound up in a dead end. We didn't have enough money for cannons!
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 27

A first-class industry had to be created. This industry had to be so directed as to be capable of technically reorganizing not only industry, but also our agriculture and our railway transport. And for this it was necessary to make sacrifices and to impose rigorous economy in everything; it was necessary to economize on food, on schools and on textiles, in order to accumulate the funds required for the creation of industry. There was no other way of overcoming the famine in technical resources. Thus Lenin taught us, and in this matter we followed in the footsteps of Lenin….
Well then, there were comrades among us who were scared by the difficulties and began to call on the Party to retreat. They said: "What is the good of your industrialization and collectivization, your machines, iron and steel industry, tractors, combines, automobiles? It would be better if you gave us more textiles, if you bought more raw materials for the production of consumers' goods and gave the population more of the small things which adorn the life of man. The creation of industry, and a first-class industry at that, when we are so backward, is a dangerous dream."
Of course, we could have used the 3 billion rubles of foreign currency obtained as a result of the severest economy, and spent on the creation of our industry, for the importation of raw materials and for increasing the production of articles of general consumption. That is also a kind of "plan." But with such a "plan" we should not have had a metallurgical industry, or a machine-building industry, or tractors and automobiles, or airplanes and tanks. We should have found ourselves unarmed in the face of the external foe. We should have undermined the foundations of Socialism in our country. We should found ourselves in captivity to the bourgeoisie, home and foreign.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 95-96

He [Stalin] 'built socialism'; and even his opponents, while denouncing his autocracy, admitted that most of his economic reforms were indeed essential for socialism.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 361

KAGANOVICH SAYS ALL POWER IS IN CLIQUE'S HANDS IN CAPITALIST COUNTRIES

Speaking in Tashkent, where he stood for election, Kaganovich assured his auditors (Pravda December 10, 1937) that no real popular rule was possible in the bourgeois countries where all power is in the hands of "a few hundred millionaires, bankers, factory owners…."
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 319

STALIN DESCRIBES REAL LIBERTY

"Real liberty," declared Stalin to Roy Howard in 1936, "can be had only where exploitation is destroyed, where there is no oppression of one people by another, where there is no unemployment and pauperism, where a person does not shiver in fear of losing tomorrow his job, home, bread. Only in such a society is it possible to have real, and not paper, liberty, personal and otherwise."

Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 326

My own prejudices are amply conveyed by the title of this book. Though over half of it is devoted to a description of the controls by the Soviet state, I have chosen to call it Liberty under the Soviets because I see as far more significant the basic economic freedom of workers and peasants and the abolition of privileged classes based on wealth;…
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 2

For although I am an advocate of unrestricted civil liberty as a means to effecting even revolutionary changes in society with a minimum of violence, I know that such liberty is always dependent on the possession of economic power. Economic liberty underlies all others. In any society civil liberties are freely exercised only by classes with economic power–or if by other classes, only at times when the controlling class is too secure to fear opposition.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 3

Such an attitude as I express toward the relation of economic to civil liberty may easily be construed as condoning in Russia repressions which I condemn in capitalist countries. It is true that I feel differently about them, because I regard them as unlike. Repressions in western democracies are violations of professed constitutional liberties, and I condemn them as such. Repressions in Soviet Russia are weapons of struggle in a transition period to socialism. The society the Communists seek to create will be freed of class struggle–if achieved–and therefore of repression.
I see no chance for freedom from the repressions which mark the whole western world of political democracy save through abolishing economic class struggle.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 4

Though I found a few opponents who were fearful of speaking out, and many cautioned me not to quote them, I found nowhere such universal fear as marks opponents of the dictatorships in Italy or Hungary…. Speech is fairly free everywhere in Russia. What the authorities land on is any attempt at organized opposition.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 9

That civil liberties, generally speaking, have not existed in fact for any classes except those with economic or political power is usually ignored by those who proclaim their validity as social principles.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 18

…No one who has seen the new life in Russian villages can doubt the feeling of liberty, of released effort and of hope which marks the active peasants–save for the ambitious well-to-do class (the Kulaks) who resist the new order because it restricts their freedom to hire labor and rent land.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 25

INTELLECTUALS AND SCIENTISTS IN SU ARE FREE

Foreign critics readily conclude that the Soviet intelligentsia is in helpless bondage and consists of sycophantic automatons, reduced to complete sterility. Nothing could be farther from the truth. No government anywhere at any time has done more than the USSR to promote art and science by providing facilities for training, work, and publication, and by giving scientists and artists economic security through regular salaries plus generous rewards for achievement through royalties, prizes, and numerous privileges. That this policy has paid dividends in shown by the striking accomplishments of Soviet music, drama, cinema, and literature as well as the biological and physical sciences. Yet all of the contributors have lacked “freedom” in the Western sense. And since freedom is commonly viewed in the West as the sine qua non of productivity, the enigma of Soviet culture seems to many quite inexplicable, particularly to those given to compiling cases (and there had been many) of Soviet intellectuals who have been dismissed, degraded, or even purged for political non-conformity.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 332

STALIN SAYS THOSE WITH PARTY CARDS ABUSE THE PRIVILEGE

Zhdanov stated on March 18, 1939, “It has been repeatedly pointed out by Lenin and Stalin that a bureaucrat with a Party card in his pocket is the most dangerous and pernicious kind of bureaucrat, because, possessing a Party card, he imagines that he may ignore Party and Soviet laws and the needs and interests of the working people.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 347-48

TRAITS OF GOOD PARTY LEADERS

Other life histories of the highest ranking party leaders serve to confirm the pattern already suggested…. All in varying agree share with Stalin and their colleagues those traits and experiences which, thus far, are the prerequisites of political eminence in the USSR: peasant or proletarian origin, poverty stricken youth, little formal education, much informal education in the school of hard knocks, early conversion to the cause, fame won in revolutionary education and organization, and a generous measure of vision, courage, unflagging energy, relentless determination, and genius for holding many jobs simultaneously and for directing and inspiring subordinates to perform the impossible. These leaders are not fawning yes-men or wordy agitators or arbitrary bureaucrats, but hard-driving executives.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 357

In a speech to the Active Workers of the Moscow Organization of the CPSU (April 1928) Voroshilov quotes Stalin as having said, “To sit at the helm and keep watch, seeing nothing until some calamity overtakes us–this is no kind of leadership. Bolshevism does not interpret leadership in this way. To lead means to foresee; and to foresee, comrades, is not always so simple. It is one thing when a dozen other leading comrades keep watch and notice defects in our work; but the working masses do not want to keep watch, or cannot do so; they therefore do not notice the defects.”
Life of Stalin, A Symposium. New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1930, p. 45

…wherein lies the art of leadership.

“The art of leadership,” Stalin wrote, “is a serious matter. One must not lag behind the movement, because to do so is to become isolated from the masses. But neither must one rush ahead, for to rush ahead is to lose contact with the masses. He who wants to lead a movement and at the same time keep in touch with the vast masses must wage a fight on two fronts–against those who lag behind and against those who rush on ahead.”
Alexandrov, G. F. Joseph Stalin; a Short Biography. Moscow: FLPH, 1947, p. 111

Stalin has himself given what is probably the best characterization of what he tries to do in these words: “The art of leadership is a serious matter. One must not straddle behind a movement, nor run in front of it, lest one become in both cases separated from the masses. Whoever wants to lead and at the same time maintain his contact with the masses must fight on two fronts; against those loitering in the rear, and those speeding on ahead.”
Again, in April 1928, before the Moscow organization of the party, he declared that leaders often think they are watching but see nothing “until some calamity overtakes them–this is no kind of leadership. Bolshevism does not interpret leadership in this way. To lead means to foresee; and to foresee, Comrades, is not always so simple.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 13

[in a letter to Kaganovich on 11 August 1932 Stalin stated] Lenin was right in saying that a person who does not have the courage to swim against the current when necessary cannot be a real Bolshevik leader….
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 180

LENIN FIRST WANTED TO EQUALIZE INCOMES

Meanwhile, during the protracted socialist “transition” to communism, the equality of incomes is not, and never was, contemplated, since men and women differ markedly in their capacities to contribute to the welfare of the Commonwealth. Lenin toyed for a time, to be sure, with the notion of a moderate leveling of incomes. Under “War Communism,” and to a lesser extent under the NEP, wage and salary scales were influenced by this idea. Once the building of socialism was embarked upon in earnest, however, the gap between the best paid and the worst paid grew ever greater.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 575

SU ABOLISHED PRIVATE PROPERTY AND EXPLOITATION

What distinguishes Soviet society from all others, past and present, is not the allocation of income but the distribution and form of ownership of property…. No one in the USSR owns corporate stocks or bonds, or possesses tangible property (save houses and gardens and objects of personal use), or leases real estate for private rentals, or employs labor to produce services or goods exclusively for personal profit. If a “ruling class” be defined as a group at the peak of the social hierarchy, possessed of maximum deference, income, and power by virtue of private ownership of productive property, then the USSR has none and is already a truly “classless” society. The socialization of the means of production signifies the

end of the propertied classes which, in their various forms, have controlled all hitherto existing societies.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 578

ALL WANT TO LIVE IN LUXURY WITHOUT WORK AND THAT THE SU ABOLISHES

But what is impossible for the Soviet intelligentsia is to become a propertied class or a leisure class living on unearned income. These are the earmarks of every landed aristocracy. To live without labor is the dream of every Western businessman, indeed the secret hope of almost all men and women everywhere, since the species is allergic to work, craves luxuries, preferably on a silver platter, and prefers a horizontal to a vertical position whenever possible. The pecuniary elites of the West consist in part of hard-working and hard driving executives and managers, and in part of idle rich. The latter indulge in conspicuous consumption and live without work by virtue of astute selection of ancestors, schools, colleges, fraternity brothers, wives/or business associates, affording access to adequate quantities of unearned increments.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 580

SU ELIMINATES LEISURE WITHOUT WORK BY OWNING PRIVATE PROPERTY

In the USSR, for better or for worse, leisure is all too scarce and no such group exists, or can come into being, so long as productive property may not be privately bought and sold, and so long as industrial capital is not raised by selling shares to individuals with private savings from which they hope to derive income without effort.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 581

WEALTHY SOVIET ELITE DOES NOT EXIST

“Striking it rich” is impossible. “Keeping up with the Joneses” is bad form. Excelling the Ivanoviches in socialist competition to cut production costs, increase output, and raise profits beyond the Plan is always the order of the day. Conspicuous success in such endeavors means prizes, bonuses, honors, and fame.
This elite bears little resemblance to any known aristocracy, plutocracy, or theocracy.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 581

No private person may legitimately make a penny of profit out of this system of state and cooperative industry and trade, banking and transport. There are no individual shareholders in the state industrial enterprises; and the financial columns of the Russian newspapers are restricted to brief quotations of the rates of the state loans. All the normal means of acquiring large personal fortunes are thus pretty effectively blocked up in Russia; and if there are some Nepmen, or private traders who have become ruble millionaires through lucky dealings in commerce or speculation, they are certainly neither a numerous nor a conspicuous class.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 131

The new class of state managers, or “red directors” of factories, who have replaced the former capitalist owners, are mostly Communists and former workers. But by the very nature of their position they must look at industrial life from a rather different angle from that of the workers. Although they make no personal profit out of the enterprises which they manage, they are supposed to turn in a profit for the state.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 174

But the general view of the Social Democratic and Anarchist critics of the Soviet regime, that there is a deep rift between a few Communist officeholders at the top and the working masses at the bottom, is, in my opinion, distorted, exaggerated, and quite at variance with the actual facts of the Russian situation.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 177

The difference in the standard of life is only determined by the ability of the single man. The external glamour of life, enjoyed in all other countries by a few big businessmen or rich heirs, has been sacrificed to a feeling of security guaranteed by no other state to its citizens. In order to remove the fear of the vacuum endured by 90% of the citizens, the enjoyment of the other 10% must be curtailed. Then the worker will not be filled any more by hate and jealousy, nor the owner by hate and fear of revolts.
Such a state without classes must necessarily be a state without races. Privileges for any race or color are explicitly denied by the Constitution.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam’s sons, 1942, p. 167

On the whole the men who remain in top leadership are the ablest of the 12 million government employees. Although shouldering more responsibility they do not receive salaries anywhere near as large as those of corporation presidents in the United States. They do receive decorations and they may have cities named after them. They are all provided with automobiles, expense accounts and good houses or apartments.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 39

Even more important than these liberties is the fact that they labor not for the private profit of employers (save for the small proportion employed in private industry), but for the profit of the whole community. State industries, like private, must show a profit to keep going, but the public use of that profit robs it of the driving force of exploitation.
The liberties enjoyed by workers in Russia, whether or not in unions (less than 10 percent are outside), go far beyond those of workers in other countries, not only in their participation in controlling working conditions and wages, but in the privileges they get as a class. The eight-hour day is universal in practice, alone of all countries in the world, with a six-hour day in dangerous occupations like mining. Reduction of the eight-hour day to seven hours is already planned for all industries. Every worker gets a two-week vacation with pay, while office workers and workers in dangerous trades, get a month. No worker can be dismissed from his job without the consent of his union. His rent, his admission to places of entertainment or education, his transportation–all these he gets at lower prices than others. When unemployed he gets a small allowance from his union, free rent, free transportation, and free admission to places of entertainment and instruction. Education and medical aid are free to all workers–or for small fees–extensive services being especially organized for and by them.

…There is in Russia no privileged class based on wealth. Practically all rents for land or buildings are paid to the state or to cooperatives; only a little of it goes to line private pockets. Money may be loaned at simple interest, the rate being limited. Money deposited with the state earns a rate of interest even higher than in capitalist countries. But nobody is getting rich off the interest on his savings and loans, for all incomes are both limited at their source, and, when much above the average, are heavily taxed. Persons with higher incomes are also obliged to pay higher prices for some necessities–especially rent. Inheritance of property is now theoretically unlimited, but so heavily taxed as in effect to destroy all above a moderate amount.
The new bourgeoisie, which has grown-up with the new economic policy–private traders, richer peasants…–is too small to constitute a noteworthy exception to the general absence of a wealthy class. And they are being increasingly restricted, despite the assertions to the contrary by the Communist Opposition and others. The statistics of private versus public enterprises show it. Earnings and incomes throughout Soviet Russia vary from the minimum of bare subsistence, 15 or 20 rubles a month, to 10 or 15 times that amount. Few incomes run above that figure (300 rubles a month, $150), the highest in all Russia being those of a few concessionaires and foreign specialists on salaries ($5000-$10,000). Even the few traders and concessionaires who have gotten rich are unable to invest money productively in Russia, except in state loans. None can be invested for exploitation. There is practically no chance for anyone to get rich under the Soviet system except a comparatively few traders, concessionaires, or the winners of some of the big state lotteries–and it is hard for any of them to stay rich under the heavy taxation.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 29-30

…Even to tourists in Russia the absence of any moneyed class is at once apparent…. No fine shops, no gay restaurants, no private motors–none of the trappings of wealth that lend color and variety to the life of bourgeois countries. Instead, a somewhat monotonous drabness and shabbiness, more than compensated for by the thought of its significance to the masses.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 30

And to anyone who accepts the view of social action as a struggle of classes, the political democracy of capitalist countries is only an instrument for the rule in the last analysis of a comparatively small class–the big property owners.
…Tested by it, the Soviet system clearly represents the interests of the overwhelming majority of the population–the workers and peasants–as opposed to propertied classes,…
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 35

One should keep in mind, however, that big incomes are still extremely rare. Earning power may vary in the Soviet Union, according to artistic or technical proficiency, but the extremes, as Louis Fisher has pointed out, are very close. No such “spread” is conceivable in the USSR as exists in Britain or America between say, a clerk in a factory and its owner. Among all the 165 million Russians, there are probably not ten men who earn $25,000 per year.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 567

SOCIALISM RESTORED NATIONAL MEANING AND REMOVED LEISURE CLASS

Despite the blundering and cruelty which are constant companions of all pioneers, the adventure has led to 2 interdependent results which are pearls without price amid the self stultifications and social schizophrenia of other industrial societies.
One is the cure of the mass neuroses of our time through the re-generation of personality around community values and purposes which afford escape from loneliness and, ultimately, from the class snobberies and mass envies characteristic of deeply divided societies.
The other is the cure of economic paralysis and stagnation, with their concomitants of wholesale insecurity, frustration, and aggression, through the building of an institutional framework wherein all who are willing to work may find productive employment in a constantly expanding economy.
The unpardonable sin of the Russian Revolution has been the liquidation of the old leisure class and the imposition of limitations on ownership which make the emergence of a new leisure class all but impossible.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 582

In the end it became clear that the whole economic system should be run by the State.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 206

SU DICTATORSHIP WAS NECESSARY AND SUCCESSFUL FOR WORKERS

“Dictatorship” in Soviet society is not a means (save in isolated instances, flowing from abuses of power) whereby a privileged and parasitic oligarchy exploits the community to its own advantage. Neither is it a formula for ” tyranny,” Nor an institutionalization of the corruption which often goes with absolute power. It is rather the means of integrating elite and mass, preserving the true faith, promoting high morale and group purpose, maintaining discipline and elan, and evolving and administering the broad All Union directives for serving the general welfare and the common defense. Soviet planning involves cooperation and collaboration by millions at all levels and stages of the process. But the necessary continuity, crusading fervor, and coordination from a common center are supplied, and at present can only be supplied, by maintaining the Party’s monopoly of legality and leadership.
Only those observers who are invincibly ignorant, or blinded by irrational fear and hatred, will deny that the Soviet system of business and power has, for all its abuses and crudities, promoted the liberation of men from impoverishment, exploitation, illiteracy, and prejudice and served the cause of human dignity and self respect on an immense scale. These purposes are of the essence of the Democratic dream. In this sense the USSR is a Democratic polity–in its ends and in its achievements, if not always in its means.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 585

The harsh word “dictatorship” is not pleasant. Nevertheless, in the West they are getting used to it. But it is being falsified there; they [presumably the Euro-Communist movement] don’t comprehend that without the dictatorship of the proletariat, they will never be able to move forward. However much they babble, the truth remains: either remain slaves of capitalism or, if you want to wrench yourself free, it is possible only with the aid of the dictatorship.

It is not by chance that in the theory of the state there is no room for “state of all the people.” Nowhere has it ever existed in reality.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 398

Poland and certain other states show that the concept of the “state of all the people” is not a particularly sound one.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 395

A state of all the people does not and cannot exist.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 404

The Soviet Union would never have been able to achieve what it has achieved if it had indulged in a parliamentary democracy according to the West European conception. The establishment of socialism would never have been possible with an unrestricted right to abuse. No government, constantly attacked in parliament and in the press and dependent on the result of elections, could ever have been able to impose on the population the hardships which alone made this establishment possible, and, faced with the alternatives either of using up a very great part of their strength in parrying foolish and malicious attacks, or of bending the whole of this strength to the completion of the structure, the leaders of the Union decided to restrict the right to abuse.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 66

STALIN BELIEVES DECISIONS SHOULD BE MADE BY GROUPS

Stalin is not an an arrogant man, although he is master and lord of a large and populous country. In meetings of the Politburo, he never says as Lenin used to say, “Here is the way things are and here is what we must do. If any of you have better ideas and can prove to me they are better, go-ahead.” Stalin doesn’t act like that. He says, “Here is the problem, and perhaps one of us” — say, Voroshilov, if it’s a military matter, or Mikoyan if its commerce, or Kaganovich for industry–“will tell us what he thinks.” After that, there is general discussion while Stalin sits and listens. He may lead the conversation as a lawyer can “lead” a witness, but when the decision is reached it is, or appears to be, a joint not a single decision.
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, Inc., 1941, p. 35

For Stalin, whatever his later practice, gave the classic expression of the danger of individual decision, unchecked by collective thought. When Emil Ludwig, and later Roy Howard, sought to learn how “the great man made decisions,” Stalin impatiently replied: “With us, individuals cannot decide…. Experience has shown us that individual decisions, uncorrected by others, have a large percentage of error.” He added that the success of the USSR came about because the best brains in all areas–science, industry, farming, world affairs–were combined in the Central Committee, through which decisions were made.
This standard he, more than anyone, instilled in the Soviet people. For he always acted “through channels” and after building majorities….
In all my years in the USSR, I never heard them speak of “Stalin’s decision” or “Stalin’s orders,” but only of “government orders” or “the Party line,” which are collectively made. When speaking of Stalin, they praised his “clearness,” his “analysis.” They said: “he does not

think individually." By this, they meant that he thought not in isolation but in consultation with the brains of the Academy of Science, the chiefs of industry, and trade unions.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 22

It was nothing but the exceptional attitude adopted by Trotsky, whose public position had been a considerable one by Lenin's side, and who showed a tendency to place himself above the Central Committee, that brought the question of "the leadership" up before the Fourteenth Congress. To Trotsky's exuberant personality Stalin opposed the principle of Community-leadership. He declared: "One cannot direct the party without colleagues. It is absurd to think that we can. And now that we have lost Lenin it is stupid even to speak about it. Common labor, collective leadership, a united front and unity among the Central Committee, with, as a vital condition, the subordination of the minority to the majority, are what we really need at the present time."
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 149

Not so very long ago, Stalin said to a foreign visitor who was anxious, as are all intelligent tourists in the USSR (particularly those who visit important Soviet personalities), to go closely into this question of personal power in the Workers' and Peasants' State (looking meaningly at Stalin): "No, one must make no individual decision. Individual decisions are always, or nearly always, biased. In every association, in every community, there are people to whose opinions heed must be paid. In every association, in every community, there are also men who may express erroneous opinions. Experience of three Revolutions has shown us that out of 100 individual decisions which have not been examined and corrected collectively, 90 are biased. The leadership organization of our Party in the Central Committee, which directs all the Soviet and communist organizations, consists of about 70 people and it is among those 70 members of the Central Committee that are to be found our best technicians, our cleverest specialists and the men who best understand every branch of our activities. It is in this Supreme Council that the whole wisdom of our Party is concentrated. Each man is entitled to challenge his neighbor's individual opinion or suggestion. Each man may give the benefit of his own experience. If it were otherwise, if individual decisions were admitted, there would be serious mistakes in our work. But because each one may correct the errors of all the others and everyone considers these corrections seriously, our decisions have hitherto been as correct as it is possible for them to be."
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 150

There was no question of personal dictatorship by Stalin in those days [after Lenin died]; to the contrary, Stalin came forward as the advocate of collective leadership. He accused Trotsky of seeking to assume one-man rule and supported Zinoviev and Kamenev in their attacks on Trotsky.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 85

When, at the Fourteenth Party Congress, Kamenev accused Stalin to his face of trying to set up one-man rule, Stalin blandly replied:
"To lead the party otherwise than collectively is impossible. Now that Ilich is not with us, it is silly to dream of such a thing [applause]. It is silly to talk about it. Collective work, collective leadership, unity in the party, unity in the organs of the Central Committee, with the minority submitting to the majority–that is what we need now."

Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 183

AVERAGE RUSSIAN THINKS HE IS FREER THAN AMERICANS

It is one of the strangest things, that the average Soviet Russian honestly believes that the system under which he lives, which we consider a tyranny, or dictatorship, or totalitarian regime, or anything save freedom–the average Russian thinks that his regime is freer than "the plutocratic oligarchy" (as he terms it) under which, he says, Americans live, move, and have their being. That's what the Russian says, and that's what the Russian thinks, and he doesn't believe in our freedoms, but he does believe in his own. It's amazing, but that's how it is.
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1941, p. 161

When one talks with Soviet people on the subject [freedom], they maintain that they alone possess effective democracy and that it exists in the so-called democratic countries in form only. And they ask how, if democracy means government by the people, the people can exercise this government if they are not in possession of the means of production. In the so-called democratic countries, they assert, the people are rulers in name only and not in fact; the power is actually in the hands of those who have control of the means of production. To what, they ask again, is this so-called democratic freedom reduced if one examines it more closely? It is confined to the freedom of railing with impunity against the government and the opposing political parties and being able, once in every three or four years, to throw a little piece of paper into a ballot box without being spied upon. But nowhere do these "liberties" afford a guarantee or even a possibility that the will of the majority will really be carried out. What can be done with freedom of opinion, of the press, of meetings, if one has no control over the press, printing-works, and meeting halls? And in what country have the people control over those things? Where can be people express their opinions effectively and where find effective representation?… And, the Soviet people conclude, all so-called democratic liberties will remain fictitious so long as they are not founded upon the true freedom of the people, which can exist only when the means of production are under the control of the community.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 58

I myself have held democratic liberties dear for most of my life, and freedom of opinion and of the press was to me, as to any author, very precious…. This democratic conviction of mine received its first blow during the War, when I was made to realize that, despite all democracy, war was continued against the will of the majority of the people. In the years after the War, the gaps in the usual democratic constitutions became more and more evident to me, and today I incline towards the opinion that constitutional civil liberties are more or less a decoy to enable the will of a small minority to be carried out.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 61

FEW SUPPORT THE LIVING CHURCH

On the other hand, though it may be reckoned that fully seven-tenths of the clergy and religious laity favor reform, it is doubtful whether more than a tenth is willing to support the

“Living Church,” which the majority [of the clergy] regards as having sold itself for a mess of Bolshevik pottage.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 63

COMMUNISTS PROVIDE HONEST LEADERSHIP

In a country rotten with corruption the communists are honest. In a country where they are all-powerful they live meagerly and, like Lenin, work themselves beyond the limit of physical endurance. So they tried to resusitate Russian industry despite the handicaps of civil and foreign war, treachery, and incompetence.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 90

John Reed brings as back to the human reality of the revolution…. Reed helps to show us how petty and how wrong is the scurrilous gossip-column approach to history, which depicts these leaders as self-serving conspirators mad for power for power’s sake and each driven by personal ambition. Not, of course, that personal ambitions were absent, but they were minuscule parts of an overwhelming collective dedication to the revolution. And the spirit in which these men met, as even the scanty minutes reveal, was essentially one of good comradeship, in spite of some differences between them.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 34

Finally, if Soviet society had been so shaken by the trials and purges and so corrupted as Khrushchev, Conquest, and Medvedev imply, the USSR could not have won the war. Only a basically sound society could have achieved such a feat, a feat which required national cooperation, initiative, and morale.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 133

“Politics based on principles are the only honest ones,” said Stalin, repeating Lenin. That is the declaration of basic principle, the major precept which, as Stalin again says, “Enables one to storm impregnable positions.”
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 16

…Dzerzhinsky himself was a revolutionary ascetic, known to be morally incorruptible and dedicated absolutely to the revolutionary cause.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 5

As we were traveling back to Moscow, on the road, Stalin stopped the car for some fresh air. Vacationers with their children immediately surrounded Stalin. Stalin asked Vlasik to go and get some candies in order to give to the children. Vlasik went to this Georgian man who was running a kiosk, got the candies, and gave them out to the children, while the parents were discussing every subject imaginable with Stalin.
At night where we rested, Stalin asked Vlasik:
Did you pay the man for the candies?
No, I did not have the time.
Return immediately to the kiosk and pay the man the money that we owe him!
The kiosk man was very proud that he had sold candy to comrade Stalin.

Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 54

I confess that I approached Stalin with a certain amount of suspicion and prejudice. A picture had been built up in my mind of a very reserved and self-centered fanatic, a despot without vices, a jealous monopolizer of power. I had been inclined to take the part of Trotsky against him. I had formed a very high opinion perhaps an excessive opinion, of Trotsky's military and administrative abilities, and it seemed to me that Russia, which is in such urgent need of directive capacity at every turn, could not afford to send them into exile. Trotsky's Autobiography, and more particularly the second volume, had modified this judgment but I still expected to meet a ruthless, hard–possibly doctrinaire–and self-sufficient man at Moscow; a Georgian highlander whose spirit had never completely emerged from its native mountain glen.
… Everything I had heard in favor of the First Five Year Plan I had put through a severely skeptical sieve, and yet there remained a growing effect of successful enterprise. I had listened more and more greedily to any first-hand gossip I could hear about both these contrasted men. I had already put a query against my grim anticipation of a sort of Bluebeard at the center of Russian affairs. Indeed if I had not been in reaction against these first preconceptions and wanting to get nearer the truth of the matter, I should never have gone again to Moscow.
Wells, Herbert George. Experiment in Autobiography. New York: Macmillan. 1934, p. 684

All lingering anticipations of a dour sinister Highlander vanished at the sight of him. He is one of those people who in a photograph or painting become someone entirely different. He is not easy to describe, and many descriptions exaggerate his darkness and stillness. His limited sociability and a simplicity that makes him inexplicable to the more consciously disingenuous, has subjected him to the strangest inventions of whispering scandal. His harmless, orderly, private life is kept rather more private than his immense public importance warrants, and when, a year or so ago, his wife died suddenly of some brain lesion, the imaginative [people] spun a legend of suicide which a more deliberate publicity would have made impossible. All such shadowy undertow, all suspicion of hidden emotional tensions, ceased forever, after I had talked to him for a few minutes.
My first impression was of a rather commonplace-looking man dressed in an embroidered white shirt, dark trousers and boots, staring out of the window of a large, generally empty, room. He turned rather shyly and shook hands in a friendly manner. His face also was commonplace, friendly and commonplace, not very well modelled, not in any way "fine." He looked past me rather than at me but not evasively; it was simply that he had none of the abundant curiosity which had kept Lenin watching me closely from behind the hand he held over his defective eye, all the time he talked to me.
The conversation hung on a phase of shyness. We both felt friendly, and we wanted to be at our ease with each other, and we were not at our ease. He had evidently a dread of self-importance in the encounter; he posed not at all, but he knew we were going to talk of very great matters. He sat down at a table and Mr. Umansky [the translator] sat down beside us, produced his notebook and patted it open in a competent, expectant manner.
I felt there was heavy going before me but Stalin was so ready and willing to explain his position that in a little while the pause for interpretation was almost forgotten in the preparation of new phrases for the argument. I had supposed there was about forty minutes before me, but when at that period I made a reluctant suggestion of breaking off, he declared

his firm intention of going on for three hours. And we did. We were both keenly interested in each other's point of view. What I said was the gist of what I had intended to say….
I had never met a man more candid, fair, and honest, and to these qualities it is, and to nothing occult and sinister, that he owes his tremendous undisputed ascendancy in Russia. I had thought before I saw him that he might be where he was because men were afraid of him, but I realize that he owes his position to the fact that no one is afraid of him and everybody trusts him.
Wells, Herbert George. Experiment in Autobiography. New York: Macmillan. 1934, p. 687-689

Stalin's salary is about 1000 rubles per month, the equivalent of which, in Russia in 1939, was about $200. He is completely uninterested in money. Like all the Soviet leaders he is a poor man; no financial scandal has ever touched any of them. Salaries of Communists are adjusted by category, this system having replaced the former rule whereby no man in the party could earn more than 225 rubles per month. There is no upward limit; the average is 600. No communist may accept a salary for more than one post, no matter how many he holds; and no member of the party is allowed in theory at least to retain royalties from books.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 534

"Their penal servitude is not a stigma," wrote a well-informed anonymous commentator, "but a token of their new nobility. They are proud of their criminal record as the emblem of their new aristocracy. Yet the leaders of the Bolshevist regime are 'good' men in the most ominous meaning of that word…. The comparison with the early Church militant and the Jesuit order is irresistible. The Bolsheviks are latter-day saints and crusaders, but of a material not a spiritual world, and they are the most thoroughgoing reformers and moralists in history–in their own way. Some of them drink, some have mistresses, but their morality is of another kind. They are the first autocratic rulers in history who do not use their power for personal profit. They do not graft;… They have no castles, no titles, no purple robes; they live in a couple of rooms on a standard below that of an American bricklayer; they are pledged to personal poverty and service."
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 537

If it were not for the dictatorship of the proletariat, Russia would probably have the dictatorship of a military clique or of certain bankers and financiers. Whatever may be said for or against the Soviet regime it must be admitted by both friend and foe that the Soviet leaders have kept the great natural resources of the country 100% in Russian hands. As much cannot be said for the rulers of many other backward countries. The Soviet dictatorship is one of the few instances in history where a small group of men have seized the power of a great nation and used that power not for personal aggrandizement and selfish gain but for what they thought was the best interests of all the common people.
The Communist Party is the vanguard of the new era. It is the alert, conscious minority which is guiding the country forward. If democracy and not dictatorship were in the saddle, would it be possible to continue the socialistic program long enough to give it a fair trial? Would not a fickle populace be lured away by the bright promises of charlatans and demagogues and hand over the power to interests which were secretly controlled by selfish financial interests?
…Americans may or may not be grateful that they do not live under communism and a Soviet system, but they certainly cannot with justice throw many stones at the Soviet power. Considering the illiteracy of the Russian masses, considering the backwardness of the

country, who can be sure that any other party or any other structure of government would have done more for the genuine welfare of the people?
Davis, Jerome. The New Russia. New York: The John Day company, c1933, p. 130-131

SMALL PEOPLE CAN CRITICIZE BIG ONES

Some cub reporter on the Communist youth Pravda or an illiterate worker sling a pebble at the railroad commissariat and get away with it if he only has facts to back his charge.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 204

Perhaps the administrators of industry are protected from criticism by the cowed masses? Heaven knows what Trotskyists and other critics of the Soviet Union would do if they were. For many hostile criticisms are based on the open public criticism directed against the organs of government and industry in the USSR, by the workers of the Soviet Union, both in the wall newspapers and the trade union press. In what other country of the world is it possible for the workers to establish in every department of the factory a wall newspaper exposing the shortcomings of the management on a whole variety of technical and social questions?
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 156

Indeed nothing would be more interesting than for some of the people who talk about lack of freedom of criticism in the Soviet Union to make a six months' comparison of the British and Soviet press.
They would find in the Soviet press many criticisms of the poor functioning of certain factories in the Soviet Union. Are there factories which function poorly in Britain? There are, but even if the proprietors of the British press had any inclination or interest in criticizing these factories, there is one all-sufficient deterrent–the law of libel. They would find factories in the Soviet Union criticized for neglecting to improve the working conditions. There are many such factories in Britain, but again the law of libel prevents any possibility of pillorying the owners of such factories.
The fact is that not only are the officials in the State, the Party, and industry, removable, but they are subjected to a floodlight of criticism that is without parallel in any capitalist State.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 157

One of the chief revelations to come from the opening of Soviet archives is the sheer volume of letters received by newspapers, as well as party and state leaders and institutions. We now know that in the not atypical month of July 1935, Krest'ianskaia Gazeta (the peasants' newspaper) received approximately 26,000 letters. Kalinin, who as president of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets was one of the most frequent recipients of letters, received an average of 77,000 a year between 1923 and 1935. Throughout 1936 Zhdanov, Leningrad party secretary, received 130 letters a day. The regional party secretary in Dniepropetrovsk, Khataevich, reported, perhaps with some exaggeration, that he received 250 letters a day. Letters also poured into other newspapers, municipal soviets, procurators' offices, the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD), party and state control commissions, and offices of Politburo members and government leaders, including Stalin. These letters contained complaints, petitions, denunciations, confessions, and advice…. The majority were sent by individuals who signed their names, for anonymous and collectively

signed letters were frowned upon by the authorities. Regardless of their motivations for sending letters, authors expected a response, and archives indicate that some kind of response usually was forthcoming. Newspapers published only a tiny fraction of the letters. More often, staffers forwarded them to the appropriate agencies or wrote replies themselves. Individual leaders who received letters responded directly to some and forwarded others with comments and queries.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 7-8

The spring of 1936 seems to have been punctuated by warnings sent down from the top leadership, concerning the lack of interest so often shown by the authorities when they received letters of complaint in protest from ordinary working people. During March a decree went out from the Central Committee denouncing the "political blindness" of two regional newspaper editors and criticizing their attitude to this sort of readers' letters as "bureaucratic" and "feudal." It ordered newspapers to publish the "politically most important" correspondence and to examine any allegations contained in it. In addition the decree contained a sharp attack on the current practice of forwarding letters of complaint to the people complained about. Later, the leadership of the Western Region ordered that complaints received by various bodies of the Party or of the soviets should be looked into carefully, and the archive material of this region gives evidence of an unprecedented zeal in analyzing information coming up "from below."…
In May 1936 a decree from the Commission of Soviet Control, approved by the Council of People's Commissars and receiving wide press coverage, severely condemned the abuse of power by officials of "soviet institutions"–that is the cadres running the administrative and economic apparatus of the whole country. Pointing out that most of the complaints received were about cadres overstepping their powers, the decree laid an increased responsibility on officialdom in the whole matter of examining and rectifying without delay the errors or faults that people wrote about….
This decree constituted nothing less than a forthright condemnation of the "soviet apparatus," that is of the state apparatus itself, on account of its negligence in carrying out the repeated directives of the Party and the government, over taking into account objections and complaints by the public. The decree did more than order that complaints must not be passed on to the official concerned, it set time limits on investigating and dealing with them, and specified the individual responsibility of cadres at every level of the apparatus. It even made provision for officials to be brought to court if they should be guilty of slowness or failure in carrying out action to remedy faults brought to their attention in letters.
The letters and complaints in the archives of the Western Region cover virtually all the problems of daily life, from collective farms to industrial enterprises. They denounce the practices of the heads of these organizations, as well as the behavior of cadres of local soviets and even Party officials. With each letter go the papers showing what investigations were made, the reports and the evidence obtained, and other such documents. One can find that complainants were not always objective in their criticisms and that at times the allegations were false;…
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 66-68

SOVIET CENSORSHIP IS SENSIBLE AND BALANCED

Among the many difficulties, censorship, which is generally supposed to rank highest, is less terrible than is thought abroad. Though strict in a certain direction, it is usually applied with intelligence and moderation. Unlike most censors whom the writer has known in the past seventeen years, the Bolsheviks are always willing to discuss matters with the correspondent before a cable message is sent and meet him halfway in modifying a sentence so as not to break the thread of his message or even to convey in more moderate form the item disapproved.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 206

During the past two or three years there has been no censorship of news sent by mail, but it is always understood the responsibility for such news will fall on the correspondent if the authorities object later, whereas for cable messages the censor himself must bear the brunt of subsequent official ire.
It cannot be said, however, that the Soviet press department is equally satisfactory in giving news to foreign reporters. Contrary to what generally is believed abroad–perhaps for that very reason–far from the Soviet government pumping propaganda into resident correspondents, the latter generally have to extract it drop by drop. When the writer contrasts the admirable mechanism of the French press bureau–that is, propaganda department–during and shortly after the world war with the aloof inertia of the "scratch-for-yourself" attitude of the Soviet foreign office, it becomes positively infuriating to hear people abroad say: "Of course, Moscow correspondents write just what the authorities want."
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 206

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"Of course, Moscow correspondents write just what the authorities want."
Far from knowing what they want, it is a labor of Hercules to drag scraps of official information from the omnivorous monopoly of Tass, the Soviet Government press agency….
Duranty, Walter. "Soviet Censorship Hurts Russia Most," New York Times, June 23, 1931.

The Foreign Office maintains that its censorship is solely in the interests of "fairness and accuracy," and that it never censors opinion. According to the correspondents, this general principle is usually observed. They have little complaint of the censorship, which they

describe as “the lightest possible.” Dispatches are not blue-pencilled. If a change is desired the censor usually telephones the correspondent, asking if he would mind changing a phrase or sentence; or in serious matters he may ask the correspondent to discuss the point in person.
One correspondent who sent a dispatch on the night of the big police raids in Moscow in June, 1927, following the murder of the Soviet ambassador at Warsaw, alleged that “thousands were being arrested.” He was told that the censor could not approve such an exaggerated statement, but would let him say “over a 1000.” Subsequent estimates showed that the censor was nearer right than the correspondent.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 150

The Foreign Office keeps close watch on correspondents through reading the foreign press. It also sizes up their point of view. One type of correspondent, of whom there have been a number in Moscow, is the man who “lies by telling the truth.” He selects from the Russian press for his dispatches all the damaging articles he can find, omitting anything favorable to the Soviet regime. The censor cannot call him to account for inaccuracy, but he is warned that if his paper’s policy is to print only damaging news his leave to stay will not be renewed. Since the civil war ended in 1921 there have been only two actual expulsions of correspondents from the country–one English, one American. But some have not been readmitted after going out.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 151

SU RANK IS BASED ON MERIT, NOT WEALTH OR BIRTH

Rank may replace class in the Bolshevik cosmogony to satisfy human needs, but rank based on merit, not on wealth or birth.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 210

… for in Russia the highest incomes go to the big engineer and the great writer.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam’s sons, 1942, p. 143

STALIN SAYS THAT IN CAPITALISM STRONG PREY ON THE WEAK

Stalin said, “it is a law of capitalist society that the strong must prey on the weak; you are right if you are strong; if weak you are wrong!’”
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 236

CAN CRITICIZE RUNNING OF SYSTEM BUT NOT THE SYSTEM ITSELF

The public is taught to know and recognize all three “class enemies” and to welcome action against them. On the other hand, the press, while mercilessly exposing the defects in the present system, is careful never to suggest that a different system–that is, the previous system–might be better.
The press concentrates public attention upon defects and ways to improve them, upon enemies and ways to defeat them, but it rigidly excludes the implication that there is anything wrong with the system itself.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 282

While public opposition to the basic program of communism is impossible in the Soviet Union, criticism of all aspects of Soviet life is encouraged and rewarded. Stalin not only urges every worker to criticize publicly whatever is not sound in factory, mine, and mill, but he has pointed the way in his public addresses…. In its appeal of June 2, 1928, the Central Committee gave final shape to the campaign of self-criticism, calling upon all forces of the Party and the working-class to develop self-criticism 'from top to bottom and from bottom to top,' without respect of person." The result is a perpetual stream of criticism in the papers attacking instances of inefficiency or wrong-doing.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 67

UPROOTING IS WORSE IN THE US

March 1, 1933–To Americans it doubtless sounds atrocious that any authority should thus uproot and disrupt homes. But the Bolsheviks reply sarcastically, "And what about your economic system, which suddenly and mercilessly cuts jobs and savings from under millions of families and throws them literally into the street or at the mercy of charity? Don't you know that there have been more American homes thus disrupted in the past four years than in all of our removals of kulaks and other enemies? And, remember, we uproot enemies; you break the hearts of your own supporters."
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 309

12 YEAR ADVANCE BY ALTRUISTIC BOLSHEVIKS HAS BEEN REMARKABLE

October 1, 1933–when I came to Russia 12 years ago I was prejudiced against the Bolsheviks for a variety of reasons. And in that year of famine I found conditions terrible enough. But I also found, which I had not known before, that the Russian masses had been enslaved by the tsarist regime, whose corruption and incompetence had been the chief levers of its own downfall. I found the Soviet leaders were in the main altruists–fanatical altruists, if you like–honestly trying to make a disciplined and self respecting nation out of this horde of newly liberated slaves.
During twelve years I had had no reason to change this opinion. Without holding a brief for socialism I have watched a steady progress–by zigzags, as Lenin said, but progress, nonetheless–toward the development and practice of a working socialist system. When I compare the Moscow of 1933 with the Moscow of 1921 I am amazed by what has been accomplished, and the change in the position of Soviet Russia as a factor in world affairs is no less striking than Russia's advance from a backward agrarian state, economically dependent upon the industrial West, to a stage of industrial autonomy and the solid foundations of economic self-sufficiency.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 330

One cannot, I think, judge the Communist achievement fairly without taking full account of the stupendous obstacles which stood in the way of its realization. In a backward, semi-Asiatic peasant country, shattered by war and social upheaval, the Communists introduced a completely new system of economic administration, bound, in its first stages, to

be accompanied by costly and discouraging blunders. And they installed as the ruling class of this complicated new social order the Russian workers, who were to a large extent shut out from the limited cultural opportunities afforded under the Tsarist regime and who, while full of militant revolutionary spirit, were inferior to West European and American workers in general and technical education.
If one keeps a firm mental grasp on these two facts and their manifold implications, it will be recognized that the real cause for wonder in Soviet Russia is not that so much is amiss but that so much has been achieved.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 424

Let us make a few comparisons with foreign countries so as to fix these ideas in our minds. In 1933 the United States figures were 110.2% of the pre-war figures, France 107.6%, England had reached 85.2%, Germany 75.4%, and the USSR 391 percent.
In agricultural machinery and locomotive construction the USSR today (1935) holds the world record (in agricultural machinery alone her annual production represents a value of 420 million gold rubles, against that of 325 million in the United States).
If we endeavor to visualize the titanic highway that would be made by the great factories of the world placed end to end, we would see in that evocation of the supernatural: Magnitogorsk (metallurgy), not yet quite completed, and which, when it is completed, will equal the American Gary Works which holds the record for size at the moment, Cheliabinsk (heavy tractors), the Stalin Automobile Works in Moscow, Kramatorsk, in the Dombass region, (heavy machinery), the Kaganovich factory in Moscow (ball bearings)–which are giants of their species in a world of giants. The Lugansky locomotive factory is the most powerful in Europe, and masses of other factories (machinery which makes machinery and works metal) bear the numbers two or three in world magnitude.
Some other comparisons with foreign conditions:
Unemployment– During the period of the Plan, when unemployment was eliminated from the USSR, the number of unemployed rose, in England from 1,290,000 to 2,800,000 and in Germany from 3,376,000 to 5,500,000…. In the United States, according to the Alexander Hamilton Institute, the number of unemployed in March 1933 was 17 million. In Italy there were 1,300,000 unemployed. In Spain, there were 6,500,000 unemployed in September 1934.
We are told that in many of these countries unemployment has decreased. Let us observe that in the same places in which they talk of the reduction of unemployment they also talk of the reduction in the total amount of wages. But it should be particularly observed that there is no bluff or deception in the world more shameless than those which surround the official figures of unemployment in all capitalist countries. It is impossible to humbug the public more deliberately than the competent authorities do in juggling with words and figures to disguise the true situation. No capitalist country admits its unemployed. Entire categories of workers, and of industries not having a certain proportion of workers, are “forgotten,” and whole districts are “neglected.” After performing the operation which consists in cutting working hours in two so as to give the half-day obtained to an unemployed man, this unemployed man is removed from the list, whereas no change has really taken place at all, for twice 1/2 still makes 1.
Let us pass over the enormous assistance given to scholars and to scientific institutes and to their many-sided activities, and let us merely say a few words on the subject of public education…. Every enterprise is a center of culture, every barracks is a school, every factory a factory for molding men’s minds–let us merely observe that in the USSR there are 60

million pupils of all sorts whose education is financed by the State–one-person out of every three in the Union. As for the Republics, I will quote one or two among the many: in Tatary the number of schools, which was 35 in 1913, was 1730 in 1933. The Cherkesses possessed 94 percent of illiterates in 1914; nowadays there is not a single one–0%. There were 26 times as many schools in Daghestan in 1931 as there were in 1914 and 38 times as many in Kazkistan. Seventy different languages are cultivated in the USSR. Twenty of these were not written and had to be stabilized by being given alphabets.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 201-205

The increase in fixed assets between 1913 and 1940 gives a precise idea of the incredible effort supplied by the Soviet people. Starting from an index of 100 for the year preceding the war, the fixed assets for industry reached 136 at the beginning of the First Five-Year Plan in 1928. On the eve of the Second World War, twelve years later, in 1940, the index had risen to 1,085 points, i.e. an eight-fold increase in twelve years. The fixed assets for agriculture evolved from 100 to 141, just before the collectivization in 1928, to reach 333 points in 1940. [L'Office central de statistique près le Conseil des ministres de l'U.R.S.S. Les Progrès du pouvoir soviétique depuis 40 ans en chiffres: Recueil statistique (Moscow: Éditions en langues étrangères, 1958), p 26]
For eleven years, from 1930 to 1940, the Soviet Union saw an average increase in industrial production of 16.5 per cent. [Ibid. , p. 30.]
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 51 [p. 42 on the NET]

In the early 30s it [Moscow] was a rapidly expanding modern city, as well as the traditional capital of the Soviet empire. Its growth was indeed spectacular. At a pace unthinkable in other countries it changed physically, clearing slums, expanding; whole blocks of old houses were replaced by splendid buildings, narrow winding lanes were straightened and broadened into magnificent thoroughfares. Today Moscow has no less than 2260 libraries (with a total of 65 million books), sixty museums, 100 colleges, 30 theaters–some of them world-famous–the largest Academy of Science in the world, an Academy of Medicine with 25 large research centers, an Academy of Agricultural Science with 13 research stations, an Academy of Architecture, an Academy of Pedagogy and, among many others, an Academy of Ballistics.
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 127

We could also boast some remarkable accomplishments in our lives. In spite of muddles, mistakes, and blunders, tens of millions of people became literate, general secondary education was introduced, higher education and health care were provided free of charge, formerly backward peoples on the outskirts of the czarist empire were introduced to the best in the national and world cultures. And the low rents, cheap city transport, low crime, and full employment–all this was taken for granted.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin’s Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 387

COMMUNISTS ARE THE MOST ENERGETIC AND SACRIFICING

The Party Purge (Chistka)–Lenin's rule that no drones or sluggards might remain in the party has not been forgotten, and it is not always pleasant to pay the heavy party dues and give up any salary over 225 rubles monthly.
One often hears a man or woman, even communists themselves, say:
"I would never marry a communist. They are so busy that home life scarcely exists."
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 359

SU CHILDREN AND PIONEERS ARE THE GREATEST

The Pioneers have a sort of honor system of self-government and discipline at school and are the freest, most upstanding, and intelligent children I have ever met anywhere. They are clean, which Russians used not to be; they play games for fun and think their country is the greatest ever. They know about sex at an early age and it does not worry them–in this respect all Russians are singularly natural and matter of fact–and they think it is a disgrace to be rich and have other people work for you. They do not care a rap about what Americans call comfort, but they know the joy of united effort and have an opportunity to take part in national life in drives or campaigns or investigations or what not to a degree enjoyed by no other children in the world. The girls are just the same as the boys and they are "swell," and hard as life is here in Russia this correspondent is willing to go on record that no youngsters anywhere have a better time or are likely to make more useful citizens.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 361

STALIN OPPOSES EQUAL WAGES

July 5, 1931–Stalin's "PROGRAM SPEECH"
"In many of our factories the wage system is such as to leave no difference between the skilled and unskilled worker and between hard and easy labor," he said. "This leads to unskilled workers showing no interest in raising their qualifications, and skilled workers move from factory to factory in search of a place where their qualifications will be more valued. To give this shifting a free hand would undermine our industry, wreck our plan of production, and stop improvement in the quality of manufactured goods. We must destroy such equal wages. It is unbearable to see the locomotive driver receiving the same wages as the bookkeeper.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 387

But, it may be asked, why did Stalin stress greater wages for greater service?…
What Stalin saw and wished to correct was an overhasty tendency to equalize wages in pursuit of "100 percent" communism at a time when, in fact, the collectivist system could not yet assure the masses of an adequate return for their labor or assure dominant individuals adequate recognition.
Stalin said there was no communism yet and even the penultimate step to communism–namely, socialism–was barely established. It is, therefore, necessary to maintain for some time to come direct monetary rewards to stimulate individual effort.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 390

At the same time as the new peasant policy in 1933, the official class came clearly and unmistakably to the fore in the State and in all official life. Now it was explained that the old

principle of the revolution requiring equal distribution of all necessaries and luxuries, and the attempt to give the same payment to all occupied persons, were simply a Trotskyist heresy. With the completion of the first Five-year Plan, Socialism had been built up in the Soviet Union. But that did not mean equal pay for all and universal equality.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 211

Piece-work, bonuses, Taylorism and individual competitive stunts were organized by factory directors throughout the USSR under different names and with different objectives….
The murmured complaints of those who condemned this process, because it enabled some workmen to earn more than others, received a sharp rebuke from the General Secretary himself: “By equality we do not mean the leveling of personal requirements and conditions of life, but the suppression of classes; that is to say, equal enfranchisement for every worker after the overthrow and expropriation of the capitalists. It is the duty of everyone to work according to his capacity, and the right of everyone to be paid according to the work he does. Marxism starts from the fact that the needs and tastes of men can never be alike, nor equal either in quantity or quality.”
As usual, in spite of Stalin’s eminently sane way of looking at such controversial points, many of his subordinates carried the schemes to such excesses….
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 77

Three reproaches have been leveled at Stalin and his Soviets: that they are antipatriotic, that they take away everyone’s property, and that they repress every individual’s intelligence in a universal equalization. All three are false.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam’s sons, 1942, p. 153

As regards the fable of equalization, we find that it had been derided by Marx, Lenin, and Stalin alike. In the land which has raised science to the status of a divinity, superior talent, higher education, and greater application are better rewarded in money and honor than anywhere else in the world. As the Western world has taken pleasure in reproaching the Soviets successively that they applied too much or too little equalization, I asked Stalin how the newly introduced piecework, implying an uneven wage scale, could be reconciled with Marxian principles. He answered:
“A completely socialized state, where all receive the same amount of bread and meat, the same kind of clothes, the same products, and exactly the same amounts of these products–such a Socialism was not recognized by Marx…. So long, then, as the distinction of class is not entirely obliterated, people will be paid according to their productive efficiency, each according to his capacity. That is the Marxist formula for the first stage of socialism.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam’s sons, 1942, p. 154

Stalin is similarly undogmatic regarding Marxian theories. They must stand the test of use. For instance, in the early days of the Russian Revolution, wages were much more uniform than they are today. It was found that bonuses to workers and managers brought better results. Wide differentials in pay exist today….
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 12

A different system has also brought different incentives into play in the Soviet Union. The powerful profit motive does not exist. Soviet citizens cannot dream of becoming millionaires

through having others work for them. This does not mean, however, that Sovietism makes no appeal to self interest. Stalin believes that self interest is not harmful as long as it can be synchronized with the public welfare. He has tried to build a system of rewards for achievement without private monopoly and private profit.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 65

Wages are determined by results. The more a worker produces, the more he is paid. A truck driver I met in Moscow in 1944 had been getting as high as $600 per month. A certain norm is set for every job, and the more the worker exceeds this, the more he is paid. This inequality has been greeted with cheers and groans, according to the point of view, as a departure from socialist principles. Stalin has denied this when he said, "These people evidently think that socialism calls for equality, for leveling the requirements and the personal lives of all members of society. Needless to say, such an assumption has nothing in common with Marxism…. By equality Marxism means not equality in personal requirements and personal life, but the abolition of classes, i.e. (a) the equal emancipation of all toilers from exploitation, after the capitalists have been overthrown and expropriated, (b) the equal abolition for all of private property in the means of production, after this has been transformed into the property of the whole society, (c) the equal duty of all to work according to their ability, and the equal right of all toilers to receive according to their requirements. And Marxism starts out with the assumption that people's abilities and requirements are not, and cannot be, equal in quality or quantity, either in the period of socialism or of communism."
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 65

This does not mean that in setting to work with these purely moral incentives there can be no exaggerations and no mistakes. Stalin himself has emphasized this point insofar as concerns despotic measures– too childishly despotic in a blissfully unconscious way at present–such as the mathematically equal distribution of salaries and the strict leveling of everyone–measures having a somewhat clumsy and demagogic character which make them more harmful than useful in the development, still so immature, of individual and collective social personality.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 145

In order to put an end into this evil we must get rid of equalitarianism and break down the old wage scales. In order to put an end to this evil we must set up a wage scale that will take into account the difference between skilled labor and unskilled labor, between heavy work and light work. It cannot be tolerated that the rolling mill hand in a steel mill should earn no more than a sweeper. It cannot be tolerated that a locomotive driver on a railway should earn only as much as a copying clerk. Marx and Lenin said that the difference between skilled and unskilled work would continue to exist even under socialism and even after classes had been abolished, that only under communism would this difference disappear and that, therefore, even under socialism "wages" must be paid according to labor performed and not according to need. But our industrialist and trade union equalitarians do not agree with this and opine that that difference has already disappeared under our Soviet system. Who is right, Marx and Lenin, or our equalitarians? We may take it that Marx and Lenin are right. But if so, it follows that whoever draws up wage scales on the "principle" of equality, and

ignores the difference between skilled and unskilled labor, is at loggerheads with Marxism and Leninism.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 131

But the Socialist movement did not promise that immediately industry and agriculture became socially owned and controlled, the unskilled laborer, irrespective of the service he was rendering to society, would get the same wage as the works manager. It promised to rid both laborer and manager of the necessity of carrying an exploiting class on their backs. It did not promise that they would get the same wage in return for the service they were rendering.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 93

Perhaps the most important aspect of his [Stalin] social policy was his fight against the equalitarian trends. He insisted on the need for a highly differentiated scale of material rewards for labor, designed to encourage skill and efficiency. He claimed that Marxists were no levellers in the popular sense; and he found support for his thesis in Marx's well-known saying that even in a classless society workers would at first be paid according to their labor and not to their needs.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 338

Somewhat later I brought the conversation round to the surprising change of front that communism had made in abandoning the old theory of equality and introducing piece-work in its place, thus giving the energetic worker a chance to earn more than his companion. "We were astonished," I concluded, "when you yourself characterized equalization as the remains of middle-class prejudice." Stalin answered: "A completely socialized State where all receive the same amount of bread and meat, the same kind of clothes, the same products in exactly the same amount of each product–such Socialism was not recognized by Marx. Marx merely says that so long as the classes are not entirely wiped out and so long as work has not become the object of desire–for now most people look upon it as a burden –there are many people who would like to have other people do more work than they. So long, then, as the distinction of class is not entirely obliterated, people be paid according to their productive efficiency, each according to his capacity. That is the Marxist formula for the first stage of Socialism. When Socialism has reached the complete stage everyone will do what he is capable of doing and for the work which he has done he will be paid according to his needs. It should be perfectly clear that different people have different needs, great and small. Socialism has never denied the difference in personal tastes and needs either in kind or in extent. Read Marx's criticism of Stirner and the Gotha programme. Marx there attacks the principal of equalization. That is a part of primitive peasant psychology, the idea of equalization. It is not Socialistic. In the West they look upon the thing in such a primitive way that they imagine we want to divide up everything evenly. That is the theory of Babeuf. He never knew anything about scientific Socialism. Even Cromwell wanted to level everything." Although I thought him wrong in regard to Cromwell it was not my business to enter into a historical argument with Stalin.
Ludwig, Emil. Leaders of Europe. London: I. Nicholson and Watson Ltd., 1934, p. 382

HOW INVENTORS SHOULD BE TREATED

November 13, 1931–the whole force of the dominant Bolshevik party, which in practice is intensely autocratic and organized with military discipline, is bent upon putting over collectivism and crushing individualism in the sense in which individualism implies personal gain by making others work for one, not, however, in the sense of personal reward for one's own good work.
Take, for instance, the hypothetical case of Thomas Edison under the present Soviet system. He would get from his own inventions not only honor but monetary award. He would be placed in charge of an invention department at a high salary, receive quarters for his own use, an automobile, and the like on privileged terms and get credit for the work produced by his staff.
He would be a figure of national prominence, but he would not be allowed to make a cent of personal profit from the inventions produced in his own office.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 389
It is often said that under a socialist economy there will be no rewards for inventors. Stalin, however, enacted a law providing that from the moment that an invention is recognized as useful the inventor will be paid. He does not have to wait until it is actually utilized.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 79

HOW ARE THE MOST ENERGETIC PEOPLE TREATED IN SU

What, then, it may be asked, becomes of the exceptions to the average in Russia, of the dominant type that is not content to except the lot of his fellows and wants and is able to get ahead? I made bold to say that in no country in the world are there such opportunities for this type as in the Soviet Union; that is, to get what this type wants–leadership, power, and the esteem of others.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 389

STALIN'S SU WAS REAL SOCIALISM

Foreigners seem to think because Karl Marx demanded the possession and control of production and means a production for his Socialist state, that this was the beginning and end of socialism. Theoretically of course, it is true, but in practise the thing which distinguishes a real working socialist system from a pseudo-socialist system is the abolition of the power of money and the profit motive and of the possibility for any individual or group of individuals to gain surplus value from the work of others. This and this alone is the true foundation of socialism. It does not exist in Germany and it does not exist in Italy, but in Soviet Russia today it is a cardinal principal which is absolute and definite and supported by the harshest of laws and rules and regulations. No less an expert in foreign affairs than David Lawrence suggested in hand article in the Saturday Evening Post of July 20, 1935, that there was no great difference in the systems of the USSR, Germany, and Italy, and said, "in none of these countries is there any semblance today of socialism." This is sheer ignorance.
Duranty, Walter. I Write as I Please. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1935, p. 339

(Sinclair's comments only)

I could go on at length to cite criteria and to pass such judgments. I give you one simple method, as certain as litmus paper in a test-tube, to determine whether the Soviet Union has now become counter-revolutionary, as you claim. I am sure that Hitler has better sources of information about Russian affairs than you or I have; and when Hitler learns that the Soviet Union has become counter-revolutionary, he will reduce the ardor of his crusade against it. So also will the big business press of Paris, London, and New York. When that happens I will admit that Stalin has sold out the workers. In the meantime, I must hold to my position: not that the Soviet system is Socialism, not that it is a "utopia," but that it is one of history's great experiments, entitled to be studied and understood, and to be defended against those reactionary forces which are now arming and combining to destroy it.
Sinclair and Lyons. Terror in Russia? Two Views. New York : Rand School Press, 1938, p. 63

Today, Stalin still calls the USSR a socialist state. This it is, in the sense that the State, after absolutely abolishing all private property, has ended by appropriating, as its exclusive property, the factories, the subsoil, the means of transport, the mechanism of commerce, the land, and all that the Marxists, in their jargon, call "the means of production."
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 408

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SOCIALISM AND INDIVIDUALISM

It is no longer a question of what I do or what I get but of what we do and what we get. I venture to suggest that there could be no simpler definition of the difference between socialism and individualism.
Duranty, Walter. I Write as I Please. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1935, p. 340

The "Market" and the "Centrally Planned" economies–the terms used by the UN–have exactly opposite problems. The great problem in the "West" is the threat of demand not keeping up with supply; for the entrepreneur or manager to sell his goods or services, and for the worker to sell his labor power; in the "East" the problem is supply not keeping up with demand. In the "West" the managers fear bankruptcy of their firms because they cannot find a market, and the workers fear losing their jobs. In the "East" managers fear their inability to fulfill the plan, because they cannot find the required inputs of goods and of workers, and the workers fear not finding the goods they need or want. In the "East" the
lines form at the retail outlets; in the "West" they form at the labor office and the factory gate. Every person who has worked in both the "East" and the "West," mostly emigrants, to whom I have presented this definition of the difference between the two economic systems has immediately agreed with it….
To me capitalism is unacceptable on moral grounds. It is based on the principle of buying in the cheapest and selling in the dearest market–which implies that the other fellow has to sell in the cheapest and buy in the highest market. It is the exact opposite of the principle "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you".
Blumenfeld, Hans. Life Begins at 65. Montreal, Canada: Harvest House, c1987, p. 289

MASSES SUPPORT BOLSHEVIKS AND STALIN'S SU

Nothing that may be said abroad about the tyranny and high-handedness of the Bolshevik regime can alter the fact that the Russian masses think and speak of “our” Rodina,” “our” technicians, “our” successes and “our” failures.
Duranty, Walter. I Write as I Please. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1935, p. 341

Russian workers complain, and loudly, about many things–mainly bureaucracy and petty graft–but never that the entire system is run primarily in the interests of someone else. In general there is to be found a genuine spirit of cooperation.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 65

But peasant sentiment as a whole supports the Soviet regime for the simple reason that the peasants know any other possible regime would bring back the landlords–just as did the White regime in the civil wars.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 39

Attempts to explain Stalin’s popularity have often foundered on the obstacle of partisanship. Everyone admits that, in some way or another, he enjoyed mass support: “Although its nature and extent varied over the years, it is clear that there was substantial popular support for Stalinism from the beginning and through the very worst.
Nove, Alec, Ed. The Stalin Phenomenon. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1993, p. 113

…yet the question still rises of why he [Stalin] was so popular?
One reason may be that, despite the enormous moral failure and physical sacrifice, society as a whole did not become degraded, and quite a few achievements were accomplished in the economic, social and cultural spheres….
Major changes were wrought in industrial development. The statistics, though exaggerated, indicate that Lenin’s electrification plan for industry was fulfilled. By 1935 average gross output from heavy industry exceeded the pre-war level by 5.6 times. Having lived through the industrial breakdown caused by the First World War and the civil war, the people could not but be amazed at the huge energy and creative drive unleashed by the October Revolution. They could proudly tell themselves, “We can do a lot! Let’s complete the five-year plan in four!’ As if to confirm Stalin’s words, ‘Life has become better, life has become more joyful!’, by the end of the 1930’s hundreds of new factories and plants, roads, towns, palaces of culture, rest homes, hospitals, schools and laboratories had appeared, transforming the landscape.
The statistics for education are more impressive. There were nearly seven times more specialists [in the 1930’s] who had had higher education than in 1913, while those with secondary education increased by almost 28 times. Illiteracy fell dramatically.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 263-264

The great transformation that the country had gone through before the war had, despite all its dark sides, strengthened the moral fiber of the nation. The majority was imbued with a strong sense of its economic and social advance, which it was grimly determined to defend against danger from without.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 485

While the Russian government thus certainly is not a government by the people, it may claim that it is a government for the people, if not for the living then for the future generation. It may also claim that it possesses, in fact, the consent of the people to this dictatorship and its aims. For proof of this we do not rely on election figures and votes of confidence in the State and Party leadership, the value of which must be regarded as extremely doubtful.
The real proof comes from Russia at war, Soviet Russia at her supreme test. As we all know, Hitler was not the only one to be mistaken when he expected that the Stalin regime would crack up under the impact of the onslaught, that the Ukrainians and other nationals would cut loose and the Soviet State collapse. Even the Nazi Front reporters admit now that they have never come across anything like the courageous and dogged defense of the Russian troops who went on fighting even when retreating or surrounded, men and women, soldiers and civilians alike.
Socialist Clarity Group. The U. S. S. R., Its Significance for the West. London: V. Gollancz, 1942, p. 41

CLERGY ARE MOSTLY REACTIONARY

… the clergy had been nothing but loyal servants of the Tsar. It was pointed out that the clergy had blessed guns and troops and had incited soldiers to attack although their religion said ‘Thou shalt not kill’.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 244

The Bolsheviks had three reasons for hostility towards the Church, two of which were obvious but the third more subtle. First, they regarded it as one of the principal pillars of the Tsarist regime, to which it was bound by ties that were centuries-old. It was also owner of vast wealth, and therefore by interest and tradition opposed to the Bolsheviks and their system.
Second, religion itself advocated the exact antithesis of Bolshevik teaching. The Bolsheviks wished to stir up the masses, to spur them to revolt, to make them think for themselves and to capitalize their discontent. Religion, they thought, was, as Marx put it, “opium for the people,” to keep them satisfied “in that state of life in which it pleased God to place them” here on earth, so that their submission and obedience would later win them a place in Heaven, as the parable of Lazarus and Dives suggests. But it was precisely this apathetic acceptance of misery and oppression that the Bolsheviks were most anxious to destroy, so that on these two counts they and the Church were immediately locked in conflict.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 45

RELIGION IS BEST FOUGHT BY IMPROVING THE LIVES OF PEOPLE

Stalin launched a new slogan: ‘Life has become easier and more cheerful!’ This was to define the style of living from then on. In the same speech Stalin declared that all opposition to religion was purposeless. Life had not yet been made so good or so carefree that men and women no longer needed to seek for consolation. So long as there continued to be distress and anxieties, there would always be people who hoped to find consolation in religion. If it was desired to combat religion, the way to do it was to work harder and to provide better satisfaction for human needs.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 245

STALIN DEFENDED THE CLERGY'S RIGHT TO VOTE IN 1936

Stalin himself proposed the draft constitution of 1936 at the Congress of Soviets…. There were several motions proposing that the clergy should not be entitled to civil rights or the franchise; it was urged that there was a danger that the clergy would carry on anti-Soviet agitation. The proposer of one of these motions contended that the granting of the franchise to the clergy might result in anti-Soviet members gaining admittance to the representative bodies. Stalin defended the grant of the franchise to the clergy. It was impossible, he contended, to make exceptions; all must have equal rights. It did not matter so very much if the clergy agitated; that would merely spur on the local Communist organizations to work harder and improve their propaganda. They had to learn to combat hostile propaganda…. Stalin's defense of the rights of the clergy actually brought him popularity among the peasants.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 272

It is a fact that many leading Communists opposed granting secret and universal suffrage. They feared that the backwardness among certain sections of the people might make this dangerous. Stalin strongly supported the voting provisions and they were adopted. So far they have proved to be dangerous only to officials who were neglecting their duties–and this is what Stalin had hoped for and wants more of in the future.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 34

STALIN'S VIEWS OF NAZISM AND FASCISM

Lenin did not live into the period of Fascism…. Threatened by the Revolution, the decaying capitalism, in the countries in which the danger of revolution is greatest, throws off the mask of bourgeois democracy and sets up an undisguised dictatorship. According to Stalin, Fascism and Nazism are nothing but the form of State set up by capitalism when it is in mortal danger. As it is a matter of life and death, the powerful capitalist groups can give no further consideration to their fellow-capitalists. The center of the capitalist class, 'monopoly capital', assumes all economic and political power, against the smaller capitalists as well as the other classes.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 320-321

"I am referring not only to fascism in general, but, primarily, to fascism of the German type, which is wrongly called national socialism–wrongly because the most searching examination will fail to reveal even an atom of socialism in it."
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 13, p. 299

Many try to take advantage of the ideas and slogans of socialism, which are popular among the masses. Leaders of petty-bourgeois movements are especially given to this tactic. German fascism, for example, masked its archreactionary content with the term "National Socialism." Of course there was not a grain of socialism in either the " Christian Communist Republic" in Paraguay or the "National Socialist" state in Germany.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 854

“But today? Where is the German sense of order today? Where is the respect for the law? The National Socialists break the law whenever they find it in their way. They shoot and bludgeon all round.
Ludwig, Emil. Leaders of Europe. London: I. Nicholson and Watson Ltd., 1934, p. 380

And so they called to power the fascist party–which in order to hoodwink the people calls itself the National-Socialist party–well knowing that the fascist party, firstly, represents that section of the imperialist bourgeoisie which is the most reactionary and most hostile to the working-class,…
Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Ed. History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks): Short Course. Moscow: FLPH, 1939, p. 302

STALIN AND THE BOLSHEVIKS HAVE GREATLY REDUCED CLASS DIFFERENCES

Nevertheless, the Stalinist era has achieved something permanent for Russia herself–and this is interesting because Stalin himself, like all the other Russians, has helped to achieve the general advance. The division of the Russian people into two unequal classes, aristocrats and the common people, has entirely disappeared, so much so that today in Russia a man or woman of 30 can no longer recall it. All social barriers have fallen,….
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 399

STALIN’S BANK EXPROPRIATIONS ARE NECESSARY AND SUCCESSFUL

Whatever Lenin and Krassin calculated on obtaining as a result of the new tactic, they certainly were not prepared for the tremendous results of the efficacy of Stalin’s methods which soon appeared. It is customary in most biographies of Stalin to omit all mention of his directing part in the celebrated “expropriations,” or at best to gloss over them hurriedly as a rather discreditable episode. To take this course is to fail to understand the character Stalin, who never hesitated to call a spade a spade and never feared to except responsibility for his actions, irrespective of whether or not they met with general approval. If Lenin agreed and the ultimate success of the revolution was brought nearer, no other factors had any bearing on the problem.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 28

STALIN HAD AN EFFECTIVE ANTI-RELIGIOUS PROGRAM

The old reactionary control which the church maintained on spiritual and intellectual life, had been broken officially in 1917, by 1934 it was being replaced by modern educational methods directed at both children and adults.
With such stirring events going on around them, it becomes understandable why the provincial peoples lauded Stalin to the skies. For them he was, in sober fact, a deliverer and a savior.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 91

“Nevertheless,” Stalin went on, “the question of religious beliefs must be kept well in mind, must be handled with great care, because the religious feelings of the people must not be offended. These feelings have been cultivated in the people for many centuries, and great patience is called for on this question, because the stand towards it is important for the compactness and unity of the people.”
Hoxha, Enver. The Artful Albanian. London: Chatto & Windus, 1986, p. 130

Reviving some Russian traditions, Stalin slightly curbed party efforts to combat another: religion.
…The anti-religious campaign was relaxed in 1934. The League of Militant Atheists went into decline, its newspaper Bezbozhnik (The Atheist) closed down, and its membership dropped precipitously in numbers. At Easter time in 1935 the government authorized renewed sale in the markets, and later in state stores, of the special ingredients needed for the traditional Russian Easter cake. Toward the end of that year, the traditional Russian Christmas tree, proscribed after the revolution, made–unquestionably with Stalin’s approbation– an officially sponsored comeback as “New Year’s tree.” Since Russian Christians observe Christmas according to the Orthodox Church calendar, on 7th January, the eve of the new year was an appropriate time for the religiously inclined to set up the tree. Stalin wanted the populace to identify him with the policy of easing up a little on religion. That became clear when Komsomol delegates met in Moscow in April 1936 for the organization’s Tenth Congress. One principal speaker, Fainberg, revealed in his report that Stalin, in preliminary discussion of a draft of the new bylaws, rejected a clause that would have obliged the Komsomol to combat religion “decisively, mercilessly.” All it should do was to “explain patiently the harm of religious prejudices.”
…Soon afterward, in his speech before the Eighth Congress of Soviets on the draft new Constitution, Stalin opposed two suggested anti-religious amendments. One, which would have prohibited religious worship outright, was “not in accord with the spirit of our Constitution.” The other would have deprived not only ex-White Guardists and “former people” not engaged in useful work, but also clergyman, of voting a rights, or, alternatively, of the right to be elected. In opposing this proposal (in both forms) Stalin said the time had come to repeal the long-standing Soviet law depriving nonlaboring and exploiter elements of voting rights. “In the first place, not all former kulaks, White Guardists, or priests are hostile to the Soviet regime,” he said.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 327

MOST WORKERS ARE IRRESPONSIBLE AND TRANSIENT

In a letter around September 15, 1930, Stalin said to Molotov, “As the situation now stands, some of the workers labor honestly in accordance with socialist competition; others (the majority) are irresponsible and transient, yet the latter are as well provisioned as the first (if not better), enjoy the same privileges of vacations, sanatoria, insurance, etc. as the first. Is this not an outrage?”
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin’s Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 219

WEALTH OF PEOPLE IN STALIN’S SU IS RELATIVELY EQUAL

No one can live very long in Russia without gaining an impression of leveling in the everyday life of the people. Not that absolute material equality, or anything like it, has been achieved. There are marked variations in the standards of living, not only among the people as a whole, but among the members of the Communist Party. But, whereas in other countries there is a tendency to display wealth, in Russia there is every impulse to hide it. The Communist or Soviet official who is observed to spend more freely than his modest salary would seem to permit is likely to be called on for an explanation, either by some Party tribunal or, in especially serious cases, by the secret police. Flaunting of wealth by the harassed private trader is likely to invite new visitations by the tax collecting authorities.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 50

Who owns the world? That is the basic question conditioning all hopes of social change. What is wrong with the world today, according to Marxists, is private ownership of the great productive processes which are socially operated. The way out is not backward to subsistence farms and handicraft; it is forward to social ownership. Not “share the wealth,” but jointly owned wealth, jointly organized by and for all who work…. From this economic equality, all other forms of equality will grow.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 17

PARTY DOES NOT MAKE EVERY DECISION FOR LOCAL SOVIETS AND COOPS

“In the Soviet Union…no important political or organizational problem is ever decided by our Soviets and other mass organizations without directives from the Party.” [Problems of Leninism by Stalin, page 33]
This does not mean that the local branches of the Communist Party attempt to decide every petty detail of the work of the Soviets, trade unions, and cooperatives. As a matter of fact they are expressly warned not to do this, but to leave to the above-mentioned organizations the maximum liberty and spontaneity of action consonant with the carrying out of the general lines of Party policy. But these general lines must always be carried out.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 58

VERY DIFFICULT TO BECOME A PARTY MEMBER

It is no easy matter to gain admission to the ruling Party in the Soviet Union. Workers are preferred above other classes of the population as candidates for membership; but even a manual worker, the aristocrat of Soviet Russia, must obtain two recommendations from old Party members and pass through a period of six month’s probation before he may be admitted to full-fledged membership. For peasants, employees, and intellectuals a larger number of sponsors and longer periods of probation are required.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 62

It seemed to be about as difficult to pass a camel through the eye of a needle as to bring a non-proletarian into this Communist local branch. On the other hand, worker candidates for membership were apt to pass even when serious criticisms were voiced against them.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 63

POLITBURO IS THE SUPREME AUTHORITY IN THE SU

The actual highest governing authority in the Party, and hence for the whole country, is not the large unwieldy Central Committee, but an inner steering group of nine members and eight alternates, elected by the Central Committee and known as the Political Bureau (Politburo).
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 63

… the present members of the Politburo of the Communist Party Central Committee, which is the ultimate repository of power in the Soviet Union.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 101

Stalin's chief post is not in the government, but as general secretary of the Communist Party, which would certainly remove him if his policy and actions should ever discredit him with the people; at present he is by far the most popular man in the country.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 69

The Political Bureau has full responsibility and power in the interims between meetings of the Central Committee, and is thus the most important single party body.
In my talk with Stalin in 1926 I put the following question: "conservatives claim that the Communist Party and the government are one and the same because they are all controlled by the Political Bureau. How far is this true?"
Stalin's eyes flashed with a characteristic twinkle and his face lighted with a smile as he said, "The only difference between our party control and that of foreign countries is that we do things in the open whereas abroad they do them secretly. The conservatives in England have a shadow cabinet and in most of your states in America there are political bosses who sometimes have more power than your elected officials.
"What grounds have foreigners to criticize our Political Bureau which is openly elected by the Party and known to everyone, when in Europe there are shadow cabinets and in the United States bosses who are not elected by the people, but rule nevertheless. It is humorous!
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 36

It has been argued that in these years basic decisions were made in the Politburo of the Central Committee, and the Committee itself was bypassed. There may be some truth to this, but it is not the essential truth. In fact, it harbors a distortion of the truth, for it implies a basic dictatorship in a nation which–in 1936–adopted a constitution giving citizens a broader spectrum of rights–not only political but economic–than any in world history. What the USSR achieved, was a new form of democracy, a mass democracy and the fact that mass democracy does not follow all the structures (and charades) of bourgeois democracy does not mean it is not democracy. On the other hand, it is certainly true that in a socialist government–or any government—some decisions, both substantive and executive, must be made by a small top body. Whether that body is responsive to the mass of the population, and has open channels for that response, is the question. In these years this was certainly so in the USSR….
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 77

To another critic, who demanded more freedom of discussion in the party, Stalin replied that the party was no debating society. Russia was ‘surrounded by the wolves of imperialism; and to discuss all important matters in 20,000 party cells would mean to lay all one’s cards before the enemy ‘.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 258

Somebody mentioned the need for more democracy in the Party. Did he mean, wondered Stalin, that important and urgent decisions should be made not by the Politburo, but through discussions in 20,000 primary Party organizations? If that were the system, the class and foreign enemy would rejoice at knowing in advance all Soviet plans, strengths, and weaknesses. The position of the Soviet Union unfortunately required secrecy to surround decisionmaking: “You must remember that you are surrounded by enemies, salvation may be in your ability to strike a sudden blow, to execute an unexpected maneuver, in speed.”
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 226

HIGH QUALITY OF PARTY MEMBERSHIP

It is my personal impression that the best Communists, as a rule, are to be found in two classes: the intelligentsia whose revolutionary activity began in pre-war times, and the more earnest and sincere manual workers, especially those who fought on the various fronts of the civil war.
Is never possible for a large ruling group to maintain the uniformly high standards of devotion and sincerity which usually characterize a small persecuted sect…. Today a worker may join the Communist Party because he thinks this will be an insurance against dismissal; an employee may put in an application for membership because he hopes this will be the stepping stone to a higher post; a student may become a Communist because this will enhance his chances of being admitted to the university.
The Communist Party leadership is quite alive to these inevitable dangers of internal deterioration and tries to guard against them by enforcing a rigorous disciplinary code through the agency of the Control Commission, which has among its members many Old Bolsheviks with a stern attitude toward any yearning after bourgeois fleshpots on the part of the younger Party recruits.
Functioning with the aid of a network of local commissions established all over the country, the Control Commission every year excludes from the Party a little over 2 percent of its total membership. Expulsion is the supreme penalty; milder forms of punishment, such as reprimands and demotions, are more commonly applied. The most familiar causes of expulsion from the Party are drunkenness, embezzlement, heretical political views, and what is rather quaintly called in Russian “connection with an alien element.” This last phrase means that the person concerned has too many close associations, through marriage or otherwise, with “bourgeois” circles, in which no self-respecting proletarian is supposed to move.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 67-68

It is the aim of the Communists to induce everyone who is outstanding in any respect to become a member of his Party. In this respect the Party is like a fraternity in college. It tries to attract the best leaders. But there are many millions in Russia who sympathize with the Party but do not join. Membership brings few if any privileges and imposes heavy duties.

Each member must pay the party treasury an income tax on his salary. Every member must devote at least several evenings a week to volunteer Party work. A communist is expected to set an example to others in daily life and work. If he works in a factory he must turn out more goods and be absent fewer times than the non-party worker. If he is at the front he must display more bravery than the others. If he fails to perform a duty or breaks a law, the punishment is more severe because of the higher obligation resting upon a member of the party.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 37

For ordinary members, membership meant no privileges, only some duties. Party members, in addition to being expected to be models both in their work and in their private life, had to assume a nagruska (load), voluntary work assigned to them by the Party with their consent.
Blumenfeld, Hans. Life Begins at 65. Montreal, Canada: Harvest House, c1987, p. 137

THEY TRY TO GET MOSTLY WORKERS IN THE PARTY

As has already been pointed out, there is a systematic effort to maintain a predominance of manual workers in the ranks of the ruling Communist Party.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 163

SU PRESS MORE RELIABLE THAN FOREIGN REPORTERS

I think a comparison of the news dispatches from Moscow and those sent about Russia from Riga, Helsinki, Berlin, and other places outside the country would demonstrate beyond any doubt that, despite the handicaps which are implicit even in the mildest censorship, Russia can be reported more reliably, more accurately, and more intelligently from Moscow than from any foreign city.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 395

In reporting trials in Britain the journalist–in order to avoid contempt of court–has to keep closely to the facts. In dealing with the Moscow trials he could use his imagination to the full. It would be an instructive exercise for the reader to peruse the verbatim report of the trial of the Metro-Vickers Engineers, the Radek-Pyatakov, or the Bukharin-Rykov-Yagoda trials, and then compare these records with the press reports. He would have very great difficulty in realizing that he was reading about the same events, for ever since the trial of the Shakhty wreckers in 1928 the press has labored unceasingly to create a prejudice against Soviet justice.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 237

FOREIGN PRESS FREE TO ROAM THROUGHOUT SU

The assertion is often made that correspondents and foreigners in general in Russia are so subjected to official supervision that they are unable to make any independent investigation or to form any correct idea of actual conditions. I am convinced from personal experience that this assertion is baseless….

But for the correspondent who wishes to take the time and trouble, working-class and peasant Russia, the Russia of 90 percent of the population, lies open to explore as he wishes. Except for Soviet Central Asia (which was also a restricted zone for foreign travelers before the War, on account of the proximity to India and the fear of British spies), one can travel anywhere in the Soviet Union. I have repeatedly struck off the main lines of communication to visit factory settlements and peasant villages and talked freely with the people without encountering any evidences of official espionage or obstruction; in fact it is a general rule that the further one goes away from Moscow the less one sees and hears of the GPU.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 395

Friends back in the States had told us that in Russia they only show you the good things that they want you to see. Already we had found our friends wrong. They showed us around, of course, but we were always free to go where we wanted to.
Dykstra, Gerald. A Belated Rebuttal on Russia. Allegan, Mich.: The Allegan Press, c1928, p. 62

PEOPLE ENTER THE US FOR THE DOLLAR NOT FREEDOM

There are of course people in the U.S.A. who openly and courageously carry on the struggle for equality, who do not bow down to the dollar, but they are very few. Once upon a time, before the name of Abraham Lincoln had dimmed, fighters for freedom sought refuge in America from foreign oppression. But today it is seldom fighters for freedom who seek refuge there anymore; it is those who want to get closer to Mr. Dollar.
Gromyko, Andrei. Memoirs. New York: Doubleday, c1989. p. 74

CAPITALIST SAYS THE SYSTEM MUST CHANGE RATHER THAN CHANGING INDIVIDUALS

Whenever I ask myself what brings increasing visitors to Moscow, what they want here and what they find, and why the eyes of the world turn more and more to the Soviet Union with a questing hope that hardly yet dares call itself belief, there flashes into my mind the remark made to me in 1930 at Dnieprostroy by the young and disillusioned son of a Wall Street millionaire.
Dnieprostroy in those days was the first of the famous giants of the new Soviet Russia, “the largest power dam in the world.” … It was then that my companion said: “I think that Dnieprostroy has answered the question that brought me to Russia.”
What question? I asked.
Whether the world is to be changed by trying one at a time to improve human beings or by changing the social environment that makes human beings.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 3-4

WHAT IS FASCISM

For fascism is the last stand of a desperate capitalism which can no longer use the fruits of science and machine production, which dare no longer permit either peace or democracy,

since it must brutally refuse to its victims that abolition of poverty which is already technically possible in the world.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 10

HONESTY COMES FROM THE RIGHT SYSTEM NOT PREACHING

In a world whose economic structure fails to reward honesty and altruism, a Marxist would not spend his efforts preaching these virtues, but in creating an economic system were honesty really prospered, where each man's success must be built on the success, rather than the ruin, of others.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 14

CLASSES EXIST WHETHER US PEOPLE WANT THEM OR NOT

Millions of Americans resent the very idea of classes, and are indignant at "inflaming class consciousness" where it does not yet exist. But Marxian classes are not epithets inciting to riot; they are categories in a scientific analysis.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 18

WHAT IS A REAL DICTATORSHIP

Most Americans shrink from the word "dictatorship." … the word dictatorship arouses for them the utterly incredible picture of one man giving everybody orders?
No country is ruled by one man. This assumption is a favorite red herring to disguise the real rule. Power resides in ownership of the means a production–by private capitalists in Italy, Germany and also in America, by all workers jointly in the USSR. This is the real difference which today divides the world into two systems, in respect to the ultimate location of power. When a Marxist uses the word "dictatorship," he is not alluding to personal rulers or to methods of voting; he is contrasting rule by property with rule by workers.
The heads of government in America are not the real rulers. I've talked with many of them, from the President down. Some of them would really like to use power for the people. They feel baffled by their inability to do so; they blame other branches of government, legislatures, courts. But they haven't analyzed the reason. The difficulty is that they haven't power to use. Neither the President nor Congress nor the common people, under any form of organization whatever, can legally dispose of the oil of Rockefeller or the gold in the vaults of Morgan. If they try, they will be checked by other branches of government, which was designed as a system of checks and balances precisely to prevent such "usurpation of power." Private capitalists own the means of production and thus rule the lives of millions….
Power over the means of production–that gives rule. Men who have it are dictators. This is the power the workers of the Soviet Union seized in the October Revolution. They abolished the previously sacred right of men to live by ownership of private property. They substituted the rule: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat."
Strong, Anna L. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 39-41

WORKERS OVER 18 CAN VOTE AND RUN FOR OFFICE

All “toilers” over the age of 18 may elect and be elected; the word is interpreted to include students, housewives, old people who have passed the age of work as well as those more formally known as workers. Voting thus extends to a younger age than is common elsewhere, and there are no disqualifications for transient residents, paupers, migratory workers, soldiers, sailors, such as exist in most countries; even non-citizens may vote if they work in a Soviet industry. There are no restrictions for sex, creed, or color, not even for illiteracy. The only significant restriction relates to “exploiting elements, but the steady decrease of privately owned enterprises has cut the disfranchised to 2.5 per cent of the population in the 1934 elections; by 1937 it is expected that all will have the vote.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 59

CENTRAL COMMITTEE IS THE SUPREME RULER OF THE SU

There have been statements by Stalin that ushered in great changes, as when he told the agrarian Marxist conference that the time had come to “abolish kulaks as a class.” Yet he only announced the time for a process which every Marxist knew was on the program. His famous article “Dizziness from Success” which called a sudden halt on March 2, 1930, to widespread excesses of Communists in rural regions, was regarded by foreign correspondents and peasants alike as an “order from Stalin.” Stalin at once disclaimed any personal prestige therefrom accruing, stating in the press: “Some people think that the article is the result of the personal initiative of Stalin. That of course is nonsense. The Central Committee does not exist to permit personal initiative of anybody in matters of this kind. It was a reconnaissance undertaken by the Central Committee.”
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 110

HUMAN NATURE IS NOT STATIC

Unlike those who justify ancient abuses with the formula, “You can’t change human nature,” the Marxist knows that human nature is constantly changing.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 250

ENVIRONMENT IS PRIMARY, TEACHING IS SECONDARY

For men in all ages have desired to change, to become in some direction “better.” Moral teachers have urged them to effect this by an emotional decision to be good, honest, industrious. But this is a struggle in the dark with forces which the human being does not understand. His emotional conversion lasts as long as he can focus will and attention. But if the old environment continues, the old habits reassert themselves.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 251

Can a prostitute change her environment so that street-walking will become unnecessary? Only if an honest job is somewhere accessible. And gangsters reform? Only if honesty is really the best policy; for him who would prosper under capitalism there is a time to be honest and a time to steal, and the criminal is the unlucky or stupid person who stole at the wrong time and in the unaccepted manner. Only a social system which insures to ordinary

honest labor greater rewards than can be obtained by even the luckiest dishonesty will produce instinctively honest men.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 252

For crime, in the Marxian view, arises from the conflicts of a class-exploiting society and will follow classes and exploitation into oblivion….
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 264

PEOPLE IN THE SU ARE FREE AND INDIVIDUALS

To many persons in capitalist countries these words will be only partly intelligible. They have been so accustomed to considering that their own life is “free” and Soviet life “regimented” that they cannot at once grasp a viewpoint which holds the exact opposite. Yet even the casual observer of human beings today in the Soviet Union notices that while they have certain characteristics in common they are by no means regimented into uniformity, but show a vivid individuality at least as great as is found anywhere in the world.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 287

STALIN: You say that in order to build our socialist society we sacrificed personal liberty and suffered privations. Your question suggests that socialist society denies personal liberty. That is not true. Of course, in order to build something new one must economize, accumulate resources, reduce one’s consumption for a time and borrow from others. If one wants to build a house one saves up money, cuts down consumption for a time, otherwise the house would never be built. How much more true is this when it is a matter of building a new human society! We had to cut down consumption somewhat for a time, collect the necessary resources, and exert a great effort. This is exactly what we did and we built the socialist society.
But we did not build this society in order to restrict personal liberty but in order that the human individual may feel really free. We built it for the sake of real personal liberty, liberty without quotation marks. It is difficult for me to imagine what “personal liberty” is enjoyed by an unemployed person, who goes about hungry, and cannot find employment. Real liberty can exist only where exploitation has been abolished, where there is no oppression of some by others, where there is no unemployment and poverty, where a man is not haunted by the fear of being tomorrow deprived of work, of home, and of bread. Only in such a society is real, and not paper, personal and every other liberty possible.
Stalin, J. The Stalin-Howard Interview. New York: International Publishers, 1936, p. 13

We are taught to believe that the freedom allowed in a democratic nation is better than anything else in the world, including the freedom in a socialist republic. How can this be true when there is always a ruling class who controls the wealth and has the power to order what is to be taught in the schools, suppress the press, dictate politics, and even sway the courts? A student who criticizes the teachings in a capitalistic university unless his professor is broad-minded, is in danger of flunking. If a journalist writes a truthful article directed against the status quo he runs chances of losing his job. If a politician votes against measures

favorable to the “financial interests” he will be defeated in the next election. And if a worker is hauled into court–guilty or not guilty–and has no money to hire a shyster lawyer or bride a judge, he goes to prison. Wherein lies the freedom or justice of such an order? The difference between a socialist republic and a democratic capitalist country, is that in the former the worker is really free and the capitalist is suppressed, whereas in the latter the worker is educated to believe in the wonderful so-called liberties which he is lucky to have a taste of, and the capitalist is really the free man. The worker in the Soviet Union does not have to be afraid of complaining to his “boss” or of criticizing factory conditions to the “shop committee,” but if a worker did this same thing in a capitalist industry it would cost him his job. The Soviet newspapers frequently receive letters from Russian workers presenting their objections to this or that. These letters are not only printed, but the suggestions are welcome, contrary to general opinion. Whereas the “Voice of the People” columns here are merely the feeble moan of a selected few.
Wright, Russell. One-Sixth of the World’s Surface. Hammond, Ind., The Author, c1932, p. 118

FREEDOM IS DIFFERENT FOR DIFFERENT PEOPLE

When the means a production became the factory, the meaning of freedom slowly changed. Freedom became to the owner the right to fix prices and wages, to the worker the right to drift from job to job, seeking an easier boss. Freedom in government became the “right to choose one’s rulers,” not the right to own and rule.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 289

THE PROCESS BY WHICH THE 1936 CONSTITUTION CAME ABOUT AND MASS SUGGESTIONS

One fruit of those happy days remained for history–the new Soviet constitution was born in those years.
The USSR has always claimed to be democratic; this the West has always denied….
Whatever Americans thought of Soviet elections Soviet people took part in them at least as energetically and hopefully as we. They not only voted for candidates; they wrote their demands into the “Nakaz,” the “People’s Instructions,” which became the first order of business for incoming governments.
In the 1934 elections, my husband spent every evening for a month as a precinct worker, visiting every person in his precinct and stimulating them not only to come out but to list things they wanted the government to do….
Since the 1922 Constitution, however, great changes had taken place. The basic wealth of the land was publicly owned; the people were no longer illiterate. Indirect, unequal voting from the place of work no longer fitted; people everywhere knew of their national heroes and could vote for them directly. On February 6, 1935, the Congress of Soviets decided that the Constitution should be changed to conform to the changed life of the nation. A commission of 31 historians, economists, and political scientists, under Stalin’s chairmanship, was instructed to draft a new Constitution, more responsive to the people’s will, and more adapted to a socialist state.

The method of adoption was highly significant. For a year, the commission studied all historic forms–both of states and of voluntary societies–through which men have organized for joint aims. Then a proposed draft was tentatively approved in June 1936 by the government and submitted to the people in 60 million copies. It was discussed in 527,000 meetings, attended by 36 million people. For months, every newspaper was full of people's letters. Some 154,000 amendments were proposed–many, of course, duplicates, and many others more suitable for a legal code than a constitution. Forty-three amendments were actually made by this popular initiative.

In the great white hall of the Kremlin Palace, 2,016 delegates assembled, in December of 1936, for the Constitutional Convention….

The Constitution reflected the changes in the country. It began with the form of the state and the basic types of property. Land, resources, industries were "state property, the wealth of the whole people." Cooperative property of collective farms, and "personal property" of citizens in their income, their homes, and chattels, were "protected by law." Elections were to be by "universal, direct, equal and secret ballot for all citizens over 18."

The section on "rights and duties of citizens" was cheered section by section; it was the most sweeping list of rights any nation ever guaranteed. The right to life was covered by four headings: "the right to work, to leisure, to education, to material support." The right to liberty was expanded into six paragraphs, including freedom of conscience, of worship, of speech, of press, of assembly, demonstration and organization, freedom from arbitrary arrest, inviolability of home and of correspondence, "irrespective of nationality or race."

The Constitution was a direct challenge to Nazi-Fascism, then in power in Germany. The Nazis called democracy outworn; all Soviet speakers hailed democracy and socialism as "unconquerable." Hitler preached "superior and inferior races." Stalin challenged him in one of the most sweeping statements ever made of human equality: "neither language nor color of skin nor cultural backwardness nor the stage of political development can justify national and race inequality."

Tens of millions of people poured into the winter streets of the USSR to hail the event with bands. Progressives around the world hailed it. "Mankind's greatest achievement," said Mrs. Sun Yat-sen in faraway China.

Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 55

By November 1936, 1,651,592 people in Leningrad, Smolensk and their environs had made comments or suggestions. A sampling of 2,600 a these shows that two of the four most common suggestions were the requests that local village soviets be given the right to arrest people without the sanction or participation of the state procurator (which the constitution had demanded), and that former nobles, Tsarist gendarmes, kulaks, priests, and other "class alien" elements not be given the right to vote. A collective farmer from the Leningrad region believed (contrary to law and to Stalin's orders) that ideally, "any citizen of our country can arrest such persons who wreck construction." A peasant from Kaluga warned that "Kulaks and priests must not be given electoral rights," and at one collective farm meeting, everyone who spoke wanted to limit or deny electoral rights to priests, former gendarmes, pomeshchiki, and policemen. Stalin himself had to publicly intervene to defend the idea of suffrage for the class-aliens.

Other remarks from the masses suggest the prevalence of the popular attitudes that made Stalinism possible. The worker Kombarov from Leningrad said that "Using free speech, meetings, and so forth to oppose the socialist state constitutes a betrayal of the country and should carry heavy punishment." Another peasant, showing the traditional Russian

genealogical approach to things, thought that “relatives having connections with traitors should face the full severity of the law.”
Nove, Alec, Ed. The Stalin Phenomenon. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1993, p. 126

The film changed, and now it was the Bukharin of 1936 that I saw before me. The moment was the drafting of the famous “Stalin Constitution,” of which he [Bukharin] in fact was the real author.
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 3

The composition of the Drafting Committee [of the 1936 Constitution] was a stroke of genius on Stalin’s part: here sat representatives of non-Russian republics and here too sat the leaders of the oppositionists themselves!
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 282

The discussions occasioned by the draft of a new Soviet Constitution provided an opportunity for Soviet citizens to express their views on a broad range of issues. The published record of these discussions, replete with statistics on the number of meetings, speakers and proposals, and accounts of labor enthusiasm, not surprisingly presented a picture of overwhelming support for the principles embodied in the Constitution.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 15

Two months after Kirov’s assassination, on Feb. 6, 1935, the 7th Congress of the Soviets passed a motion on the need for a new constitution and elected a commission which was to draft it. The commission, headed by Stalin, included men like Bukharin, Radek, Sokolnikov, as well as their future prosecutor Vyshinsky. In the course of the next year and a half the commission frequently met in Stalin’s presence. Bukharin and Radek were the chief authors of the new constitution, which they often discussed in the columns of Pravda and Izvestia. The constitution was to be adopted by the next congress of the Soviets, in November 1936, several months after the execution of Zinoviev and Kamenev.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 359

STALIN’S SOCIAL PROGRAMS ARE FAR BETTER THAN THE NAZIS

In Germany, before the outbreak of the war, Hitler permitted 60,000 young people to attend the institutions of higher learning; in Russia, Stalin gave permission to 600,000 recruiting young workers and peasants alike as students in newly founded military academies which are today the pride of the country. Hitler drove distinguished scholars out of the country because their fathers had inherited a religion different from the one which he himself does not even believe in. Stalin invited these scholars to his country and gave them important tasks and high salaries. When we consider the care of the aged in Russia, we need only set by its side the answer which a Berlin doctor gave over the telephone to a friend of mine who called for help. He asked how old the patient was, then said: “Seventy! It’s no longer worth while! I’m not coming!”
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam’s sons, 1942, p. 137

SU FOSTERS CULTURE

Books, radio, and film educate the Soviet citizen, who is kept away from banalities and, above all, from obscenities.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 139

The nation has, nevertheless, advanced far in most fields of its existence. Its material apparatus of production, which about 1930 was still inferior to that of any medium-sized European nation, has so greatly and so rapidly expanded that Russia is now the first industrial power in Europe and the second in the world. Within little more than one decade the number of her cities and towns doubled; and her urban population grew by 30 millions. The number of schools of all grades has very impressively multiplied. The whole nation has been sent to school. Its mind has been so awakened that it can hardly be put back to sleep again. Its avidity for knowledge, for sciences and the arts, has been stimulated by Stalin's government to the point where it has become insatiable and embarrassing. It should be remarked that, although Stalin has kept Russia isolated from the contemporary influences of the west, he has encouraged and fostered every interest in what he calls the 'cultural heritage' of the west. Perhaps in no other country have the young been imbued with so great a respect and love for the classical literature and art of other nations as in Russia. This is one of the important differences between the educational methods of nazism and Stalinism. Another is that Stalin has not, like Hitler, forbidden the new generation to read and study the classics of their own literature whose ideological outlook does not accord with his. While tyrannizing the living poets, novelists, historians, painters, and even composers, he has displayed, on the whole, a strange pietism for the dead ones. The works of Pushkin, Gogol, Tolstoy, Chekhov, Belinsky, and many others, whose satire and criticism of past tyranny have only too often a bearing on the present, have been literally pressed into the hands of youth in millions of copies. No Russian Lessing or Heine has been burned at an auto-da-fe. Nor can the fact be ignored that the ideal inherent in Stalinism, one to which Stalin has given a grossly distorted expression, is not domination of man by man, or nation by nation, or race by race, but their fundamental equality. Even the proletarian dictatorship is presented as a mere transition to a classless society; and it is the community of the free and the equal, and not the dictatorship, that has remained the inspiration. Thus, there have been many positive, valuable elements in the educational influence of Stalinism, elements that are in the long run likely to turn against its worst features.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 568

Many times in the Kremlin, the Central Committee would see new films that were shown. They were shown English films by the Cinematographic Committee under the head of Bolshakov. After seeing this "cultural film", Stalin said:
Did you buy this film with our gold?
No, it was in exchange–meekly said the chief of the committee.
You have "Chapaev"?
Yes
Give us this film. These are the kind of films to show our youth and future generations.
Some of the people in the audience, members of the Politburo, started to shout: Bravo, Stalin, Bravo!
After the film ended, Stalin was agitated and told those who performed this "Bravo" event:

This is not called for at all. I certainly do not appreciate or want these “bootlicking” words to be said in my name!
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 27-28

RICH ARE NOT KIND GOOD GUYS

The patriarchal benevolence of the big landlords is nothing but a fairytale. Even count Tolstoy, the humanitarian and poet towering so high above his class, let the peasants on his estate live in squalor. Masaryk, who told me this fact, remonstrated with Tolstoy himself on this account when visiting him in the eighties.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam’s sons, 1942, p. 146

1936 SU CONSTITUTION AMONG THE GREATEST CONSTITUTIONS

The third great document of modern humanity, after the Declaration of Independence and the Paris Rights of Man, is represented by the Soviet Constitution of 1936….
History will call this new constitution by the name of Stalin, though he did not head the Soviet Union, but only the Communist party at the time of its inception, and though its main thoughts had been already formulated by Lenin in his first two constitutions of 1918 and 1924.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam’s sons, 1942, p. 163

The Russians consider their Constitution the most advanced and democratic in the world–and they feel that Stalin more than any other man was responsible for it.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 34

The Constitution of the USSR [1936] was entirely the creation of Stalin. He supervised and directed the drafting. It was worked out according to his plan under his direct, continuous leadership.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 202

…Stalin edited the Constitution; he headed the commission; everything was in his hands.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 205

Neither was Stalin the author of the Constitution, though it was called the “Stalin Constitution.”
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 823

“…To be sure, elections to the Soviets became more democratic from a formal point of view. Deputies to local Soviets had been elected by open voting in factories and other institutions; after 1936 they were elected in polling places scattered through territorial districts, with the entire adult population casting secret ballots. Before the voters elected deputies directly only to local soviets, the local soviets elected deputies to the next higher soviets, and so on. After 1936 all elections became direct, and the voters of each district elected deputies to the local

soviet, the city soviet, the oblast soviet, the republic soviet, and the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 837

It will be seen that the difference between the usual constitutions of the [bourgeois] democracies and the Constitution of the Soviet Union lies in the fact that, all the former admittedly proclaim the rights and liberties of the citizens, they specify no means of substantiating them, whereas the Constitution of the Soviet Union stipulates the very physical conditions without which true democracy cannot exist, inasmuch as without assured economic independence the unhampered formation of opinion is impossible, while there is nothing so inimical to freedom as the fear of unemployment, fear for the future of children, and fear of a wretched old age.
It may be disputed whether all the 146 articles of the Soviet Constitution are operative, or whether some of them exist only on paper. But it is indisputable that the four articles which I have quoted [Articles 118,119,120,121]–and they seem to me to be the basis of practical democracy–are not just printed words, but do express realities. If you were to turn the city of Moscow upside-down, you would discover hardly anything inconsonant with these articles.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 30

The most outstanding feature in the first section of the constitution and upon which the whole constitution is based is the specific fact that the exploitation of man by man must cease. In addition to this a great many of its parts pertain strictly to economics. When it speaks of equality it means economic equality and not that of birth and mentality. The Russians did not tack on a Bill of Rights to their constitution like we did, but began with those rights. Their idea of a constitution is a new one to the world–stressing economics, the abolition of human exploitation for the purpose of individual profits. This is quite different from our constitution which allows exploitation to be conducted by the “financial interests.” Even those countries which have had successful revolutions in the last years did not attempt to eradicate exploitation as it exists under capitalism, but, giving it a softer tone, continued it in writing a constitution patterned after ours.
Wright, Russell. One-Sixth of the World’s Surface. Hammond, Ind., The Author, c1932, p. 16

In the middle of this earthquake, in November 1936, Stalin promulgated the new constitution in an address to the Eighth Congress of the Soviets…. The new constitution was to replace Lenin’s electoral system, which had openly and frankly favored the industrial working class, and give equal suffrage to all classes, including the hitherto disfranchised former bourgeoisie. Indirect elections were to be replaced by direct, open ballot by secret. Such an advance, Stalin said, was possible because the structure of society had changed: the first phase of communism had been achieved; the working class was no longer a proletariat; the peasantry had been integrated into the socialist economy; and the new intelligentsia was rooted in the working classes. Opposing what he claimed to be someone’s amendment to the draft of the constitution, he insisted that the constitution must guarantee to constituent republics the right to secede from the Soviet Union.
Opposing still another amendment, which aimed at investing sovereignty in the President of the Republic instead of in the many-headed Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, Stalin warned his audience that a single President might become a dictator– the constitution should leave no such opening. He even insisted on the enfranchisement of the former White Guards and priests.

Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 381

[From Pravda Feb. 27, 1937]
The introduction of the new USSR Constitution marks a turning point in the country's political life. The essence of this change consists in the further democratization of the electoral system–the replacement of the not completely equal elections to the soviets by equal elections, of multi-stage elections by direct ones, of open balloting by secret.
Whereas before introduction of the new constitution, clergy, former White Guards, former individuals and people not usefully employed were limited in their electoral rights, the new constitution dispenses with all limitations on the electoral rights of these categories of citizens, making the elections of deputies universal.
Whereas formerly the elections of deputies were unequal, since there existed different electoral standards for the urban and rural populations, now the need for placing limitations on the equality of elections has disappeared and all citizens have the right to participate in elections on an equal basis.
Whereas previously the elections to the middle and higher organs of the Soviet power were multi-stage, now, under the new constitution, elections to all soviets–from the village and city level all the way of to the Supreme Soviet–will be direct.
Whereas the election of deputies to the Soviets was formerly by open ballot and on the basis of lists, now the voting in the election of deputies will be secret and not by lists but by individual candidacies put forward by electoral districts.
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 184

The 1936 Constitution, the Stalin constitution, as it was immediately baptized, did assure democratic rights to all citizens: freedom of speech, association, and the press, freedom to demonstrate, freedom to propagate both religious and antireligious ideas, and the inviolability of privacy in the home and in one's correspondence. Freedom of movement was not mentioned, but all citizens were given the right to vote (none were disenfranchised any longer), and elections were to be secret and direct. The Stalin constitution was proclaimed "the most democratic in the world."
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 287

No doubt about it, the document [the new 1936 constitution] was as advertised, "the most democratic constitution in the world." Elections were to be free, equal, and secret. To the list of individual rights found elsewhere the Soviet document proudly added the right of every individual to demand that his government provide him with employment. Neither John Stuart Mill nor Thomas Jefferson could have objected to a single provision.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 403

And Stalin, sanctioned the granting of full civic rights under the Constitution to all Soviet citizens regardless of their social, religious, or political backgrounds. Universal equality of treatment was proclaimed. Soviet citizens were guaranteed pay, food, education, shelter, and employment. No other constitution in the world was so expansive in the benefits it proffered.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 319

PEOPLE CAN HAVE PRIVATE PROPERTY FOR PERSONAL USE

In the Constitution of the Soviets the corresponding article, of course greatly enlarged, says the following: the land and all it contains…are owned by the state, that is they are the property of the whole nation. On the other hand, private property is partly retained by the Soviets, for it says further on: “The personal property of the citizens derived from their work, savings made in their households, and objects for personal use and comfort are protected by law.”
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam’s sons, 1942, p. 165

Outside of the socialistic system, the law permits smaller private farms and other undertakings founded on personal work and excluding the exploitation of others.”
Where private ownership has been abolished, the privilege of the private owner to become a millionaire through low wages and high prices has been abolished, too. In this way the striving for gold as the greatest aim in life becomes impossible, while the striving for the good things of life, in recompense of diligence and talent, is retained. Where exploitation of human labor has been prohibited, but private property and savings permitted to a limited degree, life will offer a new purpose.
Thus the protection of the state is granted not only the “proletarian,” but every citizen, because no extremely rich or poor man can exist. Together with the right to work each citizen is guaranteed the following things: gratuitous education, access to all cultural advantages, paid vacations, insurance against sickness and old age.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam’s sons, 1942, p. 166

1936 CONSTITUTION WAS OVERWHELMINGLY ACCEPTED

Ninety millions voted for, but four millions against the Constitution.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam’s sons, 1942, p. 168

STALIN WAS A GREAT LEADER WHO FOUGHT CORRUPTION AND BUREAUCRACY

Shortly afterward, Mitrokhin, the director of the Yaroslavl factory, became Commissar of the Chemical Industry. I was pleased that Stalin hadn’t forgotten my high recommendation of this man and had assigned him to such a responsible post. In relation to the scale of or whole manufacturing industry, this episode concerned a minor matter, but it still had its significance for me. I’ve told this story to illustrate how Stalin was sometimes capable of a conscientious and statesmanly approach to problems. He was a jealous lord and master of the State, and he fought against bureaucracy and corruption and defects of all kinds. He was a great man, a great organizer and a leader,…
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 124

Whenever I had dealings with Eisenhower in later years, I always remembered these actions of his during the war. [Eisenhower ordered the commander of the German Army to surrender to the Russians who had defeated his army. Montgomery ignored the request and took them all]. I kept in mind Stalin’s words about him. [I frequently heard Stalin speak about Eisenhower’s noble characteristics…such as decency, generosity, and chivalry in his

dealings with the allies p. 220]. Stalin could never be accused of liking someone without reason, particularly a class enemy. He was uncorruptible and irreconcilable in class questions. It was one of his strongest qualities, and he was greatly respected for it.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 222

[And Stalin said], “The exposure and expulsion from the administrative apparatus of incorrigible bureaucrats and red-tapists.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 134

The service rendered by Stalin’s leadership in strengthening the unity of the party–and of the world communist movement as well–is tremendous. Stalin was a man of integrity.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 259

In 1928 Stalin was troubled by a similar problem:
“Of course, the fact that we have a group of leaders who have risen excessively high and enjoy great prestige is in itself a great achievement for our Party. Obviously, the direction of a big country would be unthinkable without such an authoritative group of leaders. But the fact that as these leaders rise they get further away from the masses, and the masses begin to look up at them from below and do not venture to criticize them, cannot but give rise to a certain danger of the leaders losing contact with the masses and the masses getting out of touch with the leaders.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 76

It was precisely the “Stalinists’ who fought bureaucracy and excesses most consistently and who defended a correct line for collectivization.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 69 [p. 59 on the NET]

The danger of bureaucracy lies first of all in the fact that it holds back the colossal reserves concealed in the bosom of our social system, not allowing them to be utilized: it tries to nullify the creative initiative of the masses, binds them hand and foot with red tape and aims at reducing every new undertaking of the Party into a petty and insignificant business. The danger of bureaucracy lies, secondly, in the fact that it cannot tolerate having the execution of orders verified and strives to transform the principal directions of the leading bodies into a mere sheet of paper divorced from real life. The danger is represented, not only and not so much by the old bureaucratic derelicts in our institutions, as particularly by the new bureaucrats, the Soviet bureaucrats, amongst whom “communist” bureaucrats play a far from insignificant role. I have in mind those “communists” who try to replace the creative initiative and independent activity of the millions of the working-class and peasantry by office instructions and “decrees,” in the virtue of which they believe as a fetish.
The task is to smash bureaucracy in our institutions and organizations, to liquidate bureaucratic “habits” and “customs,” and clear the road for the utilization of the reserves of our social order, for the development of the creative initiative and independent activity of the masses.
It is no easy task. It cannot be settled in the twinkling of an eye to. But it has to be settled at all costs, if we really want to transform our society on socialist lines.
In its struggle against bureaucracy, the Party works in four directions: in the direction of the development of self-criticism, in the direction of organizing the verification of the execution of

orders, in the direction of cleansing the apparatus, and, finally, in the direction of promoting to the state apparatus devoted members of the working-class from below.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 100

[Lev Borisovich says to Kamenev,] You see, he [Stalin] will become a man of destiny, a great figure who will occupy a permanent place in the world's history. He will take his place in history as a nail enters the wall…."
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 94

[In a speech delivered at the 8th Congress of the Oil-Union Leninist Young Communist League on May 16, 1928 Stalin stated] Bureaucracy is one of the worst enemies of our progress.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 11, p. 75

But one of the most serious obstacles, if not the most serious of all, is the bureaucracy of our apparatus. I am referring to the bureaucratic elements to be found in our Party, government, trade-union, co-operative and all other organizations. I am referring to the bureaucratic elements who batten on our weaknesses and errors, who fear like the plague all criticism by the masses, all control by the masses, and who hinder us in developing self-criticism and ridding ourselves of our weaknesses and errors.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 11, p. 137

STALIN KEEPS VERY CLOSE WATCH ON PUBLIC OPINION

It would be an error to consider the Soviet leader a willful man who believes in forcing his ideas upon others. Everything he does reflects the desires and hopes of the masses to a large degree. He always has his ear to the ground, making it his business to find out what people are really thinking. Peasants and workers are encouraged to write their frank opinions. A large staff reads and reports on all the correspondence that comes in. Stalin himself takes samplings of the letters, and, in addition, sees many visitors from remote districts of the Union. There are some 20,000 full-time party secretaries scattered throughout the country who keep him constantly informed about "public opinion." Stalin is very responsive to the state of mind of the people. This does not, however, prevent him from initiating policies he considers necessary although the populace has not asked or is not ready for them. He both leads and follows public opinion.
The forced collectivization of 1932 was an instance of something which Stalin felt simply could not wait for public opinion. At that time I asked why it would not be better to set up a model demonstration collective, equipped with modern machinery and methods, and convince the peasants by example, and by showing them the concrete benefits that collectivization would hold. The answer given me was that if the Soviets had 50 years of assured peace this would be preferable, but unfortunately, there would probably be a war within ten years and enforced collectivization was necessary if the Soviet state was to survive. There are few Russians, and few foreign observers, who would not now agree with this.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 12

Stalin took the attitude that, while he might have more education than the people he worked with, they knew more of the realities of life, and this is the key to much of his success.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 16

That Stalin listens to opinions was indicated by two changes of policy that occurred at times when he was wielding his power to maximum effect.
The first was in March, 1930, when the Communists, under Stalin's leadership were rushing the peasants headlong to collectivization at a rate and to an extent which the peasants did not like. At that moment Stalin wrote an article called "Dizziness from Success," in which he said that this hasty drive for collectivization was exaggerated and unwise…. This was not wholly a defeat for the collective-farm program, but it did mean that Stalin was sufficiently acute to realize that the peasant masses had been pushed too fast and far along the road of collectivization and did not like it. Later on, it is true, the farms were collectivized and Stalin won, but he had to do it more slowly and more carefully because of the pressure of public opinion….
Beria, who was devotedly attached to Stalin, had approached the Soviet leader on a mission identical to that of Kaganovich and Voroshilov, mainly to point out to him that the Purge was literally ruining the country. Stalin apparently had not realized how unpopular the Purge was and into what an intolerable fog of dismay and confusion it had plunged the Russian people. However, once he was informed of this by Kaganovich, Voroshilov, and Beria, he took immediate and vigorous action, not only to stop the Purge but to correct its evils as far as possible.
Duranty, Walter. Stalin & Co. New York: W. Sloane Associates, 1949, p. 23-24

WORKERS ARE EXPERIENCED FROM 3 REVOLUTIONS

Stalin stated, "The workers in the USSR grew up and received their training in the storms of three revolutions. They learned as no other workers learned, to try their leaders and expel them if they do not satisfy the interests of the proletariat. At one time the most popular man in our party was Plehanov (before the Revolution). However, the workers did not hesitate to isolate him completely when they became convinced that he had abandoned the proletarian position.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 33

SUMMARY OF THE 1936 CONSTITUTION

In 1935 Stalin was made chairman of a commission to draft a new constitution. When the draft was completed it was distributed for popular analysis and discussion. Sixty million copies in leaflet form were printed. These were issued in every one of the many languages spoken in the Soviet Union. Ten thousand newspapers with a total circulation of 37 million copies printed it in full. It was broadcast over the radio and discussed at over half a million meetings. As a result there were 134,000 suggested amendments. Every one of these suggestions was examined by the Commission and many were incorporated in an amended draft. This draft was further amended and finally approved at an extraordinary Congress of

the Soviets in December 1936. Most Westerners are totally unaware that such a democratic process was ever in operation in the Soviet Union.
The Constitution provides for a federation of 16 Socialist Soviet Republics. It frankly recognizes the Socialist character of the government. A citizen may own only what he himself can use–a home, an automobile, personal belongings, and savings. He cannot own and exploit in his personal interest the mines, the oil, the forests, the factories–in other words the basic means a production and distribution. They belong to the people.
The Constitution guarantees certain fundamental rights to the citizens:
The right to work with payment according to quality and quantity.
The right to leisure–a seven hour working day “for the overwhelming majority of the workers” and “vacations with full pay.”
The right to security in old age and sickness; free medicine.
The right to free education.
Equal rights to all citizens irrespective of race.
Freedom of religious worship.
Freedom of organization–the Constitution specifies trade unions, cooperative organizations, youth organizations, sport and defense organizations, cultural, technical and scientific societies, as well as the All-Union Communist Party.
Freedom from arrest “except by order of the court or with the sanction of a state-attorney.”
Inviolability of the homes of citizens and privacy of correspondence are protected by law.
Freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly and of street demonstrations are guaranteed by law, but only “to strengthen the socialist system.”
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 34

WORKERS ARE BABIED BY THE TRADE UNIONS

The peculiar characteristics of the Russian trade unions led some Western leaders to charge that they are not independent and are mere creatures of the state. On the other hand, Colonel Cooper, builder of the Dnieper River Dam, complained to me that the trade unions had too much power. “They babied the workers,” he said. “In America we would never think of providing the club facilities and the easy going work that they do in Russia. If a manager doesn’t get along with the workers, he may be fired. He has to agree pretty much with the trade union.”
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 65

STALIN CONTENDS ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY PREVAILS IN THE SU

Stalin believes that inasmuch as all the basic means of production and distribution are owned by the nation, and that unemployment has been abolished, there is more genuine economic democracy than in the West.”
Stalin expressed this to me in the following words: “The fact that the factories and workshops of the USSR belong to the whole people and not to capitalists, that the factories and workshops are managed not by the appointees of capitalists, but by representatives of the working-class; the consciousness that the workers work, not for the capitalists, but for their own state, for their own class, represents an enormous driving force in the development and

perfection of industry. It must be observed that the overwhelming majority of the factory and works managers in Russia are workingmen, appointed by the Supreme Economic Council in agreement with the trade unions and that not a single factory manager can remain at his post contrary to the will of the workers or the particular trade union.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 67

On the level of the workplace democracy did function during my years in the Soviet Union.
Blumenfeld, Hans. Life Begins at 65. Montreal, Canada: Harvest House, c1987, p. 151

SOVIET GOVT OPPOSED BUREAUCRACY

The Communist party has launched one campaign after another against bureaucratism and is making heroic efforts to overcome it, chiefly by drawing the workers and peasants more actively into all public functions, and by cutting out red tape.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 46

A number of criticisms can be made of Trotsky's line of argument, including its ignoring of other possible sources of Stalinism and its characterization of the bureaucracy as conservative when it was under the auspices of this group that the 'revolution from above' was carried out.
Gill, Graeme. Stalinism. Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press International, 1990, p. 58

The party was obliged to evaluate the party- and social work of old and new members and expel or purge those who did not attain a good enough level for communists. This process did not have a given end. The struggle against bureaucracy, corruption, opportunism and abuse of power within the party and state was carried out in many different ways during the thirties, and it was not always successful or devoid of errors.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

NO SOVIET PRIVILEGED CLASS

The question is often raised as to whether or not Party members occupy a privileged position in Russia as compared with ordinary citizens. The answer to that must recognize first the fact that Party membership carries responsibilities far greater than those of an ordinary citizen. A member's life is controlled by the party. His job, salary, outside activities, are all subject to orders like a soldier in an army. Members can be counted on for service as outsiders cannot….
But the picture so often painted of a ruling political class above and over the people of Russia, enjoying the privileges of greater wealth and position, is pure invention, originating probably in a comparatively few exceptions, some of them, it is true, flagrant enough to arouse public scandal. But the Party is severe on all those who seek personal privilege in goods or position out of office or Party membership. The Party constantly cleanses its membership by expulsion, getting rid of those who are not devoted, or who try to use the Party for their private interests, or whose "ideology" is not Communist. The Communist Party is hard to get into and easy to get out of.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 59

When I first went to Russia, the managing staff in industry were underpaid according to our standards, considering the heavy responsibilities they carried. This was especially true of those who were members of the Communist Party, who at that time agreed to accept maximum salaries considerably lower than the non-party staff, as evidence of their unselfishness and devotion to the cause of communism. Nearly all the chief managers of Soviet industry at this time received very small cash incomes. Even then, however, the managing staff had perquisites which ordinary workers could not get. They had the use of automobiles, special restaurants, better “closed stores,” and better houses.
After 1930, this system was gradually changed, and managers of all kinds, including Communists, were paid according to their position, with about the same relative differences as in this country. Some people in Russia today receive from 10 to 20 times as much cash income as ordinary workers.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 209-210

The communists except nominal managerial salaries for their labor. These salaries are minuscule. Communists, as a rule, get much less than non-communist technicians whom they hire. The theory is that all fruits of production are pooled for redistribution to the common good.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 565

VERY LITTLE PARTY CORRUPTION

The scores of Communists I met all over Russia, from secretaries in the small towns and villages to the heads of departments in Moscow, struck me with few exceptions as extraordinarily able and astute men–on the whole abler, more alert, and more devoted than any official class I ever met. This youth, enthusiasm, and faith in what they are doing stand out in marked contrast to the routineers so common in most government service.
It should be noted that the Party, unlike political parties in other countries, is not subject to any outside economic pressure or control. Every other dictatorship depends for its support on some propertied class–in most cases on the great landlords, as in Poland, Italy, and Hungary. The Russian Communist Party has no master, no class propping it up. Its policies are directed in the last analysis by the class interests of peasants and workers, a control sufficient to keep it eternally watching its step in a maze of problems. The Party’s freedom from the outside dictation of a propertied class practically eliminates the corruption and big graft which marked the czar’s regime, and which, let Americans bear in mind, mark politics in the United States. Such graft as exists in Soviet Russia is petty–and the Party is exceedingly severe on offenders.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 60

WORKERS AND PEASANTS DO NOT MAKE UP MOST OF THE CRITICS

…Indeed, the charge is made by some of the emigre anarchist and socialist opponents of the Bolshevik regime that most of the political exiles and prisoners are workers and peasants–a charge which seems without basis in the light of much dispassionate evidence given me in Russia. It is doubtless true that peasants are the largest group among the several hundred Left Social Revolutionist exiles and prisoners, and workers among some

hundreds of anarchists. But in the total of exiles and prisoners peasants and workers constitute a small number among the thousands, mostly from the old bourgeoisie.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 179

Equally difficult as to estimate the number of exiles is to gauge their economic class origins. The socialist and anarchist committees abroad allege that the great majority are workers or peasants. But their incomplete lists do not bear out that contention. My informants in Russia, both officials and others, stated with remarkable unanimity, whatever their political views, that the proportion of factory workers and peasants is small; that most of the political exiles are ex-aristocrats or intellectuals, students, or office employees.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 230

Under the system of secrecy maintained by the GPU it is impossible to answer with evidence the allegation that the majority of the exiles are workers and peasants. But it does not square with the interests of the Soviet regime, nor with what one sees and hears all over Russia. The Socialist and anarchist committees abroad, while asserting the preponderance of workers and peasants, show only a small number of them on their lists.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 231

SOVIET AND ITALIAN DICTATORSHIPS ARE TOTALLY DIFFERENT

…The comparison of Russia with Italy, so often made, is superficial. The two dictatorships are utterly unlike. Not only are their objectives diametrically opposed, but their relations to the masses or wholly dissimilar. The Italian regime is a one-man-and-the-police dictatorship, with the overwhelming mass of the Italians against it. The Russian regime is a dictatorship of a whole party and the police, with only a minority against it.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 271

BOLSHEVIK LEADERS COME FROM THE WORKING CLASS AND PEASANTRY

All these men of the Kremlin have a common background. They are almost without exception the sons of peasants or workers whose parents could not read or write. Out of their bitter impoverished youth came early revolutionary activity. Many of them spent years in political imprisonment or exile. Mastery of the science of revolution, and of the manipulation of revolutionary power, has been their goal all their lives. To that they have subordinated everything–absolutely everything.
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 169

No member of the Politburo had an extensive formal education.
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 172

There is a widespread assumption in America and Britain that…there is no such thing as public opinion or public or private criticism [in the SU]. If that were the case then there would be serious danger of an ever-widening gulf between government and people, until the rulers would presently be as remote as the czar was. Underground forces could then gather and

assume explosive proportions before compromise measures could be enforced to divide the opposition.
The fact is, however, that public opinion does exist in Russia, and made itself felt during the war, in many overt and covert ways. First of all, remember that all Russia's present high officials themselves rose from the peasantry or the working class. Many still consciously identify themselves with the peasants, even in their living habits; and all of them, subconsciously, react with the mentality of their own class toward given situations. Men like Kalinin and Andreyev, who spent their youth working in the village fields, and men like Voroshilov & Malenkov, who toiled over machines, probably do not need a ballot to tell them how the people feel about the way things are.
Secondly, there is, or at least is encouraged to be, a great deal of freedom of expression in local affairs. Collective farm villages do elect their own officers, and unpopular ones can be so easily sabotaged and ruined by the peasants that a party-dictated choice can seldom "stick."
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 204

…The aim of the October Revolution had been to put the proletariat in power, and by 1939 most of the positions of authority in the USSR were filled by those whose social origins were either working-class or peasant.
Gill, Graeme. Stalinism. Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press International, 1990, p. 27

All the Soviet leaders lived pretty much like this at that time. No one cared about luxury or possessions, though they did try to give a good education to their children. They hired good governesses of the old, prerevolutionary school, mainly to teach their children German. All the wives had jobs and read all they could in their spare time. Sports had just come into style. All of them played tennis, and they had tennis courts and croquet lawns at their dachas. The women paid no attention to make up or clothes, but they looked nice just the same.
…During my mother's lifetime we had a normal, modest life.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 32

Many of these men–who rule 1/6 the land surface of the globe–were workmen with their hands, manual laborers, 15 or 20 years ago…. Even so, a neutral diplomat in Moscow, in a position to know, told me that he thought the members of the Politburo were personally as able as any governing body in the world.
The lives of most of Stalin's men follow a similar pattern. They were workmen who turned revolutionary, and all but the youngest of them have a history, like Stalin, of underground political activity. The most important fact in their lives was the date when they entered the communist party; as a rule, their hierarchical position depends on this. Several have been imprisoned, and their prison sentences are proud badges of distinction.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 536

It [the Communist Party] is not an antagonistic group set over against the masses, "3 million people ruling a recalcitrant 160,000,000," as is often pictured abroad. It is rather the most energetic part of 160 million, the ones who pledge their time to the public task of creating a new social and economic system, and who make this the continuing and dominant effort of their lives.

Strong, Anna Louise. Dictatorship and Democracy in the Soviet Union. New York: International Pamphlets, 1934, p. 11

PEOPLE WORKED OVERTIME AND HARD FOR THE SYSTEM

…Many willingly worked overtime, throwing all their energies into the effort to create a new society.
Gill, Graeme. Stalinism. Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press International, 1990, p. 20

UPWARD SOCIAL MOBILITY UNDER STALIN

The chief characteristic of the social face of Stalinism during the 1930s was very high levels of social mobility. …the 1930s witnessed a real social revolution in the USSR. Throughout the entire society, members of the traditional lower classes moved into positions of power and privilege in all sectors of life. The old class structure based upon inheritance was demolished and a new social structure was emerging. …for the vast mass of those up early mobile families, the revolution meant steps towards the realization of aspirations to a more comfortable lifestyle. This social revolution, with the flow from the countryside into the towns and the percolation up into white-collar occupations of many of these new arrivals, transformed the society.
Gill, Graeme. Stalinism. Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press International, 1990, p. 52

The dimensions of this change are unprecedented within such a short space of 35 years.
Gill, Graeme. Stalinism. Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press International, 1990, p. 53

MOLOTOV SHOWS NAZIS DON'T HAVE A PROGRAM, PARTY RULES OR A CONSTITUTION

MOLOTOV: Do you have a party program? I asked Hess. I knew they didn't. How could it be, a party without a program?
Do you have party rules? I knew they didn't have party rules. But I decided to feel him out anyway. Hess was Hitler's first party deputy, a party secretary. Bormann was his deputy.
I went on tripping him up. And do you have a constitution? They didn't have that either. What a high level of organization!
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 20

LIBRARY CENSORSHIP WAS REDUCED IN EARLY 1930'S

Despite the general tightening of literary "discipline," the policy of censorship in the 1932-34 period was uneven. In June 1933 a circular letter from the Central Committee formally prescribed policies for "purging of libraries." Back in 1930, during the ultra-Left upsurge of the "cultural revolution," the party had insisted on removing literary and historical works by "bourgeois" and oppositionist authors from all libraries. The June 1933 circular, while approving the removal of "counter-revolutionary and religious literature," along with the works of Trotsky and Zinoviev, took a relatively moderate line on library holdings in general. Works representing "historical interest" were to remain in the libraries of the larger towns, and closed or "special" collections were forbidden, as were mass purges of libraries.

Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 106

[Central Committee letter on purging of libraries, 13 June 1933]
In spite of the decision of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party [Bolshevik], categorically prohibiting mass purges of libraries, in many regions, territories, and republics, this decree is not being carried out. Departments of culture and propaganda have not drawn the necessary lesson from those distortions which have occurred. Instances of mass purges of libraries continue to take place right to the present day….
A] The removal of books from libraries is to be permitted only in accordance with special instructions from the Central Commission.
B] Under the leadership of the territorial commission, openly counter-revolutionary and religious literature [gospels, lives of the saints, sermons, etc.] shall be withdrawn, while literature having a historical interest shall be permitted in the large central city libraries….
D] The organization of "special" or "closed" stacks in libraries is hereby prohibited. Existing "closed" and special stacks are to be immediately abolished by entering all [works of] literature into the catalog of the libraries.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 107

Even here, the Politburo had difficulty taking control of the situation. The June 13th order was ignored by hot headed local activists, who continued to strip the libraries of books they considered counter-revolutionary. Yaroslavsky and other party leaders complained about this to the Politburo, prompting Molotov and Stalin to issue stronger strictures that characterized the purging of the libraries as "anti-Soviet" and again ordering it stopped.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 108

[October 16, 1932 Memorandum of Malstev to Rudzutak and Yaroslavski on purging the libraries]
Libraries have been purged of pernicious and outdated literature by the People's Commissariat of Education without adequate instructions and control.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 77

STALIN WANTS INTELLIGENTSIA AND SPECIALISTS TREATED EASIER

In June 1931 Stalin's "New Conditions, New Tasks" speech seemed to call a halt to the radical, class-based persecution of members of the old intelligentsia. The party's policy should be "enlisting them and taking care of them," Stalin said. It would be stupid and unwise to regard practically every expert and engineer of the old school as an undetected criminal and wrecker." The following month, the Politburo forbade arrests of specialists without high-level permission. In the subsequent period, the Politburo intervened on several occasions to protect persecuted members of the intelligentsia and to rein in the activities of secret police officials persecuting them:…
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 109

PARTY LEADERS ADMIRED BY THE MASSES

[Nov. 29, 1935 NKVD report on an anti-Stakhanovist leaflet–Part of the leaflet said “Fight for a raise in your stipend!”]
We receive a stipend of 93 rubles [each]. If you wonder whether it is possible to live on that, the answer is “NO. Our board alone costs significantly more than that. First course–25 kopeks; second course–95 kopeks; bread–30 kopeks; for a total of one ruble, 50 kopeks; the total per month equals 4.50 x 30 equals 135 rubles. You can’t survive on that. When, oh when, will our “wisest,” “most brilliant,” “cherished” leaders understand this truism?!
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 214

HIGH TAXES WERE NEEDED TO RAISE MONEY

Stalin’s last minister of finance was Zverev…. Sholokhov called him “our iron minister of finance.”… He was derided for levying high taxes on everyone. But who to tax? Of course there were no bourgeoisie. He had to extract heavy taxes from our own, from peasants and workers. They say that orchards were destroyed–they were taxed only because fruit orchards near cities yielded supplementary incomes. You can get something out of them, so on went the tax. But just find another way. The state had to live somehow. No one would give us any money. What to do? In this matter, they say, Stalin acted badly–indeed, crudely, savagely, barbarically. But just put these “non-barbarians” in those conditions, let them ensure the life of the state and prevent its breakdown. Just find the means. They were simpletons who did not understand the most elementary things! But Zverev was stalwart. I value him for this.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 207

STALIN SAYS THE BEST WAY TO CONVERT OTHER COUNTRIES TO SOCIALISM IS BY EXAMPLE

GOLOVANOV: Stalin said that no propaganda, no agitation would be enough to unite the world proletariat around us. Instead we need to show that the people in our state live better than people live in America or in any other capitalist country. This would be the best kind of agitation, the best kind of propaganda.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 301

(Molotov picks up the party program booklet and reads Khrushchev’s conclusion that other nations will follow us once they see we live better than they)
You parrot Khrushchev’s rubbish. That’s nothing short of consumerism and even nationalism. Had the Bolsheviks waited for everyone to become literate, we would never have had a revolution. The workers in the Western countries enjoy better living conditions than we because their bourgeoisie robbed other countries as well as their own. Each Englishman used to have 10 slaves…. If we wait until we first raise our standard of living, expecting that others will then imitate us, we shall be nationalists who devote themselves solely to their own affairs, not communists. This is worse than Khrushchevism, this is utopianism.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 302

There is no denying that the regime succeeded to a considerable extent in channeling the enthusiasm of the younger generation to building up mammoth projects such as

Magnitogorsk and Kuznetsk, Dneproges, Zaporozhe, and Stalingrad. There was widespread feeling that young Communists could (and would) “storm heavens.” The mood proved infectious: The Soviet example of seemingly lifting oneself up by one’s own bootstraps found increasing interest and support in the West at the very time when the capitalist world faced a severe recession. The “socialist sixth of the world” was transforming itself, and the Russian example, as many enthusiastic visitors predicted, would serve as an inspiration for everyone else.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 35

And Trotsky never seemed to realize that when Stalin said he could build socialism in a single country, the country was Russia, which is not a country at all–but a continent [of many nationalities]. Nor did it occur to Trotsky apparently that far and away the best single advertisement for world communism, in the future, would be a Russia which was successful, stable, safe.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 526

THE MAJOR PROGRESS OF THE SU WAS DONE UNDER STALIN’S LEADERSHIP

Since Stalin’s death we have lived on the reserves built up in Stalin’s time. [12-18-70]
I propose a toast–to Stalin! No one else could have borne, no one else could have endured the burden he carried on his shoulders. None but he had the iron nerve and strength it took!
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 401

…Yet it is a fact that ‘Stalin found Russia working with a wooden plough and left her equipped with atomic piles’, even though the epoch of the wooden plough still persisted in lingering on all too many levels of her national existence. This summary of Stalin’s rule is, of course, a tribute to his achievement.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 624

Isaac Deutscher, the former Trotskyite and an independent Marxist author, was not uncritical of certain aspects of Stalin’s rule. But he, too, was overawed in his overall assessment of the man:…
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 17

A few pages further down, Deutscher observes:
“…it is a fact that ‘Stalin found Russia with a wooden plow and left her equipped with atomic piles’…. This summary of Stalin’s rule is, of course, a tribute to his achievement” The words quoted by Deutscher are quoted from his own obituary of Stalin published in the Manchester Guardian of March 6, 1953.
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 50

… Even Roy Medvedev, no friend of Stalin’s and the author of the thoroughly anti-Stalin Let History Judge, has been obliged to say: “Stalin found the Soviet Union in ruin and left it a superpower. Gorbachev inherited a superpower and left it in ruin.”
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 50

…However, we must give them all their due. Despite their crimes, Beria, Stalin, Molotov, and Pervukhin succeeded in transforming the Soviet Union from a backward agrarian hinterland into a superpower armed with sophisticated nuclear weapons. While committing equally monstrous crimes against their opponents and innocent bystanders, Khrushchev, Bulganin, and Malenkov contributed much less to the transformation of the USSR. Unlike Stalin, they greatly weakened the state through their own power struggles. Gorbachev and his aides, governed no less by personal ambition, caused the crumbling of the state. Gorbachev and Yakovlev behaved like traditional party bosses, exploiting the name of democracy to strengthen their own power base. They were naive as statesman and under the illusion that they were capable of outmaneuvering their rivals and preserving their power. They accomplished nothing in domestic policy or in foreign affairs. In 1989 Gorbachev moved Honecker out of power in East Germany, hoping to strengthen socialism, but it backfired. He and Shevardnadze were incapable of negotiating economic concessions from the West in return for the withdrawal of the Soviet Union from Eastern Europe.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 428

These advances are all connected, directly or indirectly, with Stalin. Stalin's armies paved the way for revolution in Eastern Europe and assisted it in China. Once the foundations of socialism were established under his leadership in the USSR, a model was given to the world, for socialism, although differing in specifics and in different countries, is –like feudalism or capitalism–necessarily everywhere the same in its general nature.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 136

He [Stalin] gave positive leadership and transformed a vast, backward agrarian nation into a modern industrial power.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. xi

Soviet Russia today [1979] is a superpower with a Navy probably already larger than the United States Navy, an Army certainly larger, and a weapon capacity at least equal. Stalin was the architect and creator of this military and economic might, which has been achieved within an astonishingly brief span of years.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. xv

…For such people [the urban citizenry] Stalinism provided an important means of upward social mobility, participation, and criticism. Under the Gensec's rule, the country moved from backwardness to superpowerdom.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 232

When Stalin died in 1953, the Soviet Union was the second greatest Industrial, scientific, and military power in the world, and showed clear signs of moving to overtake the U.S. in all these areas. This was despite the devastating losses it suffered while defeating the fascist powers of Germany, Romania, Hungary, and Bulgaria. The various peoples of the USSR were unified. Starvation and illiteracy were unknown throughout the country. Agriculture was completely collectivized and extremely productive. Preventive health care was the finest in the world, and medical treatment of exceptionally high quality was available free to all citizens. Education at all levels was free. More books were published in the USSR than in any other country. There was no unemployment.

Franklin, Bruce, Ed. The Essential Stalin; Major Theoretical Writings. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p. 8

Under his leadership, the Soviet Union had emerged as the strongest power in Europe by far and as a world power equal to the United States.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 11

Survivors of the Stalinist period reminded the public that for many people the 1930s had been a period of happiness and enthusiasm, when a feeling prevailed that great things were being achieved. A typical representative of the generation that "made it" under Stalin was Ivan Benediktov, who became the people's commissar of agriculture in 1938 at the age of 35, remained in key government positions for many years, and eventually served as ambassador to India and Yugoslavia (1959-70). Among the main points made in Stalin's defense are the following: Promotion under Stalin was by merit only. Many very young people (such as Voznesensky, Ustinov, Kosygin, Tevosian, and Vannikov) were appointed to key positions in their early 30s–and proved themselves. Thousands of innocents suffered, but the overall number has been grossly exaggerated; the general atmosphere was not one of fear, repression, and terror but of a mighty wave of revolutionary enthusiasm, of pride in country and party, and of belief in the leadership. Decisions taken at the top were far more democratic than generally believed; Stalin was not an extremist, but on the whole a fair and reasonable man. In fact, Khrushchev's style was more autocratic than Stalin's. As for the murder of the Red Army leadership, there is reason to believe that they plotted not against Stalin but against Voroshilov, who they thought was not equal to his task. Such behavior would not have been tolerated in any country.
… The 1930s had been a time of great enthusiasm, of national unity and pride, of belief in the leadership, and of a historical mission; young people had been given chances like never before, and so on.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 244

Stalin was, as we know, an abnormally suspicious, but also a sane and rational man. He had, by 1934, just succeeded, not in making the Soviet Union strong, but in putting it in the way to being so.
Snow, Charles Percy. Variety of Men. New York: Scribner, 1966, p. 261

This was a fantastic exaggeration but also a recognition of one indisputable achievement of Stalin's reign: from the weak third-rate industrial and military country which she had been in 1924, Russia had become one of the world's two superpowers.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 8

He [Stalin] left the Soviet Union as a world power and an industrial colossus with a literate society.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 3

DIFFICULT PERIODS LIE AHEAD

We have passed through difficult periods, but in my opinion even more difficult one's lie ahead. [6-16-83]

Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 404

EVERYTHING CONSIDERED THE BOLSHEVIKS ACTUALLY MADE FEW MISTAKES

When the Bolsheviks seized power in November 1917 this was the first time in history that a group with scientific understanding of the historical process had taken power and went on to change society by consciously utilizing these processes. The wonder, then is not that they made mistakes but that they made so few and that on the whole they succeeded.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 136

STALIN COULD PERSUADE WORKERS AND TALK TO THEM IN THEIR LANGUAGE

He would approach a worker, speak to him in a friendly way, and attach him to himself for ever. He would make a malcontent of one who was apathetic, and a revolutionary of a malcontent.
Sosso's natural simplicity, his complete indifference to the conditions of personal life, his strength of character and his knowledge, which even at that time was remarkable, gave him authority, called people's attention to him and kept it there. The Tiflis workers called him "our Sosso."
Orakhelashvili, who was Sosso's companion at that time, puts the matter in a nutshell: "He was neither pedantic nor vulgar." He looked upon the militant Socialist as an interpreter who said the same things as the wisest theorist, but adapted them to the intelligence and degree of education of his listeners. How did he do this? By imagery and by giving vivid examples.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 10

"'Our Soso,' the workers spoke of him. It is well known that for intellectuals active in labor circles the most difficult thing was to find 'a common language with the workers.' In this regard Stalin was and remains to this day a rare exception. He has always been remarkably capable of explaining to workingmen the most complicated things and events in a clear, simple, and convincing manner. He was just as able to find the ' tongue' of the peasants with whom he frequently came in touch in the revolutionary work in Georgia….
Yenukidze said, "Stalin never sought personal popularity. The circle of his persistent activity he limited exclusively to the working men and that of his underground coworkers. That is why the advanced workers and professional revolutionists knew him well and rated highly his qualities as an organizer and revolutionist."
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 15-16

STALIN SAYS A GOOD LEADER MUST FIRST CONSULT THE MASSES BEFORE ACTING

And the great incentive, for those who are trying to bring about social progress, is faith in the masses. This faith in the great mass of the workers is the watch-word, the battle-cry which Stalin has uttered most often in the course of his career. "The most unseemly malady which can attack a leader," he tells us, "is fear of the masses." The leader needs them more than they need him. He learns more from them than they learn from him. As soon as a leader

begins to make his plans without taking the masses into his conference, he is damned, as regards both victory and the cause.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 16

The older members were in favor of the distribution, in small doses, of “pure propaganda” to selected workers who should be charged with spreading the gospel. The younger members were for direct contact, for “the street.” It is hardly necessary to add that Stalin supported the latter tendency, and made it triumph.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 17

No, under no conditions would our workers now tolerate the domination of one person. Individuals of the greatest authority are reduced to nonentities as soon as they lose the confidence of the masses, and as soon as they lose contact with the masses. Plekhanov used to enjoy exceptional authority. And what happened? As soon as he began to commit political errors, the workers forgot him; they abandoned him and forgot him. Another instance: Trotsky. Trotsky also used to enjoy very great authority, although, of course, not as much as Plekhanov. What happened? As soon as he lost contact with the workers, he was forgotten…. They remember him sometimes–with bitterness…. As far as our class-conscious workers are concerned, they remember Trotsky with bitterness, with irritation, with hatred.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 245

The art of leadership is a serious matter. One must not lag behind a movement, because to do so is to become isolated from the masses. But one must not rush ahead, for to rush ahead is to lose contact with masses. He who wishes to lead a movement, and at the same time keep touch with the vast masses, must conduct a fight on two fronts–against those who lag behind and against those who rush on ahead.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 256

Even an absolute dictator – which Stalin was not – has to sell his policies to his people if he is to survive, particularly if he is asking them to risk their lives.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 328

Koba is a cynic but his knowledge of the masses is undeniable. No leader of our party, not even Ilyich, has understood the masses better than Koba…. Trotsky is but a novice in this field. He invents the masses instead of studying them.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 220

But the fact that as these leaders rise they get further away from the masses, and the masses begin to look up at them from below and do not venture to criticize them, cannot but give rise to a certain danger of the leaders losing contact with the masses and the masses getting out of touch with the leaders.
This danger may result in the leaders becoming conceited and regarding themselves as infallible. And what good can be expected when the top leaders become self-conceited and begin to look down on the masses? Clearly, nothing can come of this but the ruin of the Party.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 11, p. 34

DECISIONS MUST BE MADE AFTER CONSULTING THE MASSES

He [Stalin] strongly indicts “the lack of faith in the creative faculty of the masses” (under the pretext that they are not sufficiently developed intellectually). If they are properly taught they will both lead themselves and lead you. No “aristocracy of leaders with regard to the masses,” because it is the masses themselves who are called upon to destroy the old order and to build up the new. Not to be nursemaids and governesses to the crowd: because, quite definitely, they learn less from our books than we learn from them. So that it is only by collaboration with the masses that proper government can take place.
“To be at the wheel and to stare blindly ahead until a catastrophe occurs does not mean leadership. The Bolsheviks do not understand the act of leadership in this way. To lead one must foresee…. If you are isolated, even with other comrades who are also leading, you will only see everything if, at the same time, hundreds of thousands, millions of workers are on the look out for weaknesses, discover errors and apply themselves to the achievement of the common task.”
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 151

STALIN BELIEVES PERSUASION NOT FORCE SHOULD BE USED WITH THE MASSES

And in dealing with the masses, persuasion, not violence, must be used. When Zinoviev defended the theory of dictatorship of the Party in 1925, Stalin rose up in arms against “this narrow point of view” and declared that there must be complete harmony between the Party and the mass of the people, and that mutual confidence should not be destroyed by any abstract and unlimited rights which the party chose to confer upon itself. In the first place, the Party may be mistaken: and even if it is not, the masses may take some time to see that it is right.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 151

In his answers to Ludwig’s questions Stalin kept his end up most creditably. He explained that force alone could not possibly keep the Communists in power and that they would have been overthrown but for the fact that they always told the truth; that he was no more than a continuation of Lenin; that in any case all decisions were taken in ‘our Areopagus’, the Central Committee.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 183

The three or four rooms and the corridors that we passed through were quite simple but efficiently furnished as offices. A carpet with wide red borders leads to Stalin’s room. He received us there immediately. My companion was a young journalist who speaks several languages excellently and translates very precisely. Stalin and Mustapha Kemal are the only men with whom I have had to converse through the medium of an interpreter. The room which we entered was long and at the far end of it a medium-sized man in a light brown jacket stood up from his chair. He was dressed with painful neatness, just as the room was arranged with the hygienic accuracy of a doctor’s consulting room. A large table stood in the middle, as in an ordinary board-room, with plain water carafes and glasses and large ashtrays. Everything was in apple-pie order. The walls were colored dark green. Pictures of Lenin and Marx and several other people unknown to me hung there, but they were all just

enlarged photographs. Stalin's desk was also in perfect order and on it was a photograph of Lenin, besides four or five telephone apparatuses, such as one finds in all these government offices.

"Good evening," I said, in stumbling Russian. He smiled and seemed somewhat embarrassed but he was extremely courteous and began by offering me a cigarette. He assured me that I was at full liberty to say what I liked and to ask whatever questions I liked and that he had an hour -and-a-half free. But when I drew out my watch at the end of the time he made a prohibitive gesture and kept us for another half-hour. A certain degree of embarrassment is as graceful in a man of power as it is in a beautiful woman. In the case of Stalin it did not surprise me at all because he scarcely ever sees people from the West. None of the present ambassadors or envoys, and scarcely any of the great experts, have ever seen him. The only foreigner who has free access to him is little old Cooper, the American hydraulic engineer, who is constructing the cofferdam on the Dnieper. Though my interpreter holds an important position in the Bolshevik Press organizations, he had never seen Stalin before. Since he had to speak constantly through the medium of the interpreter, Stalin was looking away from me practically all the time and for the whole two hours he kept on drawing figures on a piece of paper. With a red pencil he drew red circles and arabesques and wrote numbers. He never turned the pencil round though at the other end it was blue. During the course of our conversation he filled many sheets of paper with red markings and from time to time folded them and tore them to pieces. The result was that I managed to get his glance straight into my face only for a few seconds…. His look was dour and the expression veiled. But it was not the glance of a misanthropist.

In the long pauses that were necessary for translation and re-translation I had a very good opportunity for observing his movements, especially as he speaks so slowly. Such pauses enable an interviewer to introduce a change of theme in the conversation and thus the better to search the mind of his interlocutor. Stalin's habit of sitting absolutely immobile and of scarcely ever emphasizing a word with a gesture made this all the easier. When I am conversing with anybody I have a habit of standing up and walking about. If I had done it here it might have been considered strange.

What completed the picture of Stalin, as I have already described it, was the heavy and muffled tone of his voice. It was the kind of voice that could never speak the word of destiny "I Will" with fiery emotion. He could only let the syllables fall like heavy hammer blows. The chief impression that I got of him was that of a protector. Stalin is a man before whose name many men and women have quaked, but one could never imagine a child or an animal doing so. In a former age such a man would have been called the father of his country.

…Stalin gave me an exhaustive answer each time and I shall not shorten it here. He spoke in short clear sentences, not as a man who is accustomed to simplify things before public audiences, but as a logical and constructive thinker whose mind works slowly and without the slightest emotion. This man who is now the exponent of the whole Moscow ideology struck me as a typical disciple of Hegel…. Stalin takes the point of an argument immediately, lays it on the table, as it were, talks around it and then comes close to it and carefully brings historical data and statistical percentages to bear on it. When he spoke he seemed to me to be absolutely a contradiction of Prince Bulow. He scarcely ever gave me the merely official answer, the experience which I have had with most of the other Communists.

Although he could not have been prepared for most of my questions and although he has not had the experience of our European ministers of State who are asked the same questions week after week, and although he knew that I would publish his answers to the world, he did not correct himself once. He had all the historical data and names at his

fingertips. He did not ask for any copy of what my interpreter wrote down and he did not ask for any corrections to be made. I had never before experienced the same kind of self-confidence. In all my conversations with other leaders, I have not taken down what they have said at the moment but have recorded it afterwards and submitted it to them for authorization. But here I took the stenographical text as it was taken down by another person and when I examined it I could not find the slightest omission and yet nothing had been bettered. Outside of one mere private question, he did not ask me to tone down anything or omit this or that. When I recall to mind the habits of our poor ministers, when they are preparing a parliamentary speech or having an interview corrected by the head of their press bureau, I am filled with respect for the shoe-maker's son from the Caucasus….

"You have led a life of a conspirator for such a long time," I said, "and do you now think that, under your present rule, illegal agitation is no longer possible?"

"It is possible, at least to some extent."

"Is the fear of this possibility the reason why you are still governing with so much severity, 15 years after the revolution?"

"No. I will illustrate the chief reason for this by giving a few historical examples. When the Bolsheviks came to power they were soft and easy with their enemies. At that time, for example, the Mensheviks (moderate Socialists), had their lawful newspapers and also the Social Revolutionaries. Even the military cadets had their newspapers. When the white-haired General Krasnow marched upon Leningrad and was arrested by us, under the military law he should have been shot or at least imprisoned, but we set him free on his word of honor. Afterwards it became clear that with this policy we were undermining the very system that we were endeavoring to construct. We had begun by making a mistake. Leniency towards such a power was a crime against the working classes. That soon became apparent. The Social Revolutionaries of the right and the Mensheviks, with Bogdanov and others, then organized the Junker revolt and fought against the Soviets for two years. Mamontow joined them. We soon saw that behind these agents stood the great Powers of the West and the Japanese. Then we realized that the only way to get ahead was by the policy of absolute severity and intransigence…."

"This policy of cruelty," I said, "seems to have aroused a very widespread fear. In this country I have the impression that everybody is afraid and that your great experiment could succeed only among this long-suffering nation that has been trained to obedience."

"You are mistaken," said Stalin, "but your mistake is general. Do you think it possible to hold power for 14 years merely by intimidating the people? Impossible. The Czars knew best how-to rule by intimidation. It is an old experiment in Europe; and the French bourgeoisie supported the Czars in their policy of intimidation against the people. What came of it? Nothing."

"But it maintained the Romanovs in power for 300 years," I replied.

"Yes, but how many times was that power not shaken by insurrections? To forget the older days, recall only the revolt of 1905. Fear is in the first instance a question of the mechanization of administration. You can arouse fear for one or two years and through it, or at least partly through it, you can rule for that time. But you cannot rule the peasants by fear. Secondly, the peasants and the working classes in the Soviet Union are by no means so timid and long-suffering as you think. You believe that our people are timid and lazy. That is an antiquated idea. It was believed in formerly, because the landed gentry used to go to Paris to spend their money there and do nothing. From this arose an impression of so-called Russian laziness. People thought that the peasants were easily frightened and made obedient. That was a mistake. And it was a three-fold mistake in regard to the workers.

Never again will the workers endure the rule of one man. Men who have reached the highest pinnacles of fame were lost the moment they lost touch with the masses. Plechanow had great authority in his hands but when he became mixed up in politics he quickly forgot the masses. Trotsky was a man of great authority, but not of such high standing as Plechanow, and now he is forgotten. If he is casually remembered it is with a feeling of irritation." (At that point he sketched something like a ship with his red pencil.)

I did not intend to mention Trotsky to Stalin, but since he himself had broached the subject, I asked: "Is the feeling against Trotsky General?"

"If you take the active workers, nine -tenths speak bitterly of Trotsky."

There was a short pause during which Stalin laughed quietly and then took up the thread of the question again: "You cannot maintain that people may be ruled for a longtime merely by intimidation. I understand your skepticism. There is a small section of the people which is really afraid. It is an unimportant part of the peasant body. That part is represented by the kulaks. They do not fear anything like the intimidation of the reign of terror but they fear the other section of the peasant population. This is a hang-over from the earlier class system. Among the middle-classes, for example, especially the professional classes, there is something of the same kind of fear, because these latter had special privileges under the old regime. Moreover, there are traders and a certain section of the peasants that still retain the old liking for the middle-class.

"But if you take the progressive peasants and workers not more than 15 percent are skeptical of the Soviet power, or are silent from fear or are waiting for the moment when they can undermine the Bolshevik date. On the other hand, about 85 percent of the more or less active people would urge us further than we want to go. We often have to put on the brakes. They would like to stamp out the last remnants of the intelligentsia. But we would not permit that. In the whole history of the world there never was a power that was supported by nine-tenths of the population, as the Soviet power is supported. That is the reason for our success in putting our ideas into practice. If we ruled only by fear not a man would have stood by us. And the working classes would have destroyed any power that attempted to continue to rule by fear. Workers who have made three revolutions have had some practice in overthrowing governments. They would not endure such a mockery of government as one merely based on fear."

"When I hear repeatedly about the power of the masses," I said, "I am surprised at the hero worship that is more prevalent here than anywhere else, for this is the last place that one would logically expect to find it. Your materialistic conception of history, which is what separates me personally from you–for I hold that men make history–should prevent leaders and symbols from being shown in the form of statues and pictures on the street. You are the very people who, logically, ought not to revere the Unknown Soldier or any other individual. Now how can you explain that contradiction?"

"You are mistaken. Read that part of Marx where he speaks of the poverty of philosophy."

Above Stalin's head hung a portrait of the white-haired Karl Marx. And every time the conversation turned to the great Socialist, I had to look at the portrait.

"There," continued Stalin, "you will find that men make history. But not in the way that your fancy suggests. Men make history rather in their reactions to the definite circumstances in which they find themselves placed. Every generation has a new set of circumstances to face. In general it can be said that great men are of value only insofar as they are able to deal with the circumstances of their environment. Otherwise they are Don Quixotes. According to Marx himself, one should never contrast men and circumstances. As far as my opinion goes, it is history that makes men. We have been studying Marx for 30 years."

“And our professors interpret him differently,” I suggested.
“That is because they try to popularize Marxism. He has himself never denied the importance of the role of the hero. It is in fact very great.”
“May I therefore conclude that here in Moscow also one man rules and not the council. I see 16 chairs around the table.”
Stalin looked at the chairs: “The individual does not decide. In every council there are people whose views must be taken into account but wrong views also exist. We have had the experience of three revolutions and we know that out of 100 decisions made by individuals 90 are one-sided. Our leading organ is the Central Committee of the Party and it has 70 members. Among the 70 members are some of our most capable industrialists and our cooperatives and our best tradesmen, also some of our ablest authorities on agriculture and co-operative as well as individual farming, finally some men who have a first-class knowledge of how to deal with the various nationalities that make up the Soviet Union. This is the Areopagus in which the wisdom of the party is centered. It gives the individual the possibility of correcting his partial prejudices. Each contributes his own experience for the general benefit of the Committee. Without this method very many mistakes would be made. Since each person takes his part in the deliberations our decisions are more or less correct.”
“So you refuse to be a dictator,” I said, “I have found the same tactics are used by all dictators. In Europe you are painted as the bloodthirsty Czar or the aristocratic freebooter from Georgia.”
He laughed in a genial way and blinked at me as I continued: “Since there are stories going around of bank robberies and other burglaries which you organized as a youth in order to help the party, or at least countenanced, I should like to know how much of all these we are to believe.”
The peasant instinct in Stalin now came to the fore. He went across to his writing-desk and brought me a pamphlet of about 20 pages which contained his biographical data in Russian but naturally nothing in answer to my question.
“There you will find everything,” he said, obviously pleased at this debonair way of giving a negative answer. I began to laugh and asked: “Tell me if you do not feel yourself to be the follower of Stenka Rasin, the noble rapparee whose legendary deeds I have heard recounted on the Volga, where they were done.”
He returned to his constructive logical way of talking.
“We Bolsheviks,” he said, “apart entirely from our national origin, have always been interested in personalities like Bolotnikow, Stenka Rasin, Pugatschew, because they emerged spontaneously from the first elementary uprising of the peasantry against the oppressor. It is interesting for us to study the first signs of that awakening. Historical allegories, however, are out of the question; and we have not idealized Stenka Rasin. Individual uprisings, even when organized with the capacity that characterized these three leaders I have mentioned, lead to nothing. A peasant revolution can attain its ends only when it is united with the revolution of the workers and led by the latter. Only a revolution integrally organized and welded together in all its parts can lead to its goal. This you cannot have among the peasants because they alone form an independent class. Moreover, the three insurrectionary leaders that I have mentioned were all Tsarist. They were against the landed gentry but for our good Czar. That was their battle cry.”
The hands of the watch that I had placed before me on the table showed that our time was growing short. I put another question in an innocent way, as if I did not know about America in Russia: “Everywhere in this country,” I said, “I find that America is respected. How is it

possible that any State whose aim is to overthrow capitalism can pay its respect to a country in which capitalism has reached its highest grade of development?"
Without a moment's pause, Stalin gave a magnificent answer: "You are overstating things. Here there is no general respect for everything that is American. There is only a respect for the American sense of practicality in everything, in industry, in literature and in business; but we never forget that it is a capitalist land. They are sound people, or at least there are many sound people there, sound in mind as well as in body, sound in their whole attitude towards work and towards everyday facts. The practical business side of American life in its simplicity has our admiration.
Ludwig, Emil. Leaders of Europe. London: I. Nicholson and Watson Ltd., 1934, p. 369-378

STALIN SAYS THE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION IS THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

Tirelessly, Stalin began at the beginning, put each principle in its proper place, and once more laid it down that "the fundamental question of Leninism, its starting-point, is not the peasant question but the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the question of the conditions of obtaining it, and the conditions of its retention. The question of the peasantry as allied to the proletariat in its struggle for power, is a subsidiary question."
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 177

Stalin, supported by Molotov and several others, defended Lenin's new conception: the dictatorship of the proletariat, resting on the poorest peasants, can alone assure a solution of the tasks of the democratic revolution and at the same time open the era of socialist transformations. Stalin was right as against Volodarsky, but he did not know how to prove it.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 216

LENIN ATTACKS THOSE ATTACKING THE GOVT UNDER THE GUISE OF REJECTING BUREAUCRACY

Bureaucracy? Yes, no doubt one is always right when one abuses it. It has a deplorable tendency either to become sterile and fat, or thin to mummification. But, all the same, the Administration has a broad back and very often one blackguards it with theatrical violence and with one's eyes shut, solely because one wants, for one reason or another, to attack the government. More than 20 years earlier, in 1903, Lenin replied to the Mensheviks and to Trotsky: "It is obvious that outcries against the bureaucracy are only a method of showing one's dissatisfaction with the composition of the central organization. You are a bureaucrat because you were elected by the Congress, not by my wishes, but in spite of them…. You are acting in a barberous, mechanical way because you take orders from the majority of the Congress of the Party and pay no heed to my desire to be personally consulted…. You are an autocrat because you do not wish to restore the power into the hands of the old group of your colleagues, which defends its own ideas all the more energetically because it objects to being disregarded by the Congress." Thus Lenin expressed himself, and he was an amazingly good psychologist with a hundred piercing eyes.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 186

STALIN SAYS MARXISTS ARE NOT TRYING TO EQUALIZE EVERYONE

And yet, these men who are content for themselves to live a dull, often ascetic, life, are by no means fanatics on the subject of leveling, as many people think. With us, the average man–whose brain does not yet know how to digest ideas properly and whose head is filled with a strange farrago of headings of social and political doctrines–has three great grievances against the Communist, grievances such that they transform the said Communist into an ogre. They are that he is anti-patriotic, that he wants to deprive everyone of his possessions, and that he wants to turn society into a vast disciplined and equalized barracks, and to level everyone's intelligence like paving-stones. But the Communist Internationalists are, on the contrary, all in favor of national expansion, on the sole condition that is not obtained by war, and is not put into the hands of so-called businessmen. Their general theory of the suppression of private property only harms a negligible number of social parasites and profiteers, and it brings with it enormous benefit to all the other inhabitants of the Earth. (All public evils result, beyond any question, from the moral and material chaos brought about by the general struggle to grow rich.) As for leveling, they are its avowed enemies as soon as it goes beyond that great law of justice and of equity (the basis, in fact, of Socialism) which consist in giving each human being precisely the same political power, that is to say, in effacing the artificial and pernicious inequality on the threshold of destiny. It would be easy to show that Socialism is, of all regimes, the one which cultivates individuality the most and the best.
Stalin is very insistent on this point: "By equality, Marxism does not mean the leveling of personal requirements and conditions of existence, but the suppression of classes, that is to say equal enfranchisement for every worker after the overthrow and expropriation of the Capitalists…. The equal duty of everyone to work according to his capacity, and the equal right of all workers to be remunerated according to work they do (socialist society): the equal duty of everyone to work according to his capacity and the equal right of all workers to be remunerated according to their needs (communist society). Marxism starts from the fact that the needs and taste of men can never be alike nor equal either in quality or in quantity, either in the socialist or the communist era. Marxism has never recognized and does not now recognize any other form of equality."
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 236-237

Later when I turned the conversation to the astonishing volte-face in which the communism of recent years cast all its boasted equality behind it, Stalin made a long and doctrinaire reply. He described a perfectly Socialist society as an impossibility so long as classes existed, and so long as work was a burden for many, and pleasure for only a few.
"Every man according to his abilities and attainments; that is the Marxist formula for the first stage of socialism. In the final stage, every man will produce as much as he can and be paid according to his needs. Socialism has never denied differences in tastes and needs, the extent of such differences. Why, Marx attacks the principal of absolute equality! In the West, people imagine that we want first to collect everything, then distribute it in a thoroughly primitive fashion. That might do well for Cromwell, but not for our scientific socialism."
Ludwig, Emil. Three portraits: Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin. New York Toronto: Longmans, Green and Company, c1940, p. 120

CRITICISM OF THE SU SHOULD FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE AS WELL AS THE NEGATIVE

…one must always give the true proportion between good and evil–which is never done, so far as the USSR is concerned, when criticism is inconsiderately leveled at it without paying the least attention to the point of view of the other side.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 239

STALIN SAYS THE SU WILL NOT SEIZE OR YIELD LAND

“We do not want one foot of anyone else’s land, but we will not yield an inch of our own.” (Stalin.)
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 247

GOODS ARE UNEQUALLY DISTRIBUTED BECAUSE OF ECONOMIC NATIONALISM

Gone, in the first quarter of the 20th century, is the time when the capitalist stomach had the Equator as its belt.
It is not over-production that should be indicted, for, actually, the world does not produce enough for its needs, but the disorder in the distribution of produce as a result of economic nationalisms.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 251

THE CAPITALIST DISGUISE OF FASCISM

Capitalism, to continue to be Capitalism, has had to disguise its aims. It has done so with a great deal of false modesty. As Stalin expressly said, some time ago, Capitalism cannot emerge from the crisis with “it’s head held high,” it can only emerge from it “on all fours.” Faced with the progress of socialism and the advance of their own decay, the middle classes soon pull themselves together. They improved their program of conservative seizure (having the material means of doing so), and today they are rising to the surface again, carefully disguised. The capitalist system is discreetly tucked away into the background, and is no longer visible in the foreground at all.
That disguise called Fascism–which, without being a necessary adjunct to middle-class power, does in fact occur almost everywhere (and has become the new uniform of Capitalism)–has as its main objective the division of the enemy and especially the isolation of the working classes and socialism at the same stroke, by getting the workers who do not belong to the laboring classes on its side. This scheme was very carefully prepared by continuous, intensive, very carefully prepared propaganda starting soon after the end of the war [WWI], at a period at which the ruling classes were crippled and were rapidly losing their hold over the masses.
Discontent, resulting from all the disillusionment and all the hardships of post-war existence, has been fostered and exploited by Capitalism through a certain democratic demagogism and by certain ideas dishonestly borrowed from socialist terminology. Capitalism has extracted from these a compound of all the bitterness, all the disillusionment and all the anger, and has diverted it and directed it against a few cock-shies set up by itself.
One of these cock-shies (apart from socialism) is the parliamentary system which, it is declared, must be swept away, in addition to Socialism, so that the last semblance of liberty

may disappear (liberty itself having already vanished). So the parliamentary system (which really thoroughly deserves it!) is accused of all the sins of Israel, thereby cunningly shifting them from the shoulders of the middle-class system itself.

And they have all the other scapegoats they need. Present-day Reaction has protested louder than anyone else against the scandals, frauds, and semi-official embezzlements with which its own methods are so filled, and it has gone out of its way to incriminate with these misdeeds of the capitalist system, not indeed all capitalists, but only those who have at length grown weary of the colossal complacency of class legislation.

And by thus playing with words (as, for instance, with the elastic word “regime”), the new-fangled Reaction has created a certain anti-Capitalism with excellent demagogic scope. It is the only means of preserving Capitalism: suppress parliament and install in its place a dictatorial government, and prosecute the villains who have committed the crime of being found out, and Capitalism becomes unassailable.

This activity in defense of Capitalism, with its rudiments of a superficial and negative programme, emanates from all sorts of different organizations only differing from one another by their titles, and forming a solid opposition group to the workers’ movement.

The peasant classes and the lower middle-classes are set against the workers; officials are set against manual laborers; and everyone is set against the officials. The taxpayers, all the ex-soldiers who do not understand the situation, and the very young men, are dazzled. The controlling idea is to gather all those who are not already organized, the floating population, in fact, into a new organization over which control can be kept, and to smother the worker in it.

Socialism–the threadbare, mangy author of all evil–is decried at the same time as the parliamentary system, by putting it in an entirely false light. People are horrified by being made to believe that Socialism is plotting their destruction.

People say: “Socialists have been in power in England and in Germany. See what they have done.” They omit to add that the people in question were perhaps socialist in name, but that they never applied the principles of Socialism. And indeed it must be recognized that this piece of sophistry is partly reinforced by the very real disappointment which certain Social-Democratic leaders, by their actions during and after the war, gave to the workers. All their pandering, whether disloyal or merely childish, and their actual betrayal of the workers, have to some extent discredited Socialism, and have appreciably weakened it among certain classes of workers which are not yet ripe for ruthless and uncompromising Communism.

So we see Mr. MacDonald, a Socialist converted to the virtues of Capitalism, being exhibited with pride, “much as a reformed drunkard is exhibited by a temperance society,” says Mr. Snowden. As for the achievements of the USSR these are hidden, and stolen from the people.

The neo- Reactionaries are particularly virulent (as is natural) against trade unionism. We know what Mussolini thinks about it, and we also know the sentiments of those who prompt Hitler with what he has to say. And not long ago, Monsieur Tardieu explicitly said: “To overcome the world crisis, all that is required is effective control of trade unions.” The Corporate State systems which flourish in Italy, in Germany, and (in disguise) in France, are based precisely on this principle. It is the system of intimidation and of new militarism –which fills Herr Krupp with enthusiasm; it transforms every worker into a soldier–a machine tool or a rifle on two legs.

But the great weapon of Fascism against Socialism is Nationalism.

National unity and greatness, prophesies Fascism, can only be acquired if Internationalism, which is the principal element of disorder, misery, and perdition, is crushed. So down with foreigners, naturalized aliens, and Jews!–down, above all, with Socialists and Communists.
Nationalism is the principal driving force of Fascism. It is a kind of chauvinistic intoxication which makes this timely re-grouping of Capitalism proceed. It is its leaven.
A powerful leaven, indeed–the simplest, the most terrible and the most dynamic of all. Its passion inflames hundreds of millions of people. The myth of national interest or national honor inflames the dullest and most apathetic of citizens–and how much more so empty-headed, loud-voiced youth! It is the most stupid of all evil instincts because, being highly contagious, it blindly paves the way for every calamity.
"Ourselves, ourselves alone!" A comprehensive formula which avoids all deep reflection and foresight. The most valuable key-formula. One which appeals to the vital interests of the rich, of military men, and of churchmen, and at the same time to the stupidity of everyone else.
Social preservation then, takes the form–for the final struggle–of so-called moral and national reconstruction trampling Socialism and the free citizen underfoot, and of a strong power which raises itself, with its soldiery, above any criticism. It is the capitalist police converted into a party.
This is the dope which Fascism has served out and is still serving out to the taxpayers–consisting of claiming to be able to put an end to the crisis and the depression by the help of the same methods that brought in about. The various forms of Fascism differ among themselves superficially; but underneath they are all the same.
However much it may establish a sort of farce of democracy, a sort of caricature of Socialism, and however loudly it gives expression to revolutionary sentiments and ideas of controlled economy–and even anti-Fascism–and however much it climbs up upon proletarian principles in order to raise itself higher, this so-called doctrine of popular reconstruction, which has installed itself in Italy, in Germany, in Hungary, in Poland, in the Balkan Peninsula, in Portugal, in Austria (where the liberators have met with the most frightful butchery and the most appalling tortures), and which at the present moment is recruiting adherents among the youth, the lower middle-classes and the faithful of the churches of France and of other countries, is no more democratic than it is new. It is the old Capitalism beplumed, tin-plated and militarized, and it consists of the same enormous fundamental contradictions running through a doctrine that is so vague that ordinary people can–at first–be made to believe that they are being pushed forward when they are really being dragged back.
It achieves nothing. Fascism is not and never will be anything but a veneer, and the only really imaginative or original things that Fascists have ever done have been to decide upon the color of their shirts and to persuade the people that one can live on smoke.
It still remains that form of society in which one only prospers in proportion as one ruins someone else, in which one only lives by killing other people, that form of society which invades new continents in order to steal weak countries and to make the natives pay for the very air they breathe, that abject form of society in which one cannot be honest without being a fool, where the elections violate the will of the people, where men exploit each other, assassinate each other, and the payment of all the great social debts is indefinitely postponed by illusive appearances of settlement, and the people are perpetually dancing over a concealed volcano.
Such a system cannot possibly put an end to the crisis; it can only make it worse, because the more Nationalism develops, the more it proceeds to its own destruction.

It produces nothing–except, perhaps, a death sentence. The “order” proclaimed by middle-class rule is that of the cemetery.
What can be the outcome of it all? Only war. And once more we shall have snout-like gas-masks, train-loads of soldiers– hearses full of living men–masses of people rushing headlong to get themselves killed, fields turned into heaps of scrap-metal, villages into stone heaps, and whole peoples asphyxiated in subterranean prisons.
But war is also social revolution scattered broadcast in the furrows of the trenches and over every hearth in the cities.
In the meantime, the chances that this spectral program, the program of blundering delusion and of annihilation, has of taking root anywhere–apart from its pretense of democracy–is that it has on its side brute force, the force of the State. Because all European and American governments are either fascist or pre-fascist.
Capitalism, dragged down in the landslide of statistics, in the melting away of figures, and economically ruined, is still strong politically. Its bankrupt partisans are armed to the teeth. They can no longer keep their feet but they possess machine guns, tanks, bombs, armies; they have crowds of policemen who would look well in an agricultural show. They control the law courts (the prisons), the newspapers, the schools, diplomacy, and aggressive alliances. Legality belongs to them alone and they coin laws as they do money, inflating them as they inflate their currencies.
They have all they need in order to sweep away men of independent thought, to plunder the weak, to exploit civilization to their own evil ends, to instill national confidence to a point of wildest enthusiasm into a part of the lower middle-classes, even to death itself, to squander the efforts of the people and to maintain for a little while longer the era of decadence and destruction.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 252-258

Fritz Thyssen was the first to shout “Heil Hitler” at the Dusseldorf meeting in February…. It means that big business has already decided to install the house painter in the Wilhelmstrasse.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 219

ABORTION WAS MADE ILLEGAL TO INCREASE THE POPULATION

Free abortion had also dramatically reduced the birthrate during the thirties, to the point where the government banned it in 1936 to increase the population.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 101 [p. 91 on the NET]

If after years of careful experiment, it is found that abortion has an evil affect on the health of women resorting to it, that it is being used as a substitute for birth control, there is nothing in Socialism which justifies the toleration of such a state of affairs.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 118

One distinguished American doctor who examined the situation with reference to abortion, came to the following conclusions:
“All doctors, however, agreed that repeated abortions affected the woman’s health in a serious way. Although it is impossible to give accurate statistical data about morbidity

following induced abortion, yet there is no doubt that menstrual disturbances, endocrine troubles, sterility, and ectopic pregnancy were frequently observed as a result of repeated abortions."
"Repeated abortion is harmful to the mother's health and hence should be forbidden in any society that is able (1) to guarantee a job to all its members, men and women; (2) to provide medical and social institutions to care for mother and child free of charge; (3) to give adequate financial aid to large families; (4) to give contraceptive advice to all who seek it" (H. E. Sigerist, M.D.–Socialized Medicine in the Soviet Union, pp. 266 and 271).
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 119

In 1936, in view of the rising standard of welfare of the people, the government passed a law prohibiting abortion, at the same time adopting an extensive program for the building of maternity homes, nurseries, milk centers and kindergartens. In 1936, 2,174,000,000 rubles were assigned for these measures, as compared with 875 million rubles in 1935. A law was passed providing for considerable grants to large families. Grants to a total of over one billion rubles were made in 1937 under this law.
Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Ed. History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks): Short Course. Moscow: FLPH, 1939, p. 340

BOLSHEVIK PARTY WAS NOT MONOLITHIC

It is a dangerous illusion to think of the Bolshevik party as "monolithic". It began as a fraction of another party and continued thereafter to produce further fractions and splits. Every year continuously after the Revolution some group opposed the central leadership….
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 85

STALIN ALLOWED GREATER FREE SPEECH THAN HIS SUCCESSORS

… Two writers, Daniel and Siniavskii, were arrested in 1966 for having published satirical stories abroad under pseudonyms. Their crime was "spreading anti-Soviet propaganda." Even Stalin had not used this argument against intellectuals. Daniel and Siniavskii were sentenced to terms in a labor camp, but their convictions spurred 63 members of the Moscow Union of Writers to protest the harm such persecution could do to Soviet culture. Further arrests led to further protests, a phenomenon unknown under Stalin's terror.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 264

[Feb. 7, 1970, letter from Tvardovskii, the manager of Novyi Mir, to Brezhnev]

No matter how strange it may seem, Stalin showered me with decorations and medals when he was alive, while the Stalinists of today are hounding me.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 280

AMERICAN SAYS THERE IS MORE INCORRECT INFO ABOUT THE SU THAN ANY OTHER TOPIC

[Speech given by Col. Cooper of the United States to the American section of the All-Union Western Chamber of Commerce, Sept. 14, 1928, on his impressions of the USSR during four visits lasting a total of eight months]

…When I was in America (after my visits to the USSR), I gave many lectures about Soviet Russia. I was astonished by the enormous interest in the USSR throughout America. I have to say that in America there is more incorrect information about Russia than about any other topic whatsoever.

… I am well aware that the Soviet Union will develop its own natural resources with the efforts of its own citizens and for their benefit, and I would hate to see today when these incredible natural riches were exploited for selfish purposes.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 570

PARTY PEOPLE MUST NOT BE FAVORED OVER NON-PARTY PEOPLE FOR JOBS

Certain comrades think that only Party members may hold leading positions in the mills and factories and for that reason ignore and hold back non-Party comrades who possess ability and initiative, and advance Party members instead, although they are less capable and possess less initiative. Needless to say, there is nothing more stupid and reactionary than such a policy, if it may be called a policy. That such a policy can only discredit the Party and repel non-party workers from it, needs no proof. It is not our policy to transform the Party into an exclusive caste. It is our policy to achieve, as between workers who are members of the Party and workers who are not, an atmosphere of “mutual confidence,” of “mutual control” (Lenin)”….
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 139

CONSTITUTION PRESERVES THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

Such are the facts. And facts, it is said, are stubborn things.

I must admit that the draft of the new Constitution really does preserve the regime of the dictatorship of the working-class, just as it also preserves unchanged the present leading position of the Communist Party of the USSR. If our esteemed critics regard this as a flaw in the draft constitution, it is only to be regretted. We Bolsheviks regard it as a merit of the Draft Constitution.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 228

RELIGION IS THE OPPOSITE OF SCIENCE AND MUST BE FOUGHT

The Party cannot be neutral towards religion, and it does conduct anti-religious propaganda against all and every religious prejudice because it stands for science, while religious prejudices run counter to science, because all religion is something opposite to science.

Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 261

His attitude toward conventional religion is purely negative. His religion…is his work; communism is enough faith for him. Stalin has said, "The party cannot be neutral toward religion, because religion is something opposite to science." Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that he permitted his wife an almost orthodox religious burial.

… People who know him well call him "Yosif Visarionovich"; others simply say Tovarish (Comrade) Stalin. He has no title.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 534

INDIVIDUAL & COLLECTIVE, SOCIALIST, INTERESTS WORK IN HARMONY NOT CONFLICT

There is no, nor should there be, irreconcilable contrast between the individual and the collective, between the interests of the individual person and the interests of the collective. There should be no such contrast, because collectivism, socialism, does not deny, but combines individual interests with the interests of the collective. Socialism cannot abstract itself from individual interests. Socialist society alone can most fully satisfy these personal interests. More than that; socialist society alone can firmly safeguard the interests of the individual. In this sense there is no irreconcilable contrast between "individualism" and socialism.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 320

AMERICAN PRESIDENTS LIKE ROOSEVELT SERVE AT THE WHIM OF THE CAPITALIST CLASS

… I have some experience in fighting for socialism, and this experience tells me that if Roosevelt makes a real attempt to satisfy the interests of the proletarian class at the expense of the capitalist class, the latter will put another president in his place. The capitalists will say: Presidents come and presidents go, but we go on forever; if this or that president does not protect our interests, we shall find another. What can the president oppose to the will of the capitalist class?
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 320

STALIN PREDICTS AN ECONOMIC CRISIS IN THE US AND THE END OF WORLD CAPITALISM

I think the moment is not far off when a revolutionary crisis will develop in America. And when a revolutionary crisis develops in America, that will be the beginning of the end of world capitalism as a whole.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 324

STALIN REFUSES TO LECTURE THE CAPITALISTS ON MORALITY WHEN THEY HAVE NONE

Far be it from me to moralize on the policy of non–intervention, to talk of treason, treachery and so on. It would be naive to preach morals to people who recognize no human morality. Politics is politics, as the old, case-hardened bourgeois diplomats say.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 335

Actually speaking, the policy of non-intervention means conniving at aggression, giving free rein to war and consequently transforming the war into a world war. The policy of non-intervention reveals an eagerness, a desire not to hinder the aggressors in their nefarious work… Far be it from me to moralize on the policy of non-intervention, to talk of treason treachery and so on. It would be naive to preach morals to people who recognise no human morality.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. London, 1978. Vol. 14, pages 355; 368.

CENTRALIZATION AND TOTALITARIANISM DID NOT RULE IN THE SU OF THE 30'S

According to most Western views, power was transmitted from the top to the bottom, from the center to the localities…. Theoretically, every committee was completely subordinate to the one above it, and individual members had no power or control at all.

The political reality was much different. In fact, the chain of command collapsed more often than it functioned. The Communist Party, far from having penetrated every quarter of Russian life, was more an undisciplined and disorganized force with little influence outside the cities. Soviet Russia in the '30s resembled a backward, traditional society far more than it did the sophisticated order of totalitarianism.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 27

The party in the '30s was neither monolithic nor disciplined. Its upper ranks were divided, and its lower organizations were disorganized, chaotic, and undisciplined. Moscow leaders were divided on policy issues, and central leaders were at odds with territorial secretaries whose organizations suffered from internal disorder and conflict. A bloated party membership containing political illiterates and apolitical opportunists plus a lazy and unresponsive regional leadership was hardly the formula for a Leninist party. Such a clumsy and unwieldy organization could not have been an efficient or satisfying instrument for Moscow's purposes.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 37

Keeping the obvious source caveats in mind, the present analysis has suggested a number of conclusions about Soviet political history in the 1930s. First, it seems that the Bolshevik party was not the monolithic and homogeneous machine both totalitarian theorists and Stalinists would have us believe. Administration was so chaotic, irregular, and confused that even Fainsod's characterization of the system as "inefficient totalitarianism" seems to overstate the case.

Although the Soviet government was certainly dictatorial (or tried to be), it was not totalitarian. The technical and technological sophistication that separates totalitarianism from dictatorship was lacking in the '30s. The primitive texture of the Smolensk Archive, the real

weakness of the central government in key areas, and a certain degree of political pluralism argue strongly against any totalitarian characterization.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 198

Moscow had little information about what was really happening in the far-flung provinces, where regional satraps used distance and poor communications to insulate themselves from Moscow's control and build their own power. There was not even a telephone line to the Soviet Far East until the eve of World War II.

The Future Did Not Work by J. Arch Getty, Book Review of The Passing of an Illusion by Franois Furet [March 2000 Atlantic Monthly]

POSITIVE CHANGES FAR EXCEEDED THE NEGATIVE SIDE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

It was known that party and state leaders were being arrested as "enemies of the people," but at the same time new schools, factories, and palaces of culture were rising everywhere. Military leaders were being arrested as spies, but the party was building a strong, modern army. Scientists were being arrested as wreckers, but Soviet science developed rapidly with the party's support. Writers were being arrested as "Trotskyites and counter-revolutionaries," but some literary works appeared that were real masterpieces. Leaders in the union republics were being arrested as nationalists, but the formerly oppressed nationalities were improving their lot, and friendship among the peoples of the Soviet Union was growing. And this obvious progress filled Soviet hearts with pride, engendering confidence in the party that was organizing it and in the man who stood at the head of the party.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 629

Finally, the whole structure of Russian society has undergone a change so profound and so many sided that it cannot really be reversed. It is possible to imagine a violent reaction of the Russian people itself against the state of siege in which it has been living so long. It is even possible to imagine something like a political restoration. But it is certain that even such a restoration would touch merely the surface of Russian society and that it would demonstrate its impotence vis-a-vis the work done by the revolution even more thoroughly than the Stuart and the Bourbon restorations had done. For of Stalinist Russia it is even truer than of any other revolutionary nation that '20 years have done the work of 20 generations'.

For all these reasons Stalin cannot be classed with Hitler, among the tyrants whose record is one of absolute worthlessness and futility. Hitler was the leader of a sterile counter-revolution, while Stalin has been both the leader and the exploiter of a tragic, self-contradictory but creative revolution.

The better part of Stalin's work is as certain to outlast Stalin himself as the better parts of the work of Cromwell & Napoleon have outlasted them.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 569-570

Summing up Stalin's rule in 1948 I said that' Stalin cannot be classed with Hitler, among the tyrants whose record is one of absolute worthlessness and futility. Hitler was the leader of a sterile counter-revolution, while Stalin has been both the leader and the exploiter of a tragic, self-contradictory, but creative revolution.' This remains true if the whole of Stalin's career is assessed.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 627

THE SOVIET PEOPLE WERE UNITED AND OPTIMISTIC FOR SEVERAL REASONS

Closer examination reveals that this notorious "conformism" can be reduced to three main features: uniformity of opinion in regard to the fundamental principles of communism, common love of the Soviet Union, and the confidence shared by all that in the near future the Soviet Union will be the happiest and most powerful country on earth.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 39

RISING STANDARD OF LIVING GENERATES GREATER PATRIOTISM

One difference there certainly is between the patriotism of the Soviet people and that of other countries. The patriotism of the Soviet Union has a more rational foundation. There the individual's standard of living is visibly improving daily. Not only is he receiving more rubles, but the purchasing power of these rubles is also increasing. In 1936 the Soviet worker's average wage had increased by 278 percent compared with 1929, and the Soviet citizen enjoys the certainty that this tendency must continue for many years to come (not only because the gold reserves of Germany have fallen to $25 million and those of the Soviet Union risen to $7 million). It is easier to be patriotic when the patriot gets more guns and more butter too than it is when he gets more guns and no butter.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 43

INTELLECTUALS, ARTISTS AND WRITERS ARE PAMPERED AND GIVEN FUNDS

Savants, writers, artists, and actors enjoy definite advantages in the Soviet Union. They are appreciated, encouraged, and even pampered by the state both with prestige and large incomes. All the means they require are placed at their disposal, and not one of them need suffer any anxiety as to whether what he is doing will pay. They have, moreover, the most responsive and eager public in the world.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 45

THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SOVIET DICTATORSHIP AND FASCIST DICTATORSHIP

But carping, whining, and alarming are pursuits which many hold almost as dear as life itself. Every language contains a host of words for them, and I can well imagine that to many the restriction of the right to abuse must seem sheer despotism. For this reason many people say that the Soviet Union is the very opposite of a democracy, and some, indeed, go so far

as to maintain there is no difference between the Union and the Fascist dictatorships. Their blindness is to be pitied. At bottom, the Soviet dictatorship is confined to prohibiting the propagation of two opinions in word, deed, or writing: first, that the establishment of socialism in the Union is impossible without a world revolution, and, secondly, that the Soviet Union is bound to lose the coming war. It seems to me that anyone who deduces from these two prohibitions complete identification with the Fascist dictatorships is overlooking one essential difference: the Soviet Union forbids agitation in support of the principle that twice two is five, whilst the Fascist dictatorships forbid active pursuit of the principle that twice two is four.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 66

WRITERS MUST DECIDE WHICH CLASS THEY'LL SERVE AND WHOSE FREEDOM THEY'LL FOSTER

Expressed plainly and simply, this is the problem which today presents itself to every writer of any responsibility. Since socialist economy can hardly be established without a temporary modification of what is today called democracy, which do you prefer: that the great mass of the people should have less meat, bread, and butter and, instead, that you have greater freedom of writing, or that you should have less freedom of writing and the great mass of the people more bread, meat, and butter?
That, for a writer of responsibility, is no easy problem.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow , 1937. New York : The Viking Press, 1937, p. 146

SOVIET'S PROGRAM CAME FROM THE MASSES THEMSELVES

The Communists say: "We did not create the Soviets. They sprang out of the life of the people. We did not hatch up some program in our brains and then take it out and superimpose it upon the people. Rather we took our program directly from the people themselves. They were demanding 'Land to the Peasants,' 'Factories to the Workers,' and 'Peace to All the World.' We wrote the slogans upon our banners and with them marched into power. Our strength lies in our understanding of the people. In fact, we do not need to understand the people. We are the people." This was certainly true of the rank-and-file of the leaders, who, like the five young Communists we first met in Petrograd, were flesh and bone of the people.
Williams, Albert R. Through the Russian Revolution. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967, p. 31

SOVIET STUDENTS TREATED WELL UNDER SOCIALISM

The Government does a great deal to assist the student. First, there is a State subsidy of 25 rubles a month to the students. In addition they get free rooms and tuition. They also travel home at vacation times free of charge. And their books are put out by Government publishing houses at a great reduction.
Dykstra, Gerald. A Belated Rebuttal on Russia. Allegan, Mich.: The Allegan Press, 1928, p. 102

EDELMAN LIKES BEING IN THE SU

As I looked at the town, the thought of the years that I had spent in the Soviet Union, which now I was about to leave, rose in me with a presentiment of nostalgia. Here I had spent four years, from 1933 to 1937, undismayed by shortage, happy in abundance, content among plans, hopes, enthusiasms, victories, failures, with the knowledge that I was helping to build a new society.
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 13

PERSON SAYS LIFE IN THE SU MUCH BETTER THAN IN GERMANY

We stayed at the Metropole til about 1 a.m.. I told Smirnov and Liepmann in detail of my plans for my return to Germany.
“You won’t like it,” said Liepmann. “I’ve worked seven years in the USSR. Last year I went back to work in Cologne. Do you know the difference between working with comrades and working with a boss breathing down your neck? If you’ve forgotten, they’ll soon remind you. There are discomforts and pinpricks in the USSR. But give me a pinprick before a bayonet thrust!”
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 33

DEFECTIONS WERE NOT FOR IDEOLOGICAL OR POLITICAL REASONS BUT FOR MONEY

A number of Soviet officials serving on missions abroad, refused to return. Many of them took posts with foreign firms. Going back to Russia meant giving up a life of comfort, and would necessarily involve rendering an account of their behavior while out of the country. Corruption played a greater part in leading these men to act as they did than any spirit of political opposition.
Barmine, Alexandre. Memoirs of a Soviet Diplomat. London: L. Dickson limited,1938, p. 242

LITERACY INCREASED DRAMATICALLY IN THE 1920’S AND AFTERWARD

By the middle of the 1920s, literacy had increased markedly. Improvement in the national republics was especially striking. Compared to 1922, in 1925 the number of literate workers in Georgia grew 15 times, in Kazakhstan five times, in Kirghizia four times, and the pattern was similar in other regions. The main sources of literacy and culture were the workers’ clubs in the cities and the reading huts in the villages. The printing of periodicals was three times what it had been in 1913. The building of libraries began on a massive scale. Film studios were built in Odessa, Yerevan, Tashkent, and Baku. More creative literature was being published.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 127

In 1940 and thereafter Stalin claimed the literacy rate in the USSR was over 99 percent, the most literate country in the world. This was incredible, but there is no reason to doubt that Stalin pushed the Soviet literacy rate to some point around 95 percent, which compared favorably with the most advanced countries. Considering the immensity of the USSR, its 175

languages in which instruction was given, the primitiveness of much of the population, and the desperate shortage of buildings, educational materials, and teachers, Stalin's alphabetization of his many peoples was a great and staggering achievement, and one that cannot be argued away by pointing to the shortcomings of the rest of his school system. Making the USSR a literate nation was Stalin's greatest contribution to the liberation of man.
Randall, Francis. Stalin's Russia. New York: Free Press,1965, p. 111

By 1939 about 87% of Soviet citizens between the ages of 9 and 49 were literate and numerate. Schools, newspapers, libraries, and radio stations proliferated. Factory apprenticeships had hugely expanded in number. The universities teamed with students. An agrarian society had been pointed in the direction of "modernization.' The cultural revolution was not restricted to the dissemination of technical skills; it was also aimed at spreading science, urbanism, industry, and Soviet-style modernity.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 308

SU IS FIRST COUNTRY TO LEGALIZE ABORTION AND DIVORCE

Soviet divorce legislation was the first in the world to allow either spouse to terminate the marriage and to do so on the sole grounds of incompatibility….
…although it did not formally legalize abortion, in the first three years the Soviet government treated it with forbearance. Because many abortions were performed by unqualified individuals under un-hygienic conditions causing infections and death, a decree of November 18, 1920, legalized them under strict medical supervision. Discouraged as a "moral survival of the past," they were to be available free of charge at the mother's request provided they were performed in hospitals by physicians. This, too, was the first law of its kind.
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 330

STALIN'S PROGRAM WAS BETTER AND MORE ACCEPTED THAN ROBESPIERRE'S

The deeper reason for Stalin's triumph lay, as we have said, in that, unlike Robespierre, he offered his nation a positive and new programme of social organization which, though it spelt privations and suffering to many, also created undreamt-of openings for many others.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 383

GREAT EDUCATIONAL ADVANCEMENTS UNDER STALIN IN THE 1930'S

In the five years from 1933 to 1938 about half a million administrators, technicians, economists, and men of other professions had graduated from university schools, an enormous number for a country whose educated classes had previously formed a very thin layer of society.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 384

During the 1930-ies the cultural development of the Soviet Union advanced in leaps too. The number of students in all schools 1929 was approx. 14 millions. In the year 1938 they had

increased to approximately 34 millions, and at that time students in all kinds of courses including part time, amounted to more than 47 millions. Almost a third of all citizens took part of the school system. In the beginning of the 1930-ies 33 per cent were still illiterate in the Soviet Union (67 per cent in 1913). 1938 illiteracy was totally eradicated since several years back. During this period the students at higher forms of education almost tripled from 207,000 to 601,000. The number of libraries was 70,000 in the year 1938 compared with 40,000 in 1933. The amount of books in the libraries 1938 reached the colossal figure of 126 millions to compare with 86 millions 1933.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

SCOTT EXPLAINS WHY PEOPLE CAME TO MAGNITOGORSK TO WORK

Scott explained how, from 1928 to 1932, about 250,000 people came to the barren place where the Magnitogorsk giant was to be erected. Approximately 3/4 of them came there voluntarily, in search of work, bread cards, and better living conditions. The remaining part consisted of deported peasants and criminals who were placed in corrective labor colonies.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 265

STALIN EXPLAINS DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM

There are two parts to the concept of socialism in one country. Emphasis is usually placed only on the part that says “one country.” Equally important is the idea that only socialism, and not communism, can be achieved prior to the time when the victory of the world revolution has been won. A Communist society would have no classes, no money, no scarcity, and no state, that is, no army, police force, prisons, and courts. There is no such society in the world, and no society claims to be Communist. A socialist society, according to Marxism-Leninism, is the transitional form on the road to communism. Classes and class struggle still exist, all the material needs of the people have not yet been met, and there is indeed a state, a government of the working-class known as the dictatorship of the proletariat (as opposed to the government of capitalist nations, the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie).
Franklin, Bruce, Ed. The Essential Stalin; Major Theoretical Writings. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p. 15

Russia is not practicing communism today and never has been. The Bolsheviks do not even make the claim. The Five-Year Plan is the blueprint of a socialist, not a communist, edifice.
Davis, Jerome. The New Russia. New York: The John Day company, c1933, p. 1

PRESS COULD CRITICIZE AT WILL AS LONG AS IT DID NOT ATTACK THE SYSTEM ITSELF

The Soviet press, which allowed no criticism of the State gospel, even when it changed, in every way encouraged criticism as to how it was being carried out, and it contained hair-raising accounts of the living conditions of workers, even comparing their accommodations to catacombs….

Pares, Bernard. Russia. Washington, New York: Infantry Journal, Penguin books, 1944, p. 130

THE SYSTEM REALLY CARES FOR THE PEOPLE

On the other hand, there could be no question at all of the care of the State for all, in the form of all sorts of social services and benefits; above all, education and medical assistance, which were absolutely cost-free for everyone in the country and every visitor to it. There was a complete system of State insurance. There was the utmost care and thought for women and children. Women, politically and economically, had complete equality with men.
Pares, Bernard. Russia. Washington, New York: Infantry Journal, Penguin books, 1944, p. 130

BALTIC WHITE SEA CANAL WAS A GREAT ACCOMPLISHMENT

Soon after this Stalin was able to announce the completion of the Baltic White Sea Canal. This waterway, 142 miles long, and with 19 locks, 15 dams, 12 reservoirs and 40 dykes, 25 miles of which had to be cut through rock, was ready at last and Stalin and the Soviet people had the right to be proud of this achievement.
Fishman and Hutton. The Private Life of Josif Stalin. London: W. H. Allen, 1962, p. 87

STALIN COMPARED THE PARTY LEADERSHIP TO LEVELS IN THE MILITARY

Stalin's wishes were carried out by a huge Party apparatus of local secretaries, whom he liked to think of in military terms. In a long speech he gave at the February-March 1937 Plenum on ways to liquidate the Party's enemies, he declared: 'In our party, if we look at the leading strata, there are some three to 4000 top leaders. That's what I would call the high command of the Party. Then there are about 30 to 40,000 middle leaders. That's our officer corps. Then there are about 100-150,000 lower ranks. They are, so to speak, the Party's NCOs.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Autopsy for an Empire. New York: Free Press, c1998, p. 104

[At the Feb. March 1937 Plenum Stalin stated], How does the leadership in the CPSU look at this moment? The top leadership of the CPSU in the country is composed of 3-4,000 comrades. This, I would say, is the General Headquarters. There are between 30-40,000 middle rank party workers in all the Soviet Republics…our officers.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 245

Aside from the image of the cell, almost every metaphor in Communist ideology comes from military life. The world is at "war"– open or covert class warfare as the case may be–interrupted by "truces." The war is fought by two "armies" dwelling in "camps." Before the revolution, and sometimes after it, the Communist party is the "army" and its leaders are the "officer corps" [or General Staff]. At other times after the revolution, the whole population of a Communist country is the "army" and the party as a whole is its "officer corps." The party fights on various "fronts"–industrial, agricultural, educational–as well as military.

Randall, Francis. Stalin's Russia. New York: Free Press,1965, p. 85

STALIN CLOSELY WATCHED GOVT MONEY AND HOW MUCH FOREIGN PARTIES RECEIVED

Stalin showed an abiding concern for state funds, state gold, and state valuables. As soon as he was informed of an infringement at a gold refinery, Stalin made a note to ask the NKVD chief Yezhov or his deputy about the case, adding that 'a commissar must be appointed at the refinery without whose signature the assay mark should not be given, nor the gold released. His notes frequently refer to the need for greater gold reserves to cover the costs of the Communist movement, and after 1940 he personally fixed the sums any particular party should be given. When the 'People's Democracies' came into being in the postwar period, they were expected to do their part. In a letter to Mao Tse-tung in February 1953, less than a month before his death, Stalin wrote: 'The work of the West European Communist parties, such as the French, Italian, and English, has become difficult. They are demanding more help than before. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union has decided to increase its contribution to the fund and thinks it necessary to raise it from 800,000 to $1.3 million a year. If the Communist party of China would contribute $1.1 million in 1953, we could satisfy the demands of the above-mentioned parties. We await your reply.' Mao agreed at once: 'We'll transfer the cash to Panyushkin [Soviet Ambassador to China].'
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Autopsy for an Empire. New York: Free Press, c1998, p. 144

Moscow was to be especially generous in the post-war., paying out huge amounts, of which the following list is only a small part (all figures are in U.S. dollars): in 1945, to Bulgaria (Kostov)–$100,000; in 1946, to China (Chou En-lai)–$50,000; to Romania (Gheorgiu Dej)–$500,000; in 1947, to Greece (Zachariades)–$100,000) in 1948, to France (Thorez)–$258,350; to Italy (Secchia)–$40,000; to Holland (Groot)–50,000.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 400

[In a letter to Kaganovich on 30 August 1931 Stalin stated] This is why I don't think we should go easy at all on people (or institutions) who try to squander the working class's hard-currency resources just for the peace of mind of their organizations' functionaries.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 68

A SPECIAL TYPE OF BUREAUCRACY THAT IS NOT A NEW CLASS IS NECESSARY

Any planned economy inevitably involves the rise of a bureaucracy; it is not at all a necessary sign of reaction. If we rid ourselves of the habit of regarding the word "bureaucracy" as a term of abuse, we must come to the conclusion that a bureaucracy is as indispensable to a modern society as an industrial working-class. Modern development makes necessary a new stratum of leading officials, technicians, managers, etc.. The idea of a simple classless society in which everyone will have interchangeable functions and anyone can occupy positions of authority or be an "expert" has proved to be utterly illusionary.
The original idea of Marx and Lenin that, in a socialist society, the division of labor would disappear, that is to say the division into directive and managerial work, on the one hand,

and work executed to instructions, on the other, can no longer be regarded as feasible. Lenin's famous slogan–"every cook will be able to govern the State"–is not likely to be realized, at least not for some generations to come.
In fact, the need for a specialized army of technical, industrial, and managerial experts and their social importance grow in direct proportion to the general advance of technical progress and higher forms of economic organization. That is true not only for a planned society but also for modern capitalism. The difference is only that under capitalist conditions most of these experts, supervisors, managers, economists, statisticians, industrial chemists, etc., are the private employees of private enterprises who use their knowledge and skill for the benefit of competing vested interests. They do not appear therefore as a bureaucracy although their social function is a very similar one.
Socialist Clarity Group. The U. S. S. R., Its Significance for the West. London: V. Gollancz, 1942, p. 45

The material privileges which the new bureaucracy enjoys as a whole, are not very considerable. The same system of differentiation has been established among the bureaucracy as among the industrial working-class, and for the same reason, i.e., as an incentive for more and better work. The lower strata of the bureaucracy earn in many cases less than industrial workers. Only about 20% of the whole bureaucracy earn considerably more than the average worker. They also enjoy a number of other material privileges.
Apart from a very small number of artists and writers who have incomes quite out of proportion to the rest of the population, the highest salaries are paid to factory managers, the so-called Red Directors. In Magnitogorsk, for instance, the salary of the Red Director Is seven times as high as the average wage and he gets 30 times as much house space as the workers.
In other words, the top layer of the bureaucracy is certainly materially privileged compared to the ordinary worker. The value of these privileges must not, however, be exaggerated for they are in no way comparable to the differentiation of income in capitalist countries….
The third argument of those who regard the Soviet bureaucracy as the new ruling class of Russia is their growing influence on all political and general decisions. There is no doubt that this also is a fact, although one that is more difficult to establish. We shall have to say more about this point in the following chapter. But this much must be said here: the growing influence on general policy of so indispensable a section of society is only to be expected. Neither this increased general influence, nor the absence of democratic control, nor the privileges which they enjoy, make the Soviet bureaucracy a class of its own. And this is chiefly for three reasons.
(a) The material privileges of the Soviet bureaucracy are exclusively confined to the sphere of consumption. They cannot use their income as private capital, that is to say as a source of profits and means of exploitation.
(b) Their children and relatives cannot inherit from them their position of power and influence.
(c) Socially they recruit themselves from the industrial workers and collective farmers, and this process of recruitment continues. There are no barriers of either money, social position or monopoly of education which could prevent ordinary workers and collective farmers or their sons and daughters from rising to the ranks of the bureaucracy.
If ever the Soviet bureaucracy became a closed, self-perpetuating social group, it would then acquire the characteristics of a class. But so long as each new generation of the

bureaucracy is recruited afresh from the best available talent throughout the masses of the population, it constitutes merely a functional group–essential in any modern society.
To speak of the Soviet bureaucracy as the new ruling class of Russia is therefore a misuse of terms. On the other hand, it remains perfectly true that this bureaucracy has exercised an increasingly great influence on the development and policy of the Soviet Union.
Socialist Clarity Group. The U. S. S. R., Its Significance for the West. London: V. Gollancz, 1942, p. 48-49

SPECIALISTS HAD TO BE FAVORED AT TIMES

The second argument brought forward by the “anti-democratic” critics of Soviet Russia is the privileged position of the Soviet bureaucracy. Privileges there certainly are. But one must understand the origins of these privileges. During the first years after the revolution the Soviets were in dire need of experts of all kind. They had, to a considerable extent, to be content with experts from abroad or such Russians as had received their training under the Tsarist regime and had worked for it. In order to attract these people who were either non-political or only half-hearted supporters of the Revolution, the Bolshevik Government had to grant them certain privileges, high salaries which correspond to the salaries in capitalist countries and a number of other advantages.
Socialist Clarity Group. The U. S. S. R., Its Significance for the West. London: V. Gollancz, 1942, p. 47

The other difference between fiction and reality is less well known. The monopoly of the Communist bureaucracy is neither so absolute nor so unlimited as appearances would seem to indicate. Whilst on the surface of public life–in the press, at meetings, in political bodies, in the Government, and so forth–there does exist a monopoly of the Communist bureaucracy, below the surface, in the daily functioning of social life–and so on–the Communist bureaucracy is everywhere compelled to share its power, as we have seen in the course of this book, with the non-Party specialists and intelligentsia.
Science, literature, and the arts are those domains in which a division of power is spontaneously brought into existence. Thus the factory worker has two sets of masters over him: the Communist director, the secretary of the Party organization, the chairman of the trade union, etc.; and the specialist, the technician, the foreman. It is the same for the peasant on the kolkhoz; it is the same in any Soviet administrative body, in offices, in trusts, and even in the armed forces.
The strictly hierarchical organization of production and of all administrative, scientific, and social work in Soviet Russia gives these specialists enormous power over the workers, the producers. The Communist bureaucracy and the specialists thus share the power in the factories, the trusts, the Machine Tractor Stations, the kolkhoz, the schools, the law courts, and in every administrative and scientific institution. If in the political field there exists a monopoly of the Communist bureaucracy in the economic, and even more in the social domain, there is a dual power of Communist and non-Party specialists.
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 531-532

THE WIVES OF MOST SOVIET LEADERS HAD JOBS AND WORKED

Ivy Litvinov is rather untypical of Soviet women, because she has no job herself. Stalin's wife worked. So do several other important men's wives, and many women, quite in their own right, have established successful careers. In no country in Europe is it so easy for a woman of intelligence and character to make good outside the home.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 545

…The wife of Kalinin, president of the USSR, is manager of a state farm near Novosibirsk. Molotov's wife was till recently head of the Soviet trust which manufactures powder, rouge, and lipstick.
Krupskaya, Lenin's widow, lived and worked in the Kremlin until her death in 1938; she was assistant commissar of education…. Kollontai is Soviet minister to Sweden.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 546

GPU ARE THE HAND-PICKED BEST MEN FOR THE JOB

The GPU numbers about 200,000 picked men, and is in a sense a superior cadre of the Red Army; it guards frontiers, patrols railways, and the like. Especially it watches affairs within the party. The law-abiding citizen who is not a party member has less to fear from it than party men.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 549

SU CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE LED BY SOME OF THE BIGGEST NAMES IN THE PARTY

The Constitution, a potentially important document, was drawn up by a committee on constitutional reform which was set up in July, 1935, and of which Stalin himself was chairman. The 10 vice-chairmen comprised a formidable list of Soviet chieftains: Litvinov, Radek, Vyshinsky, Voroshilov, Molotov, Bukharin, Akulov, Chubar, Zhdanov, and Kaganovich. For a year the committee worked.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 570

Stalin appointed himself chairman of the constitutional commission and as an apparent gesture of reconciliation included Bukharin & Radek among its 30 members. In June 1936, the draft was published and the whole population invited to engage in a nationwide discussion of its contents. It was reported to have been "greeted with enormous enthusiasm and approved with one accord." Bukharin played a central role in drafting the charter, particularly the provision for universal suffrage, direct election by secret ballot, and the guarantees of civil rights for the citizen, including freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, freedom of street demonstrations, and the right to personal property protected by law.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 471

When the Seventh Congress of Soviets met at the beginning of February 1935 a decision was taken to set up a Constitutional Commission. Bukharin was elected as a member of the Central Executive Committee at this Congress and was included on the Constitutional Commission as head of the sub-commission dealing with the most important aspect of the new constitution–the rights and obligations of Soviet citizens.

Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 285

INTERVIEWER: Bukharin is rumored to have been largely responsible for the Constitution of 1936. Did he have anything to say about it?
NICOLAEVSKY: It was already clear from various signs that Bukharin had played a major role in drawing up the Constitution. He was secretary of the commission that worked out the draft Constitution.
Nicolaevsky, Boris. Power and the Soviet Elite; “The letter of an Old Bolshevik.” New York: Praeger, 1965, p. 22

NO MATTER WHO WINS IN A WAR BETWEEN THE CAPITALISTS THE SU WILL GAIN

In any case, no matter what happens, it would seem that the Russians are in a position to gain. If the allies lose the 1939 war, then the British empire is weakened, western capitalism is weakened. It Germany loses the war, then presumably there will be a revolution in Germany, which would also serve Russia’s ends. It would weaken or destroy Germany as a nationalist neighbor, and it might bring communism.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 575

IN LIGHT OF CONSPIRACIES THE SOVIET GOVT COULD HAVE ENDED THE NEW CONSTITUTION

For myself, I prefer to see in the present position a much more encouraging feature, namely, that the Soviet Government, undeterred by its knowledge of the conspiracies just unearthed, is going forward unperturbed in the introduction of its new Constitution because it really believes both in the principles of that Constitution, in its own fundamental stability, and in the support of the great mass of the people. I am moved indeed to wonder whether, among all the Governments in this tortured world, there are more than one or two who would not, in these circumstances, have put back the clock of progress a decade or two by announcing that the advances proposed in the draft Constitution towards freedom of speech, freedom of the Press, inviolability of the person and of the home, secrecy of correspondence, secret ballot, direct election and other advantages, are shown by recent events to have been premature and must be postponed, and that the strong arm of the executive must again be reinforced rather than weakened, in order to deal effectively with the dangers exemplified by this conspiracy. Historians may yet have occasion to praise the Soviet Union for having held steadfastly on the path to personal freedom at this time.
Pritt, Denis Nowell. At the Moscow Trial, New York City: International Publishers, 1937, p. 30

CPSU LEADER PREDICTS COMMUNISM WILL WIN EVENTUALLY

On a day when Ryzhkov was testifying on his five years as prime minister under Gorbachev, I spent the two-our afternoon recess with Ivan Polozkov, a Party chieftain from the southern Russian city of Krasnodar who in 1990 had become the leader of the Russian Communist Party and Ligachev’s successor as the conservative “dark prince.” At Central Committee meetings in 1990 and 1991, Polozkov had been openly critical of Gorbachev, but even then

there was something guarded about his speech. A glimmer of traditional Party discipline, to say nothing of simple desire for self-preservation, prevented him from saying the things he was saying now.
“I am free now,” he said, “free now to vent my spleen.” Like the other Party men who came to court every day, Polozkov operated on the fuel of resentment. He was, in his mind, a great man made small by the deceptions of Gorbachev, Yeltsin, and the Central Intelligence Agency.
I asked him why he thought the Communist Party and the Soviet system had collapsed with such stunning speed after seeming to all the world to be unconquerable, a monolith of power and strength.
Polozkov’s eyes widened, more in surprise than in anger. “They had so much and we… we had nothing!” he said.
“What do you mean?” I said. “That the Communist party had nothing and the opposition had everything?”
“Precisely,” Polozkov said, with a satisfied little nod. “We know the CIA financed parties here. You gave them Japanese cameras, German copying machines, money, everything! You had your dissidents who worked for you, the liars, the diplomats, the military double agents. Gorbachev, Yakovlev, Shevardnadze, these men were all yours, too. They were yours! Look at the book contracts they’ve gotten! Millions! One of our secretaries in the Russian Communist Party, Ivan Antonovich was in the United States and he was invited to speak at a conference. Shevardnadze was on the bill, too. Shevardnadze spoke first, and then he left. Then Antonovich spoke. Afterward they gave him a souvenir: a copper coffee cup. Someone came up to him from our embassy and said how unfair it was, that Antonovich had only gotten a mug and he spoke in English while Shevardnadze spoke in his bad Russian and got $5000!
“Look, I understand what it was all about. It was a confrontation of two systems. Reagan called us an ‘evil empire’ and other Western leaders were judged according to how anti-Soviet they could be. The putsch was just a culmination of the struggle. And I will admit this: so far you have been winning this war. But I want to emphasize–‘so far.’ Remember this: Napoleon was in Moscow , but France did not defeat us. The Nazis were near Moscow , but look what happened. But I must tell you–and listen carefully–the war is still on and, in the end, you will not be able to endure in this competition with communism.”
Remnick, David. Lenin’s Tomb. New York : Random House, c1993, p. 511-512

SOCIAL DEMOCRAT DAN FINALLY AGREES THAT THE BOLSHEVIKS DID IT RIGHT

Some of the Social Democrats, it is true, changed direction under the impact of international events. For instance, in 1936, in Paris, Dan recognized the Soviet Union as the main bulwark against fascism. He published Novyi mir (New World), and then after escaping in March 1940 to New York, aged 70, he retired as chairman of the Foreign Delegation and as editor of Sotsialisticheskii vestnik and launched Novyi Put (New Way). His break with Menshevism was complete by 1943. In Novyi put he as it were rehabilitated Stalin. In his last book, The Origins of Bolshevism, published in 1946, the old adversary of totalitarianism suddenly saw something positive in the forced collectivization of agriculture, and found himself unable fully to condemn the show trials of 1930s, or the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939.

He even stated that “the internal organic democratization of the Soviet system was not curtailed at its emergence.”
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 89

MENDELEEV SUPPORTS THE DIALECTICAL IDEA OF QUANTITATIVE CHANGES CAUSING LEAPS

As a scientist he [Mendeleev] was one of the greatest materialists of all times;… When he formulated his Periodic Law, he testified to the truth of that principle of dialectics which occupies a central place in Marxist thought and asserts that quantitative changes, whether in natural or social processes, at certain points turn into changes of quality. According to the Periodic Law quantitative alterations in atomic weights result in qualitative differences between chemical elements.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 173

CAPITALIST GOVT OFFICIALS ARE RUTHLESS AND EGOTISTIC

Even when the Presidency is politically besieged, there’s nothing comparable to working at the White House. The pace is frenetic and the hours impossible. Intrigue. Backstabbing. Ruthless ambition. Constant conflict. Informers. Leakers. Spies (at the White House from inside the U.S. government,. Egos as big as the surrounding monuments. Battles between Titans. Cabinet officers behaving like children. High level temper tantrums. I would ultimately work in the White House or four Presidents and I saw it all. The struggles for pride and place,…
Gates, Robert. From the Shadows. New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, c1996, p. 54

SU HAD A GOOD TEACHING SYSTEM WITH GOOD METHODS AND TEACHERS

Rigid discipline in the Communist school was definitely not supposed to mean harsh, loud-voiced management of the classroom or physical punishments, although the latter were kept in reserve. The teacher was told to win the confidence of his charges (most Soviet teachers were men) by friendly, helpful behavior, and to persuade them to follow the right path by exhortations, by shaming them, and by enlisting the other pupils to help reclaim a recalcitrant. Teachers were to instill obedience, unselfishness, and collective-mindedness. Individual competitiveness was to be suppressed and group spirit cultivated.
Randall, Francis. Stalin’s Russia. New York: Free Press,1965, p. 112

By [the time of] Stalin’s death there were one million full-time students in the universities alone, the largest number in the world after America.
Randall, Francis. Stalin’s Russia. New York: Free Press,1965, p. 114

STALIN FELT THE PROLETARIAT SUPPORTED HIS GOVERNMENT

Stalin was certainly sincere in thinking that the workers supported his government, and that they were the ultimate beneficiaries of his policies.

Randall, Francis. Stalin's Russia. New York: Free Press,1965, p. 184

MIKHOELS COMPLIMENTED THE SU AND FLOURISHED IN THE SU

At one Presidium [of the JAC] meeting in the fall of 1947, just three months before his death, Mikhoels proclaimed that "Jews feel more physically secure in the Soviet Union than in any other country in the world."
…Mikhoels flourished within official Soviet culture even as he insisted on preserving the Jewish character of his theater. "If we turn ourselves into a theater of translation," Mikhoels warned his colleagues in December 1933, "then to us, as a Jewish theater, there is nothing more to be done. Our path is unique–it is only compatible with the creative growth of Jewish theater and Jewish drama." Mikhoels persevered and was richly rewarded. He was first honored by the regime in 1926, when he was named an Honorary Artist of the Russian Federation. In March 1935, he was given the title People's Artist of the Russian Federation for his performance of King Lear. Four years later, in honor of the state Jewish Theater's 20th anniversary, Mikhoels was awarded the Order of Lenin and named People's Artist of the Soviet Union–becoming one of hardly a dozen intellectuals with that honor in the country. That year, in 1939, he was "elected" to serve on the Moscow City Council. As late as 1946, when he and the JAC were already under substantial pressure, Mikhoels was awarded the Stalin Prize in honor of the play Freylekhs (rejoicing).
Naumov & Teptsov. Stalin's Secret Pogrom. New Haven, London: Yale Univ. Press, 2001, p. 36

1936 CONSTITUTION MADE VOTING: MORE DIRECT, OPEN TO MORE PEOPLE AND SECRET

Before the introduction of the new Constitution there were restrictions of the franchise in the case of priests, former Whiteguards, former kulaks, and persons not engaged in useful labor. The new Constitution abolished all franchise restrictions for these categories of citizens by making the election of deputies universal….
Formerly, the election of deputies had been unequal, inasmuch as the bases of representation for the urban and rural populations differed. Now, however, all necessity for restrictions of equality of the suffrage had disappeared and all citizens were given the right to take part in the elections on an equal footing….
Formerly, the elections of the intermediate and higher organs of Soviet power were indirect. Now, however, under the new Constitution, all Soviets, from rural and urban up to and including the Supreme Soviet, were to be elected by the citizens directly….
Formerly, deputies to the Soviets were elected by open ballot and the voting was for lists of candidates. Now, however, the voting for deputies was to be by secret ballot, and not by lists, but for individual candidates nominated in each electoral area.
Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Ed. History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks): Short Course. Moscow: FLPH, 1939, p. 348

SOCIAL CONDITIONS IMPROVED GREATLY UNDER SOCIALISM ESP. FOR CHILDREN

His [the American psychiatrist] second surprise will be to find that the problems he and others have been struggling with at home and upon which in 20 years they have made scarcely an impression, do not exist in Russia as major social problems, or, if they do still exist as problems, that they are rapidly losing their importance. This will be almost too much of a blow. Every city and every nation since the beginning of history has struggled with the problem of prostitution, for example, but none has ever come near solving it….prostitution continues in America while in Russia is practically a liquidated problem. Alcoholism is a serious problem in America and one that the psychiatrist understands but finds it possible to do little about. Alcoholism, always a serious problem in Russia, was a very serious problem some 10 years ago. It is still a problem but a rapidly diminishing one….
Juvenile delinquency is one of the greatest social problems in America. It is still a problem in Russia but one could hardly call it a major problem. One certainly does not find in Russia either the professional or the lay excitement over the extent, ramifications, and increase of crime that exists in America,…
The maladjusted school child in America is a problem of such increasing importance that the best skill of the best educators is taxed.
Again much is accomplished in individual instances but the problem as a whole remains untouched–there are not even the slightest signs of a change in the situation; in fact all the signs point the other way. In Russia they are not clear at first by what is meant, when one speaks of maladjusted school children and the "problem of adolescence." Eventually, as one illustrates with case material, the children one has in mind are recognized. Of course they have such children but no "problem"–these children do not exist in sufficient numbers to constitute a problem. The Russian problem in education is not the children but how to provide adequately trained teachers for the children. The behavior of the children is the least of their troubles….
It [Soviet society] is a crazy world the American psychiatrist has got into, if there ever was one. Everything done 100% differently from the way he would do it and yet succeeding precisely where he has failed. Everything standing on its head, and yet quite successfully and comfortably….
And for the first time the American psychiatrist awakens to the fact that what has been called an economic revolution is in reality a psychological and spiritual revolution as well.
Davis, Jerome. The New Russia. New York: The John Day company, c1933, p. 11-14

From the beginning the child is given a realistic view of life. The object is to prepare him so that he will be able to find pleasure and satisfaction in life itself, not in escaping from it or dodging it in romance, fancy, illusion, or neuroticism. The attempt is made to fit the child for life so that he can enjoy living, not to make him unfit so that he must flee it. During this early period the child is not surrounded by neurotic, frustrated adults–fathers, mothers, school teachers–but by essentially healthy, busy people whose outlook is outward rather than inward, who have purpose in their own lives, who are finding satisfaction in living, and who have a genuine affection and interest in him, but who see him not only as an object for personal, emotional aggrandizement but as an element in their own larger social purpose.
Davis, Jerome. The New Russia. New York: The John Day company, c1933, p. 21

REBUILDING THE SOVIET FINANCIAL STRUCTURE HAS BEEN HARD BUT SUCCESSFUL

The rebuilding of Soviet Russia's financial structure has been one of the most difficult tasks in the mammoth reconstruction project, but it has been accomplished with remarkable speed and skill. Whatever the troubles which now lie upon the financial horizon, such as the currency problem and the difficulties of collecting agricultural taxes, it must be admitted that the organization as a whole has reached and maintained a high standard of efficiency.
Davis, Jerome. The New Russia. New York: The John Day company, c1933, p. 147

STALIN SAYS SELF-CRITICISM BY THE PARTY IS REQUIRED

[In a speech to the Moscow CPSU on April 13, 1928 Stalin stated] I think, comrades, that self-criticism is as necessary to us as air or water. I think that without it, without self-criticism, our Party could not make any headway, could not disclose our ulcers, could not eliminate our shortcomings. And shortcomings we have in plenty. That must be admitted frankly and honestly….
The slogan of self-criticism cannot be regarded as a new one. It lies at the very foundation of the Bolshevik Party.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 11, p. 32

[In June 1928 Stalin showed he was against vulgarising the slogan of self-criticism by stating] Marx himself spoke of self-criticism as a method of strengthening the proletarian revolution.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 11, p. 133

Actually, self-criticism is an indispensable and permanent weapon in the arsenal of Bolshevism, one that is intimately linked with the very nature of Bolshevism, with its revolutionary spirit.
It is sometimes said that self-criticism is something that is good for a party which has not yet come to power and has "nothing to lose," but that it is dangerous and harmful to a party which has already come to power, which is surrounded by hostile forces, and against which an exposure of its weaknesses may be exploited by its enemies.
That is not true. It is quite untrue! On the contrary, just because Bolshevism has come to power, just because Bolsheviks may become conceited owing to the successes of our work of construction, just because Bolsheviks may fail to observe their weaknesses and thus make things easier for their enemies–for these very reasons self-criticism is particularly needed now, after the assumption of power.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 11, p. 134

[In a January 17, 1930, letter to Gorky Stalin stated] We cannot do without self-criticism. We simply cannot. Without it, stagnation, corruption of the apparatus, growth of bureaucracy, sapping of the creative initiative of the working class, are inevitable. Of course, self-criticism provides material for our enemies. You are quite right about that. But it also provides material (and a stimulus) for our advancement, for unleashing the constructive energies of the working people, for the development of emulation, for shock brigades, and so on. The negative aspect is counter-balanced and outweighed by the positive aspect.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 12, p. 179

Some comrades say that it is not advisable to speak openly of one's mistakes, since the open admission of one's mistakes may be construed by our enemies as weakness and may be utilized by them.
This is rubbish, comrades, downright rubbish. The open recognition of our mistakes and their honest rectification can, on the contrary, only strengthen our Party, raise its authority in the eyes of the workers, peasants, and working intellectuals, increase the strength and power of our state. And this is the main thing. As long as we have the workers, peasants and working intellectuals with us, all the rest will settle itself.
Stalin, Joseph. Mastering Bolshevism. San Francisco: Proletarian Publishers, 1972, p. 40

USSR PROGRESS ON MORTALITY UNDER SOCIALISM

Year USSR deaths per 1000 USA deaths per 1000
1913 30.2 13.2
1940 18.3 10.8
1950 9.6 9.6
1953 9.0 9.6
1956 7.5 9.4

We use 1913 as the starting date instead of 1917 when the Russian Revolution occurred. Some capitalist historians think it is fair not to blame the capitalist system for the deaths of World War I and 1913 was the last year before World War I.
In 1924 Lenin died and Stalin came to power in the USSR. In 1953 Stalin died. Khruschev denounced Stalin in 1956 in his "secret speech." It's been downhill to capitalism ever since in the USSR.

Year USSR infant deaths per 1000 USA infant deaths per 1000
1913 273 99.9
1940 184 47.0
1950 81 29.2
1953 68 27.8
1956 47 26.0

Source: John F. Kantner, "Basic Demographic Comparisons Between the USSR and the United States," (1959)…paper submitted to the Subcommittee on Economic Statistics of the Joint Economic Committee, Eighty-sixth Congress, First Session, Washington, DC. in Alex Inkeles & Kent Geiger, eds. Soviet Society: A Book of Readings (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1961), p. 18.

FOOD WAS NEVER PURCHASED FROM ABROAD

…But we never resorted to purchasing food from abroad. We didn't want to do that because we needed equipment and metals in the event of war…. That consideration came first, and no one could deny it.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago : I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 359

Soviet Nations

AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM

The Soviet Union is the only country in the world in which it is a crime for any person to give or receive any “direct or indirect privileges on account of race or nationality” and where any preaching of “race or national exceptionalism or hatred or contempt” is punishable by law. This was a ” fighting point” enshrined in the Soviet Constitution, which was adopted after the rise of Hitler Germany across the border. Acts of race prejudice are severely dealt with in the Soviet Union. Ordinary drunken brawls between Russians may be lightly handled as misdemeanors, but let a brawl occur between a Russian and a Jew in which national names are used in a way insulting to national dignity, and this becomes a serious political offense.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 40

“At bottom every Jew is a Bolshevik!” was the constant theme of Rosenberg’s tirades.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 117

The idea of of a holy crusade against Soviet Russia dominated all of Rosenberg’s writings.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 118

The official Communist Party and Soviet attitude toward anti-Semitism, or indeed toward any stirring up of racial animosity, is one of uncompromising hostility.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 228

How much discrimination there was against Jews in educational institutions is hard to tell. It was never general but certainly there was some. It was evasive and struggles always developed against it. My best friend felt for a time undermined in her university job, because she refused to yield to the anti-Semitism which seemed to be promoted by the Party secretary at the university. One day she came home exultant. “Now I know the party doesn’t stand for anti-Semitism,” she said. “They removed A… He was in charge of universities here for the Central Committee, and was behind much of this anti-Semitism.”
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 112

…The comment frequently made that the hostility of the Party leaders to the Opposition minority was partly due to the fact that most of the Opposition leaders are Jews is unjustified on grounds of race prejudice….
Jews are not discriminated against in public employment, and most employment is public. Anti-semitism is expressed rather in social slights, sometimes in open insults. But offenders may be, and are, arrested and tried in the courts, which universally penalize them.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 76

Reference is occasionally made to the arrest and exile of Zionists as an expression of anti-semitism in Russia. Numbers of Zionists have been exiled, it is true, but only in political cases involving either Zionist Socialists opposed to the Communist regime, or Zionists alleged to have connections with bourgeois agencies or individuals abroad. Since the Zionist movement is essentially bourgeois, and dependent on friendly relations with Great Britain as the power controlling Palestine, those connections have been inevitable.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 77

The Communist Party is officially opposed to Zionism, and no Communist may be a Zionist.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 78

You see, Zionism and anti-Semitism are blood brothers. Both are reactionary and inimical to the interests of the working class. It sometimes happens that people of non-Jewish nationality trip up on this slippery ground and slide either toward favoring the Zionists, who are reactionaries, or toward becoming anti-Semites, who are equally reactionary.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 202

I met all sorts of Jews in the Soviet Union, and, being interested in Jewish questions, I discussed matters with them exhaustively. The amazing tempo of production calls for men, hands, and brains: the Jews willingly harnessed themselves to this process, and thus assimilation made further progress there than anywhere else in the world. I met Jews who said to me: “For many years I have never given a thought to the fact that I am a Jew; it was only your questions which reminded me of it again.” I was moved by the unanimity with which the Jews I came across emphasized how completely they felt in harmony with the new state. Formerly they had been despised, persecuted, without a calling, their life without meaning, Luftmenschen rootless people of the air; now they were peasants, workers, intellectuals, soldiers, all deeply grateful for the new order.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 82

The Bolsheviks did not tolerate on their territory overt manifestations of anti-semitism, least of all pogroms, for they well realized that anti-semitism had become a cover for anti-communism.
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 101

The Sovnarkom is said on July 27, 1918, to have issued an appeal against anti-semitism, threatening penalties for pogroms.
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 111

In addition, there were few genuine Russians among the moderate Socialists–most of them were Jews or Georgians, whereas the overwhelming majority of the Bolsheviks were pure Russians. ‘Somebody among the Bolsheviks remarked jestingly that since the Mensheviks were the faction of the Jews and the Bolsheviks that of the native Russians, it would become us to make a pogrom in the party.’ Anti-semitism could hardly be read into this heavy jocular aside, because nobody had been more blunt than Koba in the condemnation of racial hatred.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 91

Immediately after the Bolshevik revolution expressions of anti-Semitism became a crime. In July 1918, the Council of People’s Commissars called for the destruction of ‘the anti-Semitic movement at its roots’ by forbidding ‘pogromists and persons inciting to pogroms’. In 1922, the Russian Criminal Code forbade ‘agitation and propaganda arousing national enmities and dissensions’ and specified a minimum sentence of one year’s solitary confinement (and ‘death in time of war’) as punishment. In 1927, the Russian Republic passed legislation outlawing the dissemination, manufacture, or possession of literature calculated to stir national and religious hostility….

During the Civil War and throughout the 1920s there was an active official government campaign against anti-Semitism. Incidents involving and actions taken against were frequently reported in the Soviet press. In this period the Party published over 100 books and brochures opposing anti-Semitism.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 88

For two years following the Bolshevik takeover, new laws against anti-Semitism helped to prevent overt attacks on Jews…. By the end of the 1930s, Jews had assumed prominent roles throughout Soviet society, particularly as party activists, editors, and journalists and as leaders of industrial enterprises and cultural institutions.
…The visibility of Jews was noticeable enough to complicate relations between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union.
Naumov & Teptsov. Stalin's Secret Pogrom. New Haven, London: Yale Univ. Press, 2001, p. 34

STALIN WAS AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM

Stalin was surrounded by Jewesses–from Polina Molotova and Maria Svanidze to Poskrebysheva and Yezhova.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 267

Stalin has repeatedly condemned, along with other forms of race prejudice, anti-semitism. Russia has steadily been building a society which is free of the dangerous germs of race hate. Jews, as well as all others, are free to live where they wish, go to universities and technical schools, and secure any job for which they are fitted. Since the Jews were a scattered people and could not properly preserve their language and culture when a minority among other groups, the District of Biro-bijan, a fertile area as large as Holland and Belgium combined, has been established for those who wish to live there.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 73

Stalin was not an anti-Semite, as he is sometimes portrayed. He appreciated many qualities in the Jewish people: capacity for hard work, group solidarity, and political activeness. Their political activeness is unquestionably higher than average.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 192

This makes me believe that humor directed at any nationalist group was pleasing to Stalin, and that he was neither anti-Semitic nor anti-Muslim, only opposed to any nationalist enclave of power.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 295

To the end Stalin maintained that he opposed Jews who were Bundists, or religious activists, or 'cosmopolitans', or secessionists, or Zionists, or agents of American-Israeli organizations, but was not against Jews as such. On the contrary he had provided them with the Jewish autonomous region (in an inhospitable corner of Siberia, which attracted only a few thousand hopeful immigrants).
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 290

Stalin's attitude was unequivocal. Personally free from crude racial prejudice, he was wary of openly offending against the party canon which was hostile to anti-Semitism. Jews were quite prominent in his entourage, though far less so than they had been in Lenin's. Litvinov stood for over a decade at the head of the Soviet diplomatic service; Kaganovich was to the end Stalin's factotum; Mekhlis was the chief political Commissar of the army; and Zaslavsky and Ehrenburg were the most popular of Stalin's sycophants.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 605

Yet, while Hitler's Armies were advancing, the Soviet authorities did their best to evacuate the Jews from the threatened areas, even though in some towns–the case of Taganrog was notorious–the Jews, disbelieving the warnings about what awaited them under Nazi occupation, refused to budge. With Stalin's authorization, a Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, headed by well-known personalities was formed; he called upon the Jews of the West to support the Soviet Union…. Jews serving with the armed forces fought bravely, were decorated, and promoted even to the highest ranks. But qua Jews they were not accorded any merit…. After the war Soviet citizens guilty of collaboration with the Nazis and of Jew-baiting were punished as traitors.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 606

Koba too does not like Jews, but in my opinion he understands the absurdity of anti-Jewish measures.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 54

Trotsky also saw an obvious anti-Semitic orientation in the Moscow trials, at which a disproportionately high number of the defendants were Jewish. At the first show trial, 10 (out of 16) of the defendants were Jews, at the second, 8 (out of 17). Trotsky felt that it was particularly monstrous that, of the terrorists supposedly sent by him into the USSR, who were simultaneously working for the Gestapo, all, as if by selection, turned out to be Jews. In all this, Trotsky saw an attempt by Stalin to exploit the anti-Semitic moods that still existed in the country in the struggle against the Opposition.
The statements by Trotsky were met with indignation abroad not only by pro-Stalinists but also by bourgeois-liberal Jewish circles. Thus the famous American Zionist activist, Stephen Wise, explained his refusal to participate in the commission to investigate the Moscow Trials by the fact that Trotsky was not acting in good faith by raising the Jewish issue in connection with these trials. "If his other charges," declared Wise, "are as unsubstantiated as his complaint on the score of anti-Semitism, then he has no case at all."
Rejecting Trotsky's statements about the continued existence of anti-Semitism in the USSR, B. Z. Goldberg, a journalist who had contributed to the New York newspaper, Der Tog wrote: "In order to beat Stalin, Trotsky considers it right to make Soviet Russia anti-Semitic…. Is this the truth, Mr. Trotsky? Is it honest to write this when it is not true?… We are accustomed to look to the Soviet Union as our sole consolation as far as anti-Semitism is concerned…. It is therefore unforgivable that Trotsky should raise such groundless accusations against Stalin."
For many years, accusations that Stalin was anti-Semitic were refuted not only by foreign Jewish circles, but by members of the Russian emigration. The Israeli historian Nedava reports that even in 1952, that is at the culmination of state anti-Semitism in the USSR, Kerensky told him that in the Soviet Union anti-Semitism had long since been eradicated,

and that statements about the existence of anti-Semitism there were invented by supporters of the Cold War.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 154

Also he [Stalin] retained Dzerzhinsky as an ally in the coming struggle for power. Dzerzhinsky, as a Pole naturally hated Russians, and he was not warm towards the Jews. An association with a Georgian was not intolerable to him and he felt that Stalin must naturally share his own antipathies. In the latter surmise he was wrong, for Stalin has no racial prejudices.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 58

I wondered how Stalin, being [allegedly–Ed.] anti-semitic, could have two Jewish secretaries: Mekhlis and Kanner.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. ___w59

It was said later that Stalin was hostile to Kapler because he was Jewish, but when this was happening that did not matter.
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 150

As I have said, my father [Beria] did not believe that Stalin was anti-Semitic, even after his struggle against Trotskyism. He had many Jewish friends…. In 1947 he sent Kaganovich to the Ukraine because of the virulent anti-semitism which had developed there and which risked discrediting the USSR, whereas Khrushchev encouraged these anti-Semitic tendencies in the Party in the Ukraine. Calculation governed all of Stalin's actions. He realized that the Jews were needed in that period. Mekhlis [a Jew] was for a long time his personal secretary, and became editor of Pravda before being given charge of propaganda in the Army and, finally, charge of State Control. Stalin kept him close to himself and retained his services for years.
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 211

When they gathered at his apartment for Svetlana's 11th birthday on 28 Feb 1937, Yakov, Stalin's gentle Georgian son, brought Julia, his Jewish wife, for the first time.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 268

On the other hand, most of the women around him and many of his closest collaborators, from Yagoda to Mekhlis, were Jewish. The difference is obvious: he hated the intellectual Trotsky but had no problem with the cobbler Kaganovich….
Stalin was aware that his regime had to stand against anti-Semitism and we find in his own notes a reminder to give a speech about it: he called it "cannibalism," made it a criminal offense, and regularly criticized anti-Semites. Stalin founded a Jewish homeland, Birobizhan, on the inhospitable Chinese border but boasted, "The Tsar gave the Jews no land, but we will."
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 305

Stalin then attacked anti-Semitism: he [Stalin] had lately insisted that Jewish writers must have their Semitic names published in brackets after their Russian pseudonyms. Now he

asked the surprised Committee: “What’s this for? Does it give pleasure to someone to underline that this man is Jewish? Why? To promote anti-Semitism?”
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 623

[Footnote]: Yet Stalin still remembered his loyalest retainer Mekhlis [a Jew], who had suffered a stroke in 1949. Now dying at his dacha, all he longed for was to attend the 1952 Congress. Stalin refused, muttering that it was not a hospital but when the new Central Committee was announced, he remembered him. Mekhlis was thrilled–he died happy and Stalin authorized a magnificent funeral.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 627

Simonov, then editor-in-chief of Literaturnaiia Gazeta, a major organ for literary affairs, was present at a Politburo meeting on February 26, 1952,…when the list of candidates for the Stalin prizes were presented for consideration to Stalin. Next to certain names, Simonov recounted, were other names in brackets. In each case the bracketed name had a noticeably Jewish appearance such as ” Rovinsky.”
Stalin was irritated. “Why does it say Maltsev, but in brackets “Rovinsky”? For what purpose? For how long will this continue?…..” he demanded. “Why is this being done? Why are two names being written?” Stalin appeared offended. He proceeded to instruct his amazed audience: “If a man chose a literary pseudonym–that’s his right. We’re not speaking about anything other than elementary decency… But apparently someone thought to underline the fact that this man had a double name, to underline that he was a Jew. Why would you underline this? Why would you do this? For what purpose instill anti-semitism? Who needs this?”
According to Simonov, Stalin’s comment astounded the important literary and government figures who attended the February meeting and had an impact on Soviet literary society. News of this incident spread by word-of-mouth in upper echelon cultural circles, the effect of which was to distance Stalin himself from the crude anti-Semitic campaign still underway that was the cause of the parentheses in the first place. It made people think twice about their own accusations. How could ordinary citizens expose Jews as Jews if Stalin himself could not support such invidious considerations?
Naumov and Brent. Stalin’s Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 201-202

In 1943 the Jews were useful to him [Stalin], and he sent Mikhoels and others to America to raise money and goodwill for the Soviet war effort; in 1947, he supported the establishment of the state of Israel and allowed, if unwillingly, his daughter to marry Morozov a Jew.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin’s Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 217

As early as September 1948 he [Ehrenburg] publicly demonstrated his support for Stalin’s view of the State of Israel, in his Pravda article, “The Union of the Snub-nosed”. Ehrenburg argued that the charge of anti-semitism, discrimination, and the suppression of the rights of Jews in the Soviet Union was nothing more than malicious fabrications by enemies of the Soviet order. He argued that Israel was nothing but a bourgeois state, incompetent to decide the Jewish question; nor could it unite Jews around the world.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin’s Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 306

The Hungarian Jew Karl Pauker commanded Stalin’s personal security detail for a time in the 1930s and used to shave the dictator with an open razor….

Naumov & Teptsov. Stalin's Secret Pogrom. New Haven, London: Yale Univ. Press, 2001, p. 33

Once in power, Stalin…found it opportune to denounce anti-Semitism, as in his famous statement to the Jewish Telegraph Agency in January 1931: "Anti-Semitism is an extreme expression of racial chauvinism and as such is the most dangerous survival of cannibalism." In the 1920s and 1930s, Stalin permitted Jewish settlements to flourish in the Crimea, supported the creation of a secular Yiddish culture, and established a Jewish autonomous region in Birobidzhan to rival Palestine for the allegiance of Jewish masses inside and outside the country. He was once reported saying, "The czar gave the Jews no land. Kerensky gave the Jews no land. But we will give it." Stalin, it seemed, was ready to help the Jews become a "normal" national minority with a territory of their own.
Naumov & Teptsov. Stalin's Secret Pogrom. New Haven, London: Yale Univ. Press, 2001, p. 33

[In replying on January 12, 1931 to an inquiry by the Jewish News Agency in the United States Stalin stated] Anti-semitism, as an extreme form of racial chauvinism, is the most dangerous vestige of cannibalism.
…Anti-semitism is dangerous for the working people as being a false path that leads them off the right road and lands them in the jungle. Hence Communists, as consistent internationalists, cannot but be irreconcilable, sworn enemies of anti-semitism.
In the USSR anti-semitism is punishable with the utmost severity of the law as a phenomenon deeply hostile to the Soviet system. Under USSR law active anti-semites are liable to the death penalty.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 13, p. 30

Dzhughashvili's comments were later used against him as proof of anti-semitism. They were certainly crude and insensitive. But they scarcely betoken hatred of all Jews–or indeed of all Georgians. He, a Georgian, was repeating something that a Russian Bolshevik had said about Russians and Jews. For many years into the future he would be the friend, associate, or leader of countless individual Jews.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 77

Stories also surfaced that Stalin made anti-semitic remarks in private. Against this is the incontrovertible fact that Jews were among Stalin's friends and associates before and after the Great War.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 101

In the light of his continued association with Jewish friends, it would be difficult to call him an anti-semite;
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 326

He did not refuse to allow Jewish people the right to cultural self-expression after the October Revolution; indeed his People's, Commissariat for Nationalities' Affairs gave money and facilities to groups promoting the interests of Jews. Within his family he had opposed his

daughter's dalliance with the Jewish film-maker Kapler. As a father, he had much reason to discourage Svetlana from having anything to do with the middle-aged, womanizing Kapler.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 568

His campaign against "rootless cosmopolitanism" cannot be automatically attributed to hatred of Jews as Jews. He moved aggressively against every people in the USSR sharing nationhood with peoples of foreign states. The Greeks, Poles, and Koreans had suffered at his hands before the Second Were War for this reason. Campaigns against cosmopolitanism started up when relations between the Soviet Union and the USA drastically worsened in 1947. At first Jews were not the outstanding target. But this did not remain true for long. A warm reception was accorded by 20,000 Jews to Golda Meir at a Moscow synagogue in September 1948 after the foundation of Israel as a state. This infuriated Stalin, who started to regard Jewish people as subversive elements. Yet his motives were of Realpolitik rather than visceral prejudice .
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 568

Stalin's attitude toward this growing anti-Semitism was one of friendly neutrality. But matters went so far that he was forced to come out with a published statement which declared, "We are fighting Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev not because they are Jews, but because they are Oppositionists," and the like.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 399

When speaking at a session of the Moscow City Soviet (Council) on November 6, 1941, Stalin said, "The reactionary Nazi Party with their brutal anti-Jewish pogroms are no better than the Russian tsarist regime that allowed the Black Hundred pogroms."
Korolyov, Anatoly. Soviet Jewish Doctors Dissected Hitler, Novosti, Russian News and Information Agency, 7/5/05.

Furthermore, Stalin's inner circle included four Jewish ministers (people's commissars): Lazar Kaganovich, Boris Vannikov, Semyon Ginzburg and Isaak Zaltsman. These men were responsible for the railroads, ammunition, military construction and the tank industry.
Korolyov, Anatoly. Soviet Jewish Doctors Dissected Hitler, Novosti, Russian News and Information Agency, 7/5/05.

And, Stalin, what can be said about him?
I [Kaganovich] will tell you something about Stalin. There are Stalin's statements on this question that anti-semitism is criminally punishable. He was not an anti-semite. But life is such a paradox that all his opponents were Jews. Zinoviev, Kamenev, Trotsky… what could he do if all his enemies were Jews?
Then he was very scrupulous and careful by nature on political and nationality matters.
THUS SPAKE KAGANOVICH by Feliks Chuyev, 1992

Both Dovator and Kreizer excelled as Soviet military commanders and are applauded in the memoirs of Stalin's most famous marshals. Both were among the highest Jewish officers in Stalin's armies….

Colonel-General Dragunsky, who was wounded four times during the war and achieved fame as a tank commander, told me that during the war more than a hundred generals of Jewish ancestry served in the Red Army. This figure is also mentioned in an official booklet, Jews in the USSR–Figures, Facts, Comment, published in Moscow in 1982. The existence of these generals complicates the conventional impression of Stalin as anti-Semite. A look at Red Army rosters shows that many soldiers who were members of minorities, including Jews, Georgians and Armenians, were able to climb to the top of the ladder of command.
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 115

On the subject of anti-Semitism, the three generals had almost identical views. They hadn't encountered bigotry in the military; all the men they mixed with in the Army were impervious to prejudice. Dragunsky said that after the Berlin operation was completed in mid-1945 only a handful of military persons were awarded the country's highest decoration–the Gold Star Hero Medal. 'I, a Jew, was one of those few. Stalin himself approved the order, knowing I was a Jew." According to Dragunsky, political indoctrination in the Army had weeded out bigotry.
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 117

…some of the best-known Soviet war correspondents were Jews, such as Ehrenburg and Grossman, both of whom wrote highly acclaimed novels. Meanwhile, there was the presence of over 100 Russian Jews who attained the rank of general in Stalin's army.
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 118

SET UP TERRITORY FOR THE JEWS

Small industries were already starting in the Jewish autonomous territory.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 94

The region's [Birobidjan] chief destiny is to become an industrial district producing consumer goods for the whole Soviet far east, a task which especially fits the capacities of the great belt of Jews that live on the Soviet Union's western borders. (Since Hitler's invasion, many Jewish refugees have gone to Birobidjan.)
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 95

The Union knew another way [to treat the Jews]. It has assimilated the greater part of its 5 million Jews, and it has placed at the disposal of the remainder a vast autonomous territory [District of Biro-bijan] and the means for its colonization, thereby creating for itself several millions of active and intelligence citizens, fanatically devoted to the regime.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 82

And now today in the Biro-Bidjan territory one sees a proper town with schools, hospitals, government buildings, and a theater, and one can travel there from Moscow in the through coach of an express. Although the Plan provides for the immigration of more than 100,000

Jews over the next three years, the authorities have to maintain strict supervision, so numerous are those willing to immigrate.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 86

PROTECTING JEWS

Tens of thousands of Jewish refugees were also shipped into the interior of the USSR in what seems to have been a rough and inefficient manner, causing many complaints to go abroad. Theirs was a somewhat different case. They were people without homes or jobs in the new territories. They had fled thither to escape from Hitler and were clogging the housing facilities of cities and towns along the Soviet border. They were given about nine months to find jobs; failing this, at a moment when the Nazi menace was growing, they were deported to other areas where jobs were available. When Hitler's forces later marched into Lvov and all the surrounding territories, basic deportees may have been glad that they had been shipped away.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 170

… Jews were given priority in evacuation from areas about to be overrun by the Nazi invaders. Virtually all Polish Jews who survived the Holocaust (250,000) survived by fleeing to the Soviet Union and being evacuated East. In the immediate post-World War II period, Yiddish culture thrived in the USSR. The Jewish State Theatre continued to prosper in Moscow; a tri-weekly paper, Aynikayt, was published, also in Moscow; between 1946 and 1948 110 books were published in Yiddish. The Soviet Union was the first country to accord diplomatic recognition to Israel.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 89

GOOD JOB UNITING MANY NATIONALITIES

The greatness of this achievement in human association can hardly be exaggerated. To bring into being a multinational State uniting races which for centuries had been at each other's throats, inflicting pogroms and enslaving each other; races which were largely illiterate, steeped in superstition, and engulfed in abysmal ignorance, was daring in the extreme. Every nation became free to speak it's own language, have its own schools, form its own government, and exercise its own clearly-defined right to federate or withdraw from the federation…. The boundaries of the republics and other autonomous regions are but the demarcation lines of authority in essentially national matters….. And as class oppression vanishes, national oppression vanishes also. Every nation has the "right" to separate itself from the Union, but none is likely to wish to exercise that "right" when it's economic and social existence and national freedom are tightly bound up with union.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 147

Every nationality in the union was allowed full linguistic autonomy and what might have seemed a dangerously lavish degree of cultural and political autonomy. Thus the Jews, who had remained alien expatriates under Tsardom, received a small autonomous area with the promise of an independent Republic if and when the number of the population concentrated at any one point should justify the augmented status.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 215

For in practice 2 rules are followed in regard to the Soviet national system. First, the power is progressively restricted to “proletarian elements” of the population–the workers and poor peasants, whether industrialized or not. Second, 95 percent of the political leaders are communists, and what is more, it is an almost invariable rule that the national Communist Party secretaries and their most important district subordinates are either Russians or members of a different nationality from the people around them.
It must be admitted also that the Bolsheviks adhere with remarkable steadiness to their creed of communist equality irrespective of race or color, which assures the members of former “subject” people’s opportunities to rise to the highest central positions and removes any feeling of racial inferiority.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 215

Stalin’s thesis began by demonstrating the already proven fact that the misrule of the Czars and their treatment of the subject peoples as inferior beings, had been one of the main factors in the rapid disintegration of the old Empire. “If we fall into this error of Great Russian superiority, we shall suffer a similar fate,” insisted Stalin, “but if we go to the other extremes advocated by the Mensheviks and certain European Socialist parties, and divide the new State into a number of separate entities on an ethnological basis only, we shall weaken ourselves vis-a-vis the capitalist states of Europe and eventually be defeated piecemeal in a future war.” Between these twin dangers Stalin steered the Soviet ship on a middle course.
In his suggested plan the right of secession from the Soviet republic was granted to each one of the Constituent States should its people prefer to rule themselves rather than live under the aegis of the Bolshevik party. While it remained part of the USSR, each nation was to have its own elected assembly, which would exercise complete authority in the local concerns of the population; only in decisions as to foreign policy were the Assemblies subordinate to the Central Authority. No attempt was made to Russianize the peoples of the different nations, cultural traditions were to be perpetuated in the new schools, already spreading into the most backward provinces.
By these means Stalin confidently maintained that the centuries-old antipathy between the subject peoples and their Russian oppressors could eventually be destroyed.
The wisdom of this fundamental contribution to the creation of the USSR has now been proved to the hilt. Whereas in the half-century before October, 1917, national uprisings against the Central Government had occurred with unfailing regularity, under Bolshevik rule not one widespread effort has been made by any one of the peoples to escape from the Federation of Soviet Republics. This is in itself a great achievement and will in the future be recognized as one of Stalin’s most far-reaching contributions to world progress, as each succeeding year piles proof on proof of the sound foundation upon which the Soviet State has been constructed.
Without Stalin’s foresight, Japan would unquestionably have established a puppet kingdom in Eastern Russia at the same time as she annexed Manchukuo; but for the solidarity of the Stalin constitution Hitler might have found support among the Ukrainian people such as he found among the rabid nationalist minorities which brought Austria, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and France under a foreign domination. Perhaps even these misbegotten offspring of the Versailles agreement would have achieved a lasting stability, if they had originated in the same free choice which created the Soviet state.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 56

This federation at first was loosely organized. Regional autonomy expressed itself in a variety of flexible forms. Some of these local governments retained their own foreign offices; others issued their own money. Each nationality received the amount of freedom which its workers and peasants demanded. The Communists relied on the pressure of mutual economic interests to bring and hold these peoples together, once capitalist exploitation, the source of their bitterness, was removed.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 80

In the West it is not realized that after the Bolshevik Revolution, the Ukraine received a certain autonomy within the Soviet Union that went further than any sovereignty it had ever enjoyed under Austrian, Polish, or Tsarist rule. Unlike those in other republics, Ukrainian Communist rulers were always regarded in Moscow as influential junior partners, and cooperation with the enormous republic was considered crucial to the stability of the entire state. That is why the Ukraine retained all the attributes of an independent state: education in the native language, traditional arts and literature, its own Politburo (which was enjoyed by no other republic), its own membership in the United Nations, all of which were unthinkable under other dominations.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 259

But a Georgian is a Georgian. A Ukrainian is a Ukrainian. They are no more Russians than you or I are.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 89

This dogma of racial liberation, this unfettering, combining with that of social liberation, with the slogans of peace, land, and the control of production by labor, and welding together national aspirations and Socialism, had the effect of giving considerable impetus to the preparations for the October Revolution. The attitude taken up by the Bolsheviks with regard to the problems of nationalities brought them the sympathy of everyone, without bringing about the national secessions that some people expected. And there, once again, far-seeing wisdom, in its intrepid thoroughness, completely triumphed. “If Kolchak and Denikin were beaten,” wrote Stalin, “it is because we have had the sympathy of oppressed nations.”
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 93

Soviet Russia is performing an experiment without parallel anywhere in the world in organizing the co-existence of a number of nations and tribes within a single proletarian state on a basis of mutual confidence and voluntary and fraternal goodwill. Three years of Revolution show that this experiment has every chance of success.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 204

Perhaps Stalin and the rest of us exaggerate the degree to which he succeeded in taming the national minorities with his compromise, but he seems to a gotten what he wanted, and so have his successors. So far [1965], there has been no Yugoslavia, Poland, or Hungary within the USSR. Stalin certainly believed that the creation of the new Soviet brotherhood and supra-national patriotism in a giant industrial state was better than the murderous communal strife of Tsarist days, or the establishment of dozens of squabbling, economically impotent, little new countries. And the strength of the national minorities, nearly half the population of the USSR, had been harnessed, without crippling concessions to any nationalism, to his real purpose–the industrial and military drive for power.

Randall, Francis. Stalin's Russia. New York: Free Press,1965, p. 233

Stalin's own contributions to the whole discussion [of keeping the nationalities together] have never been made public and still remain inaccessible in a secret Stalin fond in the Presidential Archive. Particularly after 1991 there has apparently been a reluctance to reveal how well Stalin understood the potential danger of disintegration, given certain constitutional preconditions. He was less optimistic than others about the spread of revolution in the West, believing on the contrary that there was a need to make preparations in order to be in a position to repel aggression.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 267

Every nationality in the union was allowed full linguistic autonomy and what might have seemed a dangerously lavish degree of cultural and political autonomy. Thus, the Jews, who had remained alien expatriates under Czardom, received a small autonomous area with the promise of an independent republic if and when the number of the population concentrated at any one point should justify the augmented status.
At first sight such an arrangement might seem to foster a spirit of petty nationalist and racial antagonism and universal disintegration–that is the exact opposite of what the Bolsheviki are trying to achieve. In a heterogeneous capitalist State–the British Empire, for instance–liberty given minor nationalities must have had a centrifugal effect, but in the USSR the Communist party acts as a cement to bind the whole mass together and permit the facile exercise of central control.
…The strictness of the party discipline does the rest, and, although there have been cases of regional friction and sporadic difficulty, the system on the whole seems to work more smoothly than any organization of a heterogeneous State yet devised by man.
…It must be admitted also that the Bolsheviki adhere with remarkable steadiness to their creed of Communist equality irrespective of race or color, which assures the members of former "subject" peoples opportunities to rise to the highest central positions and removes any feeling of racial inferiority.
Stalin is a Georgian, Trotsky a Jew, Rudzutak a Lett, Dzershinsky was a Pole. These men offer salient examples for Communists of every nationality in the USSR. It is thus clear that the Soviet federal system, while reinforcing nationalism, did not sacrifice cohesion and centralized direction.
Duranty, Walter. "Stalinism Solving Minorities Problem" New York Times, June 26, 1931.

RIGHT OF SECESSION IS UNQUALIFIED

This right of secession is unqualified in the 1936 Constitution, whereas its exercise was subject to approval by all the Republics under the 1924 Charter. The right to secede has never been formally granted in any other true federation. The assertion of such a right in United States precipitated the Civil War.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 310

It was Stalin who, in April 1917, reported on the national question at the Conference of the Bolshevik Party…. Stalin proposed the adoption of the conception recommended during the Tsarist regime. The theory was accepted, not without a struggle; a fairly powerful opposition came from Pyatakov, and a certain number of delegates, against the clause establishing the

right of nations to independence, even to the length of separation; the possible consequences of this clause frightened them.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 92

STALIN FIRMLY OPPOSED SECESSION BY NATIONALITIES

The Georgian Mensheviks were in favor of the secession of Georgia from Russia. Stalin was naturally in favor of the autonomy of the Caucasian peoples in language and administration, but he was a fanatical opponent of the breaking up of the Russian Empire, and consequently of the secession of Georgia.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 28

What is certain is that Stalin was instinctively opposed to any splitting of Russia into its national components.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 54

Stalin, needless to say, was entirely in agreement with Lenin that these populations [the minority peoples] should only be granted their apparent national independence if they accepted the Soviet regime, the regime of the dictatorship of proletariat.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 59

Comrade Stalin combated the federalist tendencies of the bourgeois nationalists, which the Mensheviks shared. He argued that the victory of the proletariat demanded the unity of all workers, irrespective of nationality, and that national partitions must be broken down and the Russian, Georgian, Armenian, Polish, Jewish and other proletarians closely amalgamated as an essential condition for the victory of the proletariat all over Russia.
Yaroslavsky, Emelian. Landmarks in the Life of Stalin. Moscow: FLPH, 1940, p. 40

LENIN FIRMLY OPPOSED NATIONALISM

Lenin was as far as could be from being a nationalist. It is quite clear that at that time he regarded any national feeling as a narrowness, a sort of superstition, almost as morbid…. It may be that he also felt that it would be inexpedient for him as a Russian, a member of the dominant nation, in whose name the other peoples were oppressed, to carry out this work himself. Stalin, on the other hand, was not a Russian but a member of a people subjugated by the Russians. Both from the political and the propagandist point of view it would be much more effective if he dealt with this subject. He seemed, indeed, to be the very man for the job…. With his knowledge and experience, Stalin was obviously the very man that was wanted. He had had years of experience through his political activity and his agitation among the motley nationalities of the Caucasian towns, and he must have been very successful in mastering the nationalities problem; for the Bolshevik organizations composed of the various nationalities had chosen him again and again as their delegate at various congresses and conferences.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 29

But Lenin himself, with his personal revulsion against any shade of nationalism….
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 30

To him [Lenin] nationalism, Russian nationalism included, was just an obsession, as senseless as any other superstition, and, after all, that is [as] intelligible.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 56

STALIN CHOSEN BY LENIN TO HEAD NATIONALITIES ISSUE

The first part of the work is undeniably of permanent value. It was concerned with finding a universally valid definition of the concept Nationality. That problem Stalin solved brilliantly.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 30

This first considerable work of Stalin's bears all the marks of his character. The first part shows already in the still young Stalin an extraordinary exactitude of thought. His analysis of his subject is exemplary, the logic of the steps in his argument is faultless, and his formulations are models of precision.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 36

A People's Commissariat for Nationalities, that is to say a ministry, was set up within the government, to deal with the questions of national minorities. Stalin was regarded from the first as the Party's expert on this subject, and became the Commissar.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 48

In Cracow in 1912 Stalin unquestionably made a very good impression on Lenin…. Lenin's regular visitors in exile, whether at Cracow or Zurich, were almost all intellectuals. Stalin, when he met him, shoemaker's son and pupil of a seminary (which to Lenin meant a man virtually without education), was naturally regarded by Lenin, consciously or unconsciously, as a representative man of the masses. But Stalin was already well-read and energetically educating himself, and in conversation with him Lenin found that though he was a man of the lower class Stalin was able to discuss any political matter with him on equal terms. Indeed, there was one subject on which this young man could give information to the party leader, for all the latter's wide knowledge and experience. Stalin could not only tell him much that was of great interest about the real working-class environment, but, as a representative of a national minority, could tell him about the psychology of those minorities, about which Lenin knew next to nothing. Lenin had never lived in any part of Russia inhabited by a non-Russian population. Stalin was the first representative he had met of the masses of a non-Russian people under Russian rule, and he had much that was new and impressive to tell him. Thus it is not surprising that in a letter to Maxim Gorky Lenin described Stalin as a 'remarkable Georgian'.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 102-103

…when they took power in 1917, they made Stalin, Commissar of Nationalities, in charge of the problems of non-Russian peoples in the new state.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 15

Stalin was an expert on nationalities and was therefore the head of this department for a period of six years under Lenin; he was thus dealing with one of the two main problems of the revolution…. The country which we today call the USSR…gives every one of its

constituent peoples as much liberty in regard to its language as Switzerland gives to each of its 22 little cantons. In this respect Russia is actually modeled on Switzerland.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 71

Yenukidze states, "…Stalin wrote a great deal on the national question. On this question, in particular, he is undoubtedly after Lenin the most competent theoretician in our party.
Life of Stalin, A Symposium. New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1930, p. 94

If a Leninist nationalities policy is not pursued now, republics might secede from us. We have colossal experience in this regard…. It was none other than Lenin who made the appointment to one of the most important posts of the time, People's Commissar of Nationalities. He appointed Stalin to head up this ministry!
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 194

On most matters, though, he [Stalin] agreed with Lenin; and Lenin for his own part badly needed Dzhughashvili's contributions on the national question. Whereas the Mensheviks had several theorists who wrote about the nationalities in the Empire, the Bolsheviks had only Dzhughashvili. No wonder Lenin warmed to him.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 93

STALIN WARRED AGAINST ISLAM FORCING WOMEN TO WEAR VEILS [BURQA]

There came also a sharp conflict with Islam; for Stalin now attempted to make an end of the old forms of existence even in that fanatically Mohammedan region. Particularly sanguinary, and accompanied by many murders, was the campaign for the equality of rights of women. Women who allowed themselves to be persuaded by the communist agitators to throw away the veil were murdered almost without exception by their fellow villagers.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 177

STALIN UNITED A LARGER AREA THAN THE CZARS EVER CREATED

In the matter of foreign relations it is obvious that Stalin will leave behind him a great and splendid realm. If we consider him simply as a Russian statesman, and apply the old historical measure of values to his life's work, he is actually, in the nationalist sense, the greatest Russian statesman in all history. He is not only won back for Russia all that the Russian Tsars were compelled to cede at the beginning of this century, but has secured almost all the territories claimed by the Tsars since Catherine The Great. All that was ceded to Japan by the Treaty of Portsmouth in 1905, after the defeat in the Russian-Japanese war, was Russian again, with a little added. The Karelian Isthmus, conquered by Peter the Great but ceded to Finland at the beginning of the last century, has been recovered by Stalin. The Baltic provinces, and Bessarabia, lost in 1918–Volhynia and western White Russia, Lithuania and Vilna–in a word, the 1914 frontier, has been won back and extended. Of the old Russia, only two small districts on the Russo-Turkish frontier, Kars and Ardahan, ceded to the Turks in 1919, are missing. The Russian revolution voluntarily renounced Congress Poland. It is Russian once more; and Eastern Galicia, the northern Bukovina, and Carpatho-Ukraine, the

regions for which Russia fought in 1914-17, regions which had never been under Russian rule, are now Russian.
The dream of all the Tsars has been attained, all the 'Five Russias' are united under a single sceptre: Great Russia, Little Russia (Ukraina), White Russia, Red Russia (Galicia), and sub-Carpathian Russia. For the first time in history, all the eastern Slavs are united in a single realm. It was the ambition of all the rulers of Russia, attained by none –until now, by Stalin.
Nor is that all. Since the 18th-century Russia had regarded herself as the protector of all the Slavs. Panslavism provided the modern ideology for that claim. Now the inclusion of all Slav States under Russian leadership and guidance has been achieved. During the war Stalin resuscitated Panslavism as a political instrument, and actually created organs for that policy, such as the Committee of the Slav Peoples, in Moscow, and the Pan-Slav Congresses.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 391-92

In the Far East, too, Stalin has fulfilled the political ambition of the Tsars. The small region of Tannu Tuva, quietly striven for by Russian policy during the last 20 years of the Tsardom, with no apparent prospect of wresting it from Chinese sovereignty, is today Russian territory. The Tsars also laid claim to Mongolia; Stalin has made it a vassal State….
While Russia's 1914 frontier has not been reached in the Middle East, and the old Russian dream of dominance of the Dardanelles has still not been fulfilled, the Stalinist foreign policy has at least attained more than even the Treaty of San Stefano of 1877, which was subsequently revised to Russia's disadvantage at the Congress of Berlin. Russia is now, in any case, at the gates of Byzantium.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 393

STALIN DOES AN EXCELLENT JOB WITH THE NATIONALITIES DEPT.

… no such comprehension prevailed in Russia, where at least 80 adults out of every hundred could neither read nor write, living and dying according to the customs and practices of their ancestors, customs which had scarcely altered since the Middle Ages. This was the situation which Stalin faced in 1921, with the additional handicap of having no assistants of outstanding ability, no officials except those trained in the tradition of the Romanovs, for whom the subject peoples had been merely a source of revenue and cannon fodder. There was no spectacular fanfare, no trumpetings and self-advertisement about the way Stalin set about his task. Trotsky had already discovered an easy way to recruit staffs by the simple expedient of offering jobs to the displaced officials of the old regime, who were at least able to muddle through without making too obvious errors. How valuable these "hired Bolsheviks" really were was later revealed, for when Trotsky's prestige fell and his influence grew correspondingly weaker, his assistants and confidants had no compunction in transferring their allegiance to whoever could guarantee their salaries.
This was not Stalin's way; by careful hand-picking the Commissariat for Nationalities slowly acquired a staff whose qualities and technical achievements made their department justly famous as the most efficient of the multitude of bureaus and subcommittees which were generated by the early years of reconstruction.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 55

We find Stalin in the years before the World War developing the exact definition of “nation” as a “historically evolved, stable community of language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a community of culture.”
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 77

No matter what has been said about the Soviet Union, it has never exploited the small national groups within its boundaries. Where, under the Tsar, a thousand hates and animosities were kept at fever pitch, equality has brought harmony and eager co-operation. Today there is no country which has less racial discrimination than the Soviet Union. Joseph Stalin devised and carried out the policy which not only provides a humane and admirable example for the world, but which also has made the Soviet Union internally strong.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 72

In a number of republics, rather large groups of enemies of the Soviet state were revealed…. No one mastered the national question, no one organized our national republics more sagaciously than Stalin. The formation of the Central Asian Republics was entirely his doing, a Stalinist cause! He skillfully mastered the matter of borders and the very discovery of entire nations…. I regarded and still regard him as having accomplished colossal and difficult tasks that were beyond every one of us in the party at that time.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 196

About 10 years ago, in very solemn circumstances, Stalin observed that although the main basis of the Soviet Republic was the alliance of the workers and the peasants, the subsidiary basis of the Republic was the alliance of all the different nationalities existing in Russia…. And today he is looked upon as the man who understands it most thoroughly in the whole Union.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 88

“The Declaration of the Peoples of Russia” was one of the first legislative Acts of the Soviet Government. Conceived and drawn up by Stalin, it enacted:
The equality and sovereignty of all the peoples of Russia. The right to do what they wished with themselves, even to the extent of separation and the formation of independent States. The suppression of all national (Russian) and religious (Greek Orthodox) restrictions and privileges. The free development of national minorities and of racial groups finding themselves in the territory of the former Russian Empire.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 94

But the men of October, who succeeded in bringing about their Revolution in the midst of an extremely diversified juxtaposition of races and of countries–and one into which, moreover, long traditions of oppression had in many cases inculcated an exaggerated idea of nationalism, these men, for the first time in history, put forward a reasonable and serious solution of this age-old antagonism all over the planet, a logical formula which combined the two irreducible essentials, national individuality and practical federation, and placed patriotism not against but in Socialism.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 96

Stalin was not a man of conventional learning; he was much more than that; he was a man who thought deeply, read understandingly and listened to wisdom, no matter whence it came. He was attacked and slandered as few men of power have been; yet he seldom lost his courtesy and balance; nor did he let attack drive him from his convictions nor induce him to surrender positions which he knew were correct. As one of the despised minorities of man, he first set Russia on the road to conquer race prejudice and make one nation out of its 140 groups without destroying their individuality.
Statement by W.E.B DuBois regarding COMRADE STALIN on March 16, 1953

…under Stalin's "nationalities policy" the Uzbeks, Tadjiks, Bashkirs, Kazahks and the rest became equal partners of the Russians and Ukrainians. Better still, the Soviet regime took special pride in improving the lot of these backward people, and making them feel genuinely grateful to the Russians: and it is, of course, perfectly true that if, under the Tsarist regime, as much wealth as possible was pumped out of the Russian "colonies" of Central Asia, the Soviets pumped wealth and money into them. If there was, at times, resistance, even violent resistance, against the Soviets in Central Asia, it was not for economic reasons, but almost exclusively for religious reasons, the Soviets' atheism being wholly unacceptable to certain traditional Moslem communities.
Werth, Alexander. Russia: The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co., 1971, p. 40

He [Stalin] maintained that if ever the message of Marxism was to be accepted in the borderlands of the former Russian empire, it had to be conveyed in languages which were comprehensible and congenial to the recipients. The idea that Stalin was a "Great Russian chauvinist" in the 1920s is nonsense. More than any other Bolshevik leader, including Lenin, he fought for the principle that each people in the Soviet state should have scope for national and ethnic self-expression.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 202

During his 10 months sojourn abroad Stalin wrote a brief but very trenchant piece of research entitled "Marxism and the National Problem."
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 154

PERCENTAGE OF JEWS AS REVOLUTIONARY LEADERS IS HIGHER THAN OTHER GROUPS

That the Jews supplied both leaders and rank-and-file members of the revolutionary movement in greater proportion than the Russians or any of the other races which inhabited the Tsarist Empire is undeniable and quite natural, in view of the systematic and merciless policy of anti-Semitic repression and discrimination which the Tsarist Government applied,….
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 225

…the fact that the number of Jews in the upper and middle ranks of the Soviet bureaucracy is considerably in excess of their proportion in the population….
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 226

…But the percentage of Jews in the Communist Party is only slightly higher than their percentage in the population. In the Soviet Parliament of 531 members, there were only 20 Jews in 1927.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 75

Lenin knew that Rykov was a right-winger and not very reliable with respect to the party. But he was a good economist, and Lenin had promoted him to the position of chairman of our main economic center,…
Although Rykov was in favor of including the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries in the government, he had never openly opposed the October Revolution, as Kamenev had. Another consideration was that a Russian be the head of the government. At that time Jews occupied many leading positions, though they made up only a small percentage of the country's population….
There were many dubious people in the guise of Leninists.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 120

Almost all the Mensheviks were Jews. Even among the Bolsheviks, among the leaders, there were many Jews…. Lenin criticized the main Menshevik theoreticians, and they were Jews without exception.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 121

They say the Jews made the Revolution, not the Russians.
Well, hardly anyone believes that. True, in the first Soviet government and in the Politburo, Jews constituted the majority.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 191

Many of Stalin's men had Jewish wives: Voroshilov, Andreev, Rykov, Kirov, Kalinin…. There is an explanation. Oppositionist and revolutionary elements formed a higher percentage among Jews than among Russians.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 191

In 1933 the internal passport system was introduced, and Jews were identified as a national group, even though they had no republic to be their homeland. In every major ministry at this time, Jews held top positions.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 288

In his [Ivanov-Skuratov] article "The Question of the Role of Aliens in the Victory of Soviet Power" he writes:
"… In the early 30s the number two man in the party after Stalin was Kaganovich and his fellow tribesmen [i.e., Jews] gathered the most important commissariats into their hands–Litvinov the Foreign Affairs Commissariat, Yagoda the NKVD, Yakovlev the Commissariat of Agriculture; Gamarnik, and after him Mekhlis, the Political Directorate of the Red Army."
… It is common knowledge of course that not only the Bolshevik party but all the Russian revolutionary parties–including the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, Anarchists, and Anarcho-Communists–had a disproportionately large number of Jews, Latvians, Lithuanians, Georgians, Armenians, Finns, Poles, and other "aliens" (i.e. non-Russians) in their membership.

Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 557

[Said in 1926] I couldn't help smiling at the threat; Soltz, the head of the Central Control Commission, is the son of the Rabbi of Vilna.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 27
Young Jews furnished a large number of the cadres in revolutionary parties and organizations. Jews had always played an important role in the leadership of these parties. The Bolshevik party was no exception to this rule, and almost half its Central Committee were Jews.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 143

Finally, Mekhlis, a native of Odessa and, although a Jew, a favorite of the supreme leader's. Mekhlis was, at various times, editor-in-chief of Pravda, the people's commissar of state control, and the head of the political administration of the Red Army, with a rank of colonel general.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 176

Jewish intellectuals and workers were disproportionately active in the revolutionary movement in the Russian Empire. In 1922, Jews represented 5.2 percent of Communist Party membership (about five times their percentage of the population). From the late 1920s through to World War II the proportion of Jews in the party was about 4.3%.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 88

Jews have the highest representation in the Communist Party of any other Soviet nationality. In 1965, 80 out of every 1000 Jews belonged to the party, compared to the Soviet average of 51 per 1000. In 1969, Jews made up 1.5% of the Party (an over-representation factor of 1.67)…. Between 1920 and 1940 the percentage of Jews in the Party fluctuated around 4.5% to 5.0%.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 94

Western attempts to present the Soviet Union as a virulently anti-Semitic society cannot be substantiated. Historically, the Jewish people in the USSR have fared, and continue to fare, very well in almost: all respects. Jews are over-represented in the highest paying occupations, in the skilled professions, in the institutions of higher education and in all except the top levels in the Communist Party;…
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 99

An extensive examination of the position of the Jews in the Soviet Union shows that the Western attempt to color the Soviet Union as fundamentally anti-semitic is baseless. In fact, Soviet Jews were found to be heavily over-represented in both professional life and the Communist Party. No evidence of official anti-Semitism and little evidence of popular anti-Semitism was found.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 296

At the all-union level there were a few Jewish survivors, notably, Kaganovich, his brother M. M. Kaganovich as commissar of the defense industry, Mekhlis as chief editor of Pravda, and Litvinov as foreign commissar.

Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 491

Yet nationality always mattered in Soviet politics, however internationalist the Party claimed to be. There were a high proportion of Jews, along with Georgians, Poles, and Letts, in the Party because these were among the persecuted minorities of Tsarist Russia. In 1937, 5.7% of the Party were Jews yet they formed a majority in the government.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 305

The Jewish poet Fefer, executed in 1952 with his colleagues from the Jewish Anti-fascist Committee, said before his death, “It seemed to me that only Stalin could correct the historical injustice committed by the Roman kings…. I have nothing against the Soviet system. I am the son of a poor schoolteacher. Soviet power made a human being out of me and a fairly well-known poet as well.”…
Many Jews felt this way, which helps explain why so many could be found in the Soviet security organs and throughout the governmental bureaucracy. Jews had advanced with extraordinary speed from second-class citizens in Tsarist Russia to the plenipotentiaries of a great world power: Trotsky, Litvinov, Kamenev, Zinoviev, Yagoda, Kaganovich, and Lozovsky (executed as a member of the Jewish Anti-fascist Committee in 1952) were only a few of the Jews who rose through the system to the very top and exercised more real power in the Soviet Union than Jews had for nearly two millennia anywhere else in the world. Many others can be found in this book: Shvartsman, Broverman, Palkin, Raikhman, Sverdlov, Sheinin, Maklyarsky, Ehrenburg, Zhemchuzhina.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin’s Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 331

A striking feature of Mr. Wilton’s examination of the tumultuous 1917-1919 period in Russia is his frank treatment of the critically important Jewish role in establishing the Bolshevik regime.
The following lists of persons in the Bolshevik Party and Soviet administration during this period, which Wilton compiled on the basis of official reports and original documents, underscore the crucial Jewish role in these bodies. These lists first appeared in the rare French edition of Wilton’s book, published in Paris in 1921 under the title Les Derniers Jours des Romanoffs. They did not appear in either the American or British editions of The Last Days of the Romanovs published in1920. [R. Wilton, The Last Days of the Romanovs (1993)]
“I have done all in my power to act as an impartial chronicler,” Wilton wrote in his foreword to Les Derniers Jours des Romanoffs. “In order not to leave myself open to any accusation of prejudice, I am giving the list of the members of the [Bolshevik Party’ s] Central Committee, of the Extraordinary Commission [Cheka or secret police], and of the Council of Commissars functioning at the time of the assassination of the Imperial family.
“The 62 members of the [Central] Committee were composed of five Russians, one Ukrainian, six Letts [Latvians], two Germans, one Czech, two Armenians, three Georgians, one Karaim [Karaite] (a Jewish sect), and 41 Jews.
“The Extraordinary Commission [Cheka or Vecheka] of Moscow was composed of 36 members, including one German, one Pole, one Armenian, two Russians, eight Latvians, and 23 Jews.
“The Council of the People’s Commissars [the Soviet government] numbered two Armenians, three Russians, and 17 Jews.

“According to data furnished by the Soviet press, out of 556 important functionaries of the Bolshevik state, including the above-mentioned, in 1918-1919 there were: 17 Russians, two Ukrainians, eleven Armenians, 35 Letts [Latvians], 15 Germans, one Hungarian, ten Georgians, three Poles, three Finns, one Czech, one Karaim, and 457 Jews.”

“The other Russian Socialist parties are similar in composition,” Wilton went on. “Their Central Committees are made up as follows:”
Mensheviks (Social Democrats): Eleven members, all of whom are Jewish.
Communists of the People: Six members, of whom five are Jews and one is a Russian.
Social Revolutionaries (Right Wing): Fifteen members, of whom 13 are Jews and two are Russians (Kerenski, who may be of Jewish origin, and Tchaikovski).
Social Revolutionaries (Left Wing): Twelve members, of whom ten are Jews and two are Russians.
Committee of the Anarchists of Moscow: Five members, of whom four are Jews and one is a Russian.
Polish Communist Party: Twelve members, all of whom are Jews, including Sobelson (Radek), Krokhenal (Zagonski), and Schwartz (Goltz).

THE REVOLUTION SAVED THE JEWS AND GAVE THEM RIGHTS

Free access to the state service and to the universities and higher schools, absolute elimination of restrictions — on the right of movement and residence and other humiliating marks of pre-revolutionary racial discrimination, protection against mob violence–these are the substantial gains which the Russian Jews owe to the Revolution.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston : Little, Brown, 1930, p. 226

SURVIVAL OF CAPITALISM IN MEN’S MINDS PRODUCT OF NATIONALISM

The survivals of capitalism in the minds of men, Stalin pointed out, were much more tenacious in the sphere of the national question than in any other.
Alexandrov, G. F. Joseph Stalin; a Short Biography. Moscow: FLPH, 1947, p. 123

In the face of a world in which peace between nations is literally an absurd formula, each one of the 75 or so contemporary nations having but one aim (which some of them do and some do not admit), namely, to live to the detriment of one another….
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 98

LENIN WANTS JEWS ON COMMISSIONS TO ASSURE PROGRESS

Stalin recounted that he went to Lenin and said, “I’m setting up a commission of inquiry. I am appointing so and so to it.” Lenin said the him, “Not a single Jew? No, nothing will come of it!”
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 192

FEDERATION OF SOVIET NATIONS IS BETTER FOR ALL THAN INDEPENDENCE

Because, for all weak or backward nations (representing the majority of the Russian group) the system is amazingly more advantageous and intelligent, from whatever point of view one looks at it, than the system of simple and pure independence. Federated nations work towards a common end and are scientifically at peace with one another. As foreigners, however, instead of co-operation there is competition, which changes, by force of circumstances, into antagonism and enmity –with all the burdens, all the slaveries, all the perils and all the smotherings of conscience which go with it. The Soviet nations are at once small and great. If they were to leave the Union they would become small without any compensating factor.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 99

STALIN FOUGHT GREAT RUSSIAN CHAUVINISM OVER OTHER NATIONALITIES

However, when the Soviets first came into power, there was a somewhat special “Asiatic” conception of the problem of nationalities. It was manifested by strong “colonializing tendencies,” that is to say the subjection of the distant country, and a preponderance of the Russian element in its administration and in the development of its Soviet assimilation. Russian workers and Russian propagandists went into Asia, directed everything and settled everything themselves, the native population being “neglected by socialism,” according to Stalin’s own expression.
This did not agree with one of the principles of Leninist Marxism, which was a particularly dear one to Stalin, namely the untrammelled, direct and conscious participation of all in the common work. So Stalin fought bitterly against these eruptions of Muscovite exclusivism mingled with socialist organization, and against putting into practice methods which were very nearly “protectorate” or colonial methods in dealing with Soviet natives, as being a system which was erroneous in theory and foolish in practice.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 104

Some people depict the struggle of the borderland “governments” as a struggle for national liberation and against the “soulless centralism” of the Soviet government. This, however, is wrong. No government in the world ever granted such extensive decentralization, no government in the world ever afforded its peoples such plenary national freedom as does the Soviet government of Russia. The struggle of the borderland “governments” was and remains a struggle of the bourgeois counter-revolution against socialism. The national flag is tacked on to the cause only to deceive the masses, only as a popular flag which conveniently covers up the counter-revolutionary designs of the national bourgeoisie.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 187

Culture in general attracted his occasional,and unpredictable,interventions. Stalin’s aide Mekhlis rang up Pravda cartoonist Yefimov in 1937 and told him to come immediately to the Kremlin. Suspecting the worst, Yefimov feigned influenza. But “he’–Stalin–was insisting; Yefimov could postpone the visit at most by a day. In fact Stalin simply wished to say that he thought Yefimov should cease drawing Japanese figures with protruding teeth. “Definitely,’ replied the cartoonist. “There won’t be any more teeth.’

Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 305

NOTHING CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED EXCEPT THROUGH INTERNATIONALISM

Events also show–and one must not tire of proclaiming these truths–that one must embrace Internationalism in a practical way before one can emerge from chaos, because history, whether we want it to or not, speaks to us internationally. They show that nothing can be accomplished, even within frontiers, without disregarding frontiers.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 273

STALIN'S NATIONALITIES PROGRAM HAS DEGREES OF INDEPENDENCE AND AUTONOMY

Soviet autonomy is not a rigid thing fixed once and for all time; it permits of the most varied forms and degrees of development. It passes from narrow administrative autonomy (the Volga Germans, the Chuvashes and the Karelians) to a wider, political autonomy (the Bashkirs, the Volga Tatars and the Kirghiz); from wide political autonomy to a still wider form of autonomy (the Ukraine and Turkestan); and finally from the Ukrainian type of autonomy to the supreme form of autonomy –contractual relations (Azerbaijan). This elasticity of Soviet autonomy constitutes one of its prime merits, for this elasticity makes it possible to embrace all the various types of border regions in Russia, which vary greatly in their levels of cultural and economic development.

Soviet autonomy is the most real and concrete way of uniting the border regions to Central Russia. Nobody will deny that the Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Turkestan, the Kirghiz Republic, the Bashkir Republic, the Tatar Republic, and other border regions, since they are striving for the cultural and material prosperity of their masses, must have their native schools, courts, administration and government bodies recruited principally from among the native people. Furthermore, the real Sovietization of these regions, their conversion into Soviet countries closely bound to Central Russia and forming with it one state whole, is inconceivable without the widespread organization of local schools, without the creation of courts, administrative bodies, organs of government, etc., recruited from among people acquainted with the life and language of the population.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 201-202

There was a brighter side, too, to Stalin's activity. He worked with great vigor and determination on one of the most difficult problems that the revolution had inherited. It will be remembered that in 1918 he called to life the self-governing republic of Bashkirs. In the spring of 1920 an autonomous Soviet republic of the Tartars was founded. In October of the same year Kirghizian self-government followed. After the civil war a Daghestan republic was constituted, comprising a multitude of tribes speaking 36 languages and vernaculars. Karelians, Yakuts, and others went ahead with forming their own administrations. None of these republics was or could be really independent; but all enjoyed a high degree of self-government and internal freedom; and, under the guidance of Stalin's Commissariat, all tasted some of the benefits of modern civilization. Amid all the material misery of that period,

the Commissariat helped to set up thousands of schools in areas where only a few score had existed before. Schemes for the irrigation of arid land and for hydro-electrical development were initiated. Tartar became an official language on a par with Russian. Russians were forbidden to settle in the steps of Kirghizia, now reserved for the colonization of native nomads. Progressive laws freed Asiatic women from patriarchal and tribal tyranny. All this work, of necessity carried out on a modest scale, set a pattern for future endeavors; and even in its modest beginnings there was an elan and an earnest concern for progress that captivated many an opponent of Bolshevism.

In the summer of 1922, soon after Lenin's first stroke, the Politburo began to discuss a constitutional reform that was to settle the relations between Russia and the outlying republics. Stalin was the chief architect of the reform. Throughout the second half of 1922 he expounded the principles of the new constitution. These were, briefly, his ideas: the federation of Soviet Republics should be replaced by a Union of Republics. The union should consist of four regional entities: Russia, Transcaucasia, the Ukraine, and Byelorussia. (It was in connection with this scheme that he pressed the Georgians to join the Transcaucasian federation.) He was opposed to the idea that the union should be formed directly by the constituent republics; and he insisted on the need for intermediate links between the central administration and the individual republican governments. His motive was that central control would be more effective if it were exercised through four main channels than if it were dispersed in a much greater number of direct contacts between Moscow and the local administrations. The Commissariats were to be classed into three categories: (a) Military Affairs, Foreign Policy, Foreign Trade, Transport, and Communication were to be the sole and exclusive responsibility of the Government in Moscow. The governments of the various republics were not to possess any commissariats dealing with those matters. (b) In the second category were the departments of Finance, Economy, Food, Labor, and the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate. These were not to be subordinate to the central government, though they were to be subject to a measure of co-ordination from Moscow. (c) Home Affairs, Justice, Education, and Agriculture belonged to the third category and were to be administered by the provincial governments in complete independence. Sovereign power was to reside in the All-Union Congress of Soviets and, between the congresses, in the Central Executive Committee. The latter was to be composed of two chambers: the Supreme Council and the Council of Nationalities. All ethnical groups were to be represented by an equal number of delegates in the Council of Nationalities. The Central Executive Committee appointed the Council of People's Commissars, the Government.

During his first convalescence Lenin was consulted on the scheme and endorsed it. The Politburo once again pressed the Georgians to join the Transcaucasian federation. The Ukrainians demurred at Moscow's intention to conduct foreign policy on their behalf and refused to wind up their own Commissariat for Foreign Affairs. Nominally, however, the scheme left the republics with a very wide measure of self-government. It allowed them to manage independently their home affairs, security, and police, under the circumstances by far the most important department.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 244

Politically the point was to reconstruct the Tzarist empire, that prison of nations, territorially, politically, and administratively, in line with the needs and wishes of the nations themselves.
Trotsky , Leon , Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 155

NATIONAL SELF-DETERMINATION IS SECONDARY TO PROLETARIAN DICTATORSHIP

The right of self-determination means that a nation can arrange its life according to its own will. It has the right to arrange its life on the basis of autonomy. It has the right to enter into federal relations with other nations. It has the right to complete secession. Nations are sovereign and all nations are equal.

This, of course, does not mean that Social-Democrats will support every demand of a nation. A nation has a right even to return to the old order of things; but this does not mean that Social-Democrats will subscribe to such a decision if taken by any institution of the said nation. The obligations of Social-Democrats, who defend the interests of the proletariat, and the rights of a nation, which consists of various classes, are two different things.

… It should be born in mind that besides the right of nations to self-determination there is also the right of the working class to consolidate its power, and to this latter right the right of self-determination is subordinate. There are occasions when the right of self-determination conflicts with the other, the higher right–the right of a working class that has assumed power to consolidate its power. In such cases–this must be said bluntly– the right to self-determination cannot and must not serve as an obstacle to the exercise by the working class of its right to dictatorship. The former must give way to the latter.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 278

BOLSHEVIKS SUPPORT NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE UP TO COMPLETE SECESSION

The Bolsheviks advocated the self-determination of nations up to and including their complete governmental separation from Russia as independent nation-states. This did not mean that the Bolsheviks would welcome the separation of the national regions from Russia or help them secede.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 50

Bukharin dissented from Lenin on crucial points of Marxist theory and politics, among others on nationalities. While Lenin advocated their right to self-determination and interpreted that right in the sense that Poles, Ukrainians, Letts, and so on were entitled to secede from the Russian empire and constitute themselves as independent nations, Bukharin disputed that view and saw in it a superfluous concession to Polish, Ukrainian, and other nationalisms. He believed that the revolution would cut across existing national divisions. Bukharin's argument left no mark on Stalin's essay, which was consistently Leninist.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 119

JEWISH CULTURE AND YIDDISH ARE FOSTERED IN THE SU

Yiddish, like all national languages, is carefully fostered in the Union. There are Yiddish schools and Yiddish newspapers; there is a Yiddish literature of considerable standing. Congresses are called for the cultivation of the language, and Yiddish theaters enjoy the

highest prestige. I saw in the Yiddish State Theatre at Moscow an extraordinarily good performance of King Lear with that great actor Michoels in the title part and Suskins giving a splendid Fool. The sets were fine and original and the whole production excellently staged.

The establishment of the national Jewish state of Biro-Bidjan at first encountered almost insuperable difficulties,…
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 85

With the establishment of the Soviet regime [in the Ukraine] there was no discrimination by ethnic origin whatsoever. On the contrary, the city [Kiev] had Jewish schools, a theater, a synagogue. A newspaper was published in Yiddish.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin's Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 94

In special places [in the predominantly Jewish neighborhood of Podol in Kiev] the individual buyer could purchase any item in any quantity, such as a tea set, a carpet, a bicycle, or musical instruments. Weapons were also on sale, both wholesale and retail, including hunting guns, small-caliber rifles, hunting knives, and cartridges. Even though the Civil War had ended only a short time before, no one seemed worried that arms were freely available. Hunting rifles were registered with amateur hunters' organizations, and as for small-caliber guns, no one paid any attention to them at all. My father gave me such a gun as a present.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin's Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 95

In 1919, a Jewish State Theatre was established in Moscow, and by 1934 a further 18 had been established in other cities. Jewish Theatre, as well as other expressions of Jewish culture, were strongly supported by the Soviet state. In 1932, 653 Yiddish books were published with a total circulation of more than 2.5 million. In 1935, there were Yiddish dailies in Moscow, Kharkov, Minsk, and Birobidzhan; in the Ukraine alone 10 Jewish dailies were in circulation.

Many anti-Soviets in the West, especially Zionists, had argued that the 1948-53 campaign against 'cosmopolitanism' and 'Zionism' was really a manifestation of anti-Semitism (analogous to that of Hitler's) but a realistic assessment demonstrates that this argument functioned to serve the interests of Western and Israeli Zionists in their long-term battle with Jewish Marxists for hegemony in the Jewish community, as well as to strengthen Western imperialist support for Israel.

Professionally and economically the Jewish people have fared extremely well in the period of Soviet power. They are, for example, far more highly educated than any other nationality in the Soviet Union, and in 1970-71 the ratio of higher education students per 1000 population was 49.2. This is almost twice as high as the next highest group, the Georgians, who had a ratio of 27.1 per 1000. (Russians ranked fourth on this indicator with a ratio of 21.1 per 1000).
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 91

SOVIET GOVT WORKS TO TURN NOMADS INTO SETTLED PROLETARIANS

I have told in a previous chapter about the liquidation of kulaks. This process had been accompanied by a similar process which the Communists described as de-nomadization. Just as the authorities had labeled several hundred thousand small farmers as kulaks, and taken them off their land and put them at work in industries, mines, and forests under police guard, so they had removed hundreds of thousands of nomads from the steppes and put them at work in mines and factories or tried to induce them to settle down on collective cattle farms. They did this because they held the opinion that nomads are backward and cannot be raised up to the Communist notions of a higher civilization until they are taken away from the steppes and their roving life and changed into proletarians, or wage-earners, either in industries or on state-controlled farms.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 107

The nomad tribes had been heavy sufferers in both the First and Second Bolshevik Revolutions. In the Civil War following 1917, their horses and sheep had been confiscated by one armed force after another; and then in 1921, when the greatest of modern famines swept through Russia, the Kazaks herds and flocks had been further reduced, so that in 1923 the number of domestic animals in Kazakhstan was only about 30 percent of what it had been in 1916.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 184

The nomads were once again among the principal sufferers when the Second Communist Revolution started in 1929. But the nomads were dirty and superstitious, and I can understand how the Communist reformers believed that they were doing them a favor by breaking up their old forms of life and persuading them, even by the use of force if necessary, to adopt a manner of life which was considered more civilized and sensible.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 185

LIKE THE KULAKS SOME NOMADS DESTROYED THEIR HERDS RATHER THAN COLLECTIVIZE

I have told how the liquidation of kulaks resulted in a shortage of food which continued for several years. The process of de-nomadization aggravated the food shortage by causing the destruction of the nomad's herds. When the Communist "shock troops" began to break up these herds, and put pressure on the nomad owners to pool their animals in so-called collective farms, the latter simply killed their animals. At that time, I do not think the authorities worried about this, because they believed the herds could easily be replaced. They learned better later;…
In such a place as Kazakhstan, where most of the population had existed for generations on the products of the herds, the destruction of animals in the years following 1930 had very serious effects. I have been told that thousands died of starvation; whether that is true or not, I cannot say. But I can testify from my own observation that the former nomad herders were a long time recovering from the effects of this turbulent period, when the Communist authorities organized an assault upon the nomads, and the latter developed a sort of mass hysteria which caused them to destroy their means of livelihood.

Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 108

The ex-nomads who survived this period were rounded up, as the kulaks had been, and put to work in the mines and in the few industries which had been started at that time in the nomad regions. The well-to-do nomads, such as the “kumiss king” I had visited in Bashkiria, were taken over by the police and exiled to some region remote from their former homes, where they were put to work in forests or mines, or settled on cattle farms. Many of them resisted dispossession; these were adjudged criminals, and sent to jail or shot.
By the time I was assigned to the Ridder mines, a virtual civil war with the nomads had been fought and won. There were still occasional skirmishes with some nomads who stubbornly refused to give up their old forms of life, but for the most part the Kazaks and Kirghizians had admitted defeat and some of them were already more are less enthusiastic supporters of the new order. Such supporters were greatly encouraged by the authorities and liberally rewarded.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 109

These villages had been set on fire during the struggle between the nomads and Communist reformers, and were still burning months later. This drifting smoke offered evidence both of the severity of the struggle, and of the eventual triumph over the old and unprogressive way of life.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 187

SIBERIA IS FINE LAND WITH UNJUST REPUTATION

The worst thing about the Russian exile system, so far as I am concerned, is the bad reputation it has given to Siberia. Before I went to Russia, I had an idea that Siberia was a gloomy sort of place, a land of everlasting cold and darkness. Why did I have this idea? Because most of what I had read about Siberia was connected with the exile system, which has used Siberia as a dumping ground for criminals and political undesirables both before and since the Russian Revolution.
Of course, I should have known better. Books have been written both before and since the revolution to show what a fine place Siberia is. But the connection between Siberia and exiles had stuck in my mind above everything else I read about this part of the world, and I suspect that many other Americans still have the same attitude.
If anyone should ask me what I think is the most hopeful thing about Russia, I should reply at once and without any hesitation: ” Siberia!”
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 144

For myself, I would certainly rate Siberia as far more important than Bolshevism in any estimate of Russia’s future. So long as the Russians hang on to Siberia, they don’t need to worry about what social and political system operates in their country. They can even afford to give up a large part of European Russia, although this includes many extremely valuable and rich regions; retreat back into the Urals and Siberia, and still consider themselves one of the largest, richest, and most promising countries in the world.
I have traveled back and forth and up and down across Siberia dozens of times during the past 10 years, and I will stake my reputation on the claim that Siberia under proper

management can be made superior to any other country in Europe or Asia, and could give the United States a run for its money.
I am using the name Siberia here in the old sense, which he still used by most of the Soviet citizens who live there, even if the present authorities have divided up the old territory into several parts with new names. According to this interpretation, Siberia includes that region beginning 100 miles east of the Ural Mountains and extending to the Pacific Coast, as well as the Lake Baikal region and the maritime provinces taken over from China in the middle of the 19th-century. This Siberia extends to the Arctic seas on the north and as far south as the Central Asian republics, so that its southern regions are almost tropical.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 145

When I made my first trip through Siberia, and saw how badly mistaken I had been in my own mind about the nature of the country, I decided I must be unusually dumb. But I have learned since that Americans have been visiting Siberia for a long time, and that each new arrival, not profiting by the written impressions of his predecessors, makes the fresh discovery for himself that Siberia is not an Arctic waste such as he had imagined, but a great country more like the American Middle West and Northwest than any other stretch of the earth's surface with which I am familiar.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 146

… another American named Bookwalter, a businessman from Springfield, Ohio, heard that the Russians were building a transcontinental railroad to the Pacific Ocean; and as he was a curious-minded sort of fellow, he went off in 1899 to have a look at it….
Bookwalter recorded his impressions in a book which he published himself and circulated privately in 1899.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 147

Bookwalter wrote: "Somehow I had formed the idea that Siberia was, in the main, a mountainous, broken, barren, and and even sterile country, covered with forests–which opinion, I am inclined to think, is somehow generally entertained in the West. Nothing could be farther from the fact. Of all the surprises met with in my somewhat extensive travels Siberia is the greatest."
Bookwalter wrote a description of the similarities between Siberia and some of the western sections of the United States which are just as good today as when he wrote them: "There lies in western Siberia, from the Ural Mountains eastward, an unbroken tract of practically level land, about 8000 miles wide and nearly 2000 miles long; that is to say, an area equal to two-thirds of the United States, excepting Alaska. When I add that for the most part it is like or even superior to the fertile, treeless, level prairies of our own great West; that it extends over 30 degrees of latitude from the genial climate of Central Asia to the frigid north; that throughout this vast region is to be found the finest pasturage in the world; that in many parts wheat and other cereals can be grown equal to the Dakotas or Minnesota, and even Indian corn over a large section in the south–some feeble conception can be formed of the tremendous latent agricultural resources of this country."
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 148

Abroad, Siberia is generally thought of as a wasteland, a desolate country used only as a prison for deportees. That is far from the truth. It is a splendid region with terrifically rich mineral resources, drained by immense rivers, and with an industrial future as brilliant as

those of Canada or the United States. Life is calmer there than in European Russia, for the great distances permit a relaxation of the constant surveillance to which the European populations are subjected. There is more liberty in Siberia than in Russia.
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 104

NOMADS GIVEN SPECIAL TREATMENT BY THE RUSSIANS

The Russians who live among primitive tribesmen today have had to learn patience and forbearance to a marked degree. The Communists, possessing what someone has described as inverted snobishness, have decided that since the Russians exploited the tribesmen in the past, therefore the Russians must now submit to any sort of indignity. The tribesmen, having the mentality of shrewd children, have quickly caught on to the idea that the Russians have no comeback for any trick played on them, and some of the tribesmen abuse the favored position given them by the Communists. The Russians simply have to grin and bear it, as they know from experience that any effort to retaliate against the tribesmen will be severely punished, and that Communist courts will always give the tribesmen the benefit of every doubt.
During this epidemic of typhus in the Altai Mountains, we ran into one mining village where the whole population was in danger of infection, and those who could still move around were lined up in front of the dispensary….
The crowd had formed in line as its members arrived, and men and women stood there awaiting their turn to get into the dispensary. The Kazaks, knowing that the Russians were afraid of lice, were amusing themselves by picking lice off their clothing and flipping them onto the Russians. The expression of mixed anger, terror, and despair on the faces of those Russians was something to remember. But they could do nothing about it. The Kazaks wore sly and malicious grins, knowing that the Russians were powerless to object.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 191

SOVIET GOVT FOSTERS INTEGRATION AND RACE AND NATIONALITY MIXING

Often the families of exiles accompany them, and their children may settle down in Asia. Recently, in order to clear the border regions adjoining Finland, Poland, and other countries on the west, the authorities have shifted dozens of villages in mass to new lands in Siberia, where they are given credit and materials to build houses and community dwellings for themselves and begin life over in Asia.
In Russia today, as never before, Asiatics and Europeans are being thrown together as members of the same community. Already there are a considerable number of mixed marriages, and strong measures are taken to make sure that no social prejudice is shown against such marriages, and that the children get at least equal advantages.
The Soviet authorities deliberately encourage such marriages. They throw European and Asiatic young people together as much as possible, and Soviet scientists frequently publish articles declaring that children of mixed marriages are likely to be superior.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 261

As everyone knows, the Germans have started out to “purify” their race, while the Communists authorities in Russia appear equally determined to mingle the global blood of their 168 races and tribes as freely as possible.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 262

In the course of 70 years the process of ethnic integration was strongest in the central regions of the USSR, above all in Moscow and Leningrad. There was also a considerable degree of integration in Kiev, Minsk, Tbilisi, Baku, Tashkent, and Kharkov. If the USSR had continued to exist for another 40-50 years, “the Soviets” would have become as much a reality as “the Americans.”
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 269

PEOPLE IN FAR EASTERN SIBERIA PREFER SOVIET RULE OVER JAPANESE OPPRESSION

Stalin and his associates, as empire-builders, have apparently anticipated for years that the Japanese would sooner or later strike out to build an empire for themselves on the Asiatic mainland. I have seen, during my own 10 years in Russia, what the Communists General Staff has done to hold Japan in check so far as Russian interests are concerned. First of all, the Russians have built a line of defense along the Manchurian border a strong as that which they are now building along European borders. They have built up a powerful, specialized army in the Far East, almost completely independent of the army in Europe. In this way, they succeeded in preventing a Japanese attack upon their own Far Eastern Territories, which are rich in natural resources of every kind.
I have heard it suggested that the Soviet population in the Far East is so discontented that it would welcome Japanese invasion. This is not true. I have talked with hundreds of Soviet citizens along the Amur and Shilka Rivers and all through the mining regions beyond Lake Baikal. Many of these people are not especially fond of Soviet rule, but they prefer it to the Japanese. They can remember when the Japanese occupied eastern Siberia; the Japanese were not induced to leave until 1922. The Japanese military acted so brutally during their occupation that they made enemies of the Soviet population for generations.
One middle-aged prospector working on the Shilka River told me about his experiences with the Japanese. He said that a Japanese garrison was kept just outside the town where he was living during the occupation. Members of this garrison, during their rest period, would take their guns and go up on the hillside overlooking the town. There they would sit taking pot-shots at people moving along the streets, and were highly amused when they made a hit. Incidents like this have made the people in eastern Siberia ready to back the Russians in a fight with the Japanese, even though they are not Communists.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 286

STALIN SAYS THE SU IS A UNION OF NATIONS

[Report to the 18th Congress on March 10, 1939]
Long live the great friendship of the nations of our country!
Franklin, Bruce, Ed. The Essential Stalin; Major Theoretical Writings. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p. 392

SOVIET GOVT OPPOSED ZIONISM AND THE ZIONISTIC ASPECTS OF JUDAISM

An analysis of anti-religious propaganda directed at Jews in 1960s finds such specific themes as: (1) The Jewish religion promotes allegiance to another state, Israel, and to a reactionary, pro-imperialist movement, Zionism; (2) the Jewish religion promotes the notion that the Jewish people are superior to others, 'the chosen people', and thus breeds hatred of other people's; (3) the Jewish religion elevates the pursuit of material wealth, a pursuit incompatible with the Communist ideal of Soviet society; and (4) the Jewish religion calls for genocide and enslavement of other people's by the Jews (a reference to the affect of Zionism on the Arabs).
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 93

From the beginning of the Soviet state in 1917, the Soviets, with various degrees of intensity, have systematically attacked Zionism as reactionary, pro-imperialist, racist and, since World War II, essentially fascist. They share their analysis with most of the rest of the world's Marxists, including many Jewish Marxists, as well as with most progressive movements in Asia, Africa, and Latin America; especially those in the Islamic world. Anti-Soviets, especially those sympathetic to Zionism and the Israeli state, often fallaciously accuse the Soviet Union of anti-Semitism because of Soviet attacks on Zionism. But the two are quite different. Anti-Semitism, the ideology that Jews are a race to be despised and that to discriminate against them is justified, is against the law in the Soviet Union and, as far as I can ascertain, totally absent from all official Party and government written matter. Anti-Zionism, the notion that Jews should not seek or support a separate state in which all Jews maintain solidarity solely amongst themselves–rather than with individuals of other ethnic groups–is official state and Party policy.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 96

As we shall see, Stalin was growing more and more disturbed about the expressions of interest in Palestine and, later, Israel among Soviet Jews;…
Naumov & Teptsov. Stalin's Secret Pogrom. New Haven, London: Yale Univ. Press, 2001, p. 40

Several weeks later, even larger crowds assembled on Rosh Hashanah and again on Yom Kippur. They waited for hours in front of the synagogue, then escorted Golda Meier through the streets, shouting, "Next Year in Jerusalem." Stalin had had enough. On November 20, the party leadership approved the immediate disbanding of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, "since, as the facts show, this committee is a center of anti-Soviet propaganda and regularly submits anti-Soviet information to organs of foreign intelligence."
Naumov & Teptsov. Stalin's Secret Pogrom. New Haven, London: Yale Univ. Press, 2001, p. 41

Stalin told his daughter, "The entire older generation is contaminated with Zionism and now they're teaching the young people, too."
Naumov & Teptsov. Stalin's Secret Pogrom. New Haven, London: Yale Univ. Press, 2001, p. 42

JEWS SUPPORTED SU IN THE WAR & THEIR SOLDIERS RECEIVED THE 4TH HIGHEST # OF MEDALS

… Mikhoels…sent a note to Shcherbakov objecting to a prominent article in the party Journal Bolshevik, which maliciously understated the number of medals that individual Jewish soldiers had received for valor during the first six months of the war. Although the Jews constituted a tiny minority within the Soviet population, they had received the fourth highest number (after the Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians) and would soon surpass the Belarussians.
Naumov & Teptsov. Stalin's Secret Pogrom. New Haven, London: Yale Univ. Press, 2001, p. 37

On the eve of the war there were about 3 million Jews living in the Soviet Union. The rapid German offensive physically divided the Jewish community: about 1,300,000 Jews found themselves on occupied territory before they had even had time to react. The remaining 1,700,000 Soviet Jews, who had either been evacuated or had remained on unoccupied territory, fought against the Nazis, with Russians, Ukrainians, Tatars and other ethnic groups of the USSR. …
Jews did not just serve as rank and file soldiers and officers. There were a number of outstanding Jewish military commanders: M. Katukov, Marshal of Armored Troops; Y. Smushkevich, Commander-in-Chief of the Air Force; and General M. Shmelev, Chief of Staff of Long-Range Aviation. In addition there were 92 Jewish generals and 9 army and flotilla commanders. In total, there were 270 Jewish generals and marshals. Korolyov, Anatoly.
Jews were also instrumental in shaping the ideology that would underpin the Soviet role in the war. Initially the Soviet people did not know what to make of the Nazi attack. Firstly, the Soviet Union once considered Germany an enemy but more recently had viewed it as a potential ally against Britain and the U.S. Secondly, the Soviet people, brought up to believe in internationalism, had thought that the German soldiers, i.e. German workers and peasants, would refuse to attack a socialist state and instead would join with the Russians to fight the oppressors, German capitalists.
A Jewish intellectual, Ilya Erenburg,…had traveled extensively and was perhaps the only Jew in the USSR who was aware of the racist motivations for the war. He was a military correspondent in Spain during the Spanish civil war, and his world outlook was informed by this experience. Six International Brigades had fought on the side of the Republicans in that war, and these units had included 6,000 Jewish volunteers.
By the time the Germans attacked, Erenburg was resolutely opposed to fascism. He had all the main national newspapers, Pravda, Izvestia, and Krasnaya Zvezda at his disposal, as well as the national radio stations. He emphatically rejected the internationalist dogma and called on the nation to, "Kill the Germans!"
…Erenburg confronted Nazi with racism head on. A whole volume of his Collection of Essays was to be devoted to his wartime pamphlets and articles. Erenburg became very popular in the embattled Soviet Union. People found his message much more instructive than the theory of internationalism. It was because of Erenburg that Stalin decided to discard the previous national anthem (the Internationale). In 1942, at the height of the war, Stalin announced a competition to compose a new anthem.…

After the war, the question of what role the Jews had played in the defeat of Nazism sparked heated and sometimes acrimonious debate among historians. Some historians were determined to play down the role of the Jews at any cost, while others sought to do the opposite….
Nobel prize winner Alexander Solzhenitsyn tried to rise above the argument in his book about Jews in Russia, 200 Years Together. Although Russian liberals did not agree with everything that he wrote in the book, the part devoted to the war was met with general approval.
“I saw Jews fight courageously at the front. Two fearless anti-tank soldiers deserve special mention: Lieutenant Emmanuil Mazin, who was a friend of mine, and a young soldier called Borya Gammerov. The latter was called up when he was still at student. Both were wounded.”
Solzhenitsyn wrote about fellow Jewish writers who volunteered for the front, such as the poet Boris Slutsky, and the literary critic Lazar Lazarev, who fought at the front for two years until he received injuries to both arms. Dozens of pages are devoted to the participation of the Jews in the common war against Nazism…
On May 4, 1945, three Red Army soldiers, Churakov, Oleinik, and Seroukh, retrieved the charred bodies of Hitler and Eva Braun from a crater by the walls of the Reichschancellory in Berlin. The soldiers laid the corpses out on a soldier’s blanket. Hitler’s two dead dogs (an Alsatian and a puppy) were also laid out. Shortly after, the Fuhrer’s corpse was sent to Buch in the northeastern suburbs of Berlin for identification. Colonel Krayevsky, the Red Army’s chief pathologist, and doctors Anna Marants, Boguslavsky, and Gulkevich carried out the autopsy in the local clinic. The examination was overseen by Faust Shkaravsky, chief forensic expert for the First Belarusian Front.
All these doctors were Jews.
Even in his worst nightmares Hitler could never have imagined such a turn of events.
Korolyov, Anatoly. Soviet Jewish Doctors Dissected Hitler, Novosti, Russian News and Information Agency, 7/5/05.

LENIN UPHOLDS THE RIGHT OF NATIONALITIES TO SECEDE

Lenin further refuted the anti-Bolshevik views of Bukharin and Pyatakov on the national question. They spoke against the inclusion in the program of a clause on the right of nations to self-determination; they were against the equality of nations, claiming that it was a slogan that would hinder the victory of the proletarian revolution and the union of the proletarians of different nationalities. Lenin overthrew these utterly pernicious, imperialist, chauvinist views of Bukharin and Pyatakov.
Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Ed. History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks): Short Course. Moscow: FLPH, 1939, p. 233

Famine of 1932

FAMINE DID NOT OCCUR

For two years farming was dislocated, not, as often claimed, by Moscow’s enforcement of collectivization but by the fact that local people eager to be first at the promised tractors,

organized collective farms three times as fast as the plan called for, setting up large-scale farming without machines even without bookkeepers. In 1932-33 the whole land went hungry; all food everywhere was rigidly rationed. (It has been often called a famine which killed millions of people, but I visited the hungriest parts of the country and while I found a wide-spread suffering, I did not find, either in individual villages or in the total Soviet census, evidence of the serious depopulation which famine implies.)
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 69

As far back as late August, 1933, the New Republic declared:
"… the present harvest is undoubtedly the best in many years–some peasants report a heavier yield of grain than any of their forefathers had known"since 1834. Grain deliveries to the government are proceeding at a very satisfactory rate and the price of bread has fallen sharply in the industrial towns of the Ukraine. In view these facts, the appeal of the Cardinal Archbishop [Innitzer] of Vienna for assistance for Russian famine victims seems to be a political maneuver against the Soviets."
And, contrary to wild stories told by Ukrainian Nationalist exiles about "Russians" eating plentifully while deliberately starving "millions" of Ukrainians to death, the New Republic notes that while bread prices in Ukraine were falling, "bread prices in Moscow have risen."…
It is a matter of some significance that Cardinal Innitzer's allegations of famine-genocide were widely promoted throughout the 1930s, not only by Hitler's chief propagandist Goebbels, but also by American Fascists as well. It will be recalled that Hearst kicked off his famine campaign with a radio broadcast based mainly on material from Cardinal Innitzer's "aid committee." In Organized Anti-Semitism in America, the 1941 book exposing Nazi groups and activities in the pre-war United States, Donald Strong notes that American fascist leader Father Coughlin used Nazi propaganda material extensively. This included Nazi charges of "atrocities by Jew Communists" and verbatim portions of a Goebbels speech referring to Innitzer's "appeal of July 1934, that millions of people were dying of hunger throughout the Soviet Union."
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 49-51

…Sir John Maynard, a former high school… official in the Indian government was a renowned expert on famines and relief measures. On the basis of his experience in Ukraine, he stated that the idea of 3 or 4 million dead "has passed into legend. Any suggestion of a calamity comparable with the famine of 1921-1922 is, in the opinion of the present writer, who traveled through Ukraine and North Caucasus in June and July 1933, unfounded." Even as conservative a scholar as Warren Walsh wrote in defense of Maynard, his "professional competence and personal integrity were beyond reasonable challenge."
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 52

Cold War confrontation, rather than historical truth and understanding, has motivated and characterized the famine-genocide campaign. Elements of fraud, anti-semitism, degenerate Nationalism, fascism, and pseudo- scholarship revealed in this critical examination of certain key evidence presented in the campaign…and historical background of the campaign's promoters underline this conclusion.
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 133

QUESTION: Is it true that during 1932-33 several million people were allowed to starve to death in the Ukraine and North Caucasus because they were politically hostile to the Soviets?
ANSWER: Not true. I visited several places in those regions during that period. There was a serious grain shortage in the 1932 harvest due chiefly to inefficiencies of the organizational period of the new large-scale mechanized farming among peasants unaccustomed to machines. To this was added sabotage by dispossessed kulaks, the leaving of the farms by 11 million workers who went to new industries, the cumulative effect of the world crisis in depressing the value of Soviet farm exports, and a drought in five basic grain regions in 1931. The harvest of 1932 was better than that of 1931 but was not all gathered; on account of overoptimistic promises from rural districts, Moscow discovered the actual situation only in December when a considerable amount of grain was under snow.
Strong, Anna Louise. “Searching Out the Soviets.” New Republic: August 7, 1935, p. 356

Opposing the tendency of many Communists to blame the peasants, Stalin said: “We Communists are to blame”–for not foreseeing and preventing the difficulties. Several organizational measures were at once put into action to meet the immediate emergency and prevent its reoccurrence. Firm pressure on defaulting farms to make good the contracts they had made to sell 1/4 their crop to the state in return for machines the state had given them (the means of production contributed by the state was more than all the peasants’ previous means) was combined with appeals to loyal, efficient farms to increase their deliveries voluntarily. Saboteurs who destroyed grain or buried it in the earth were punished. The resultant grain reserves in state hands were rationed to bring the country through the shortage with a minimum loss of productive efficiency. The whole country went on a decreased diet, which affected most seriously those farms that had failed to harvest their grain. Even these, however, were given state food and seed loans for sowing. Simultaneously, a nationwide campaign was launched to organize the farms efficiently; 20,000 of the country’s best experts in all fields were sent as permanent organizers to the rural districts. The campaign was fully successful and resulted in a 1933 grain crop nearly 10 million tons larger than was ever gathered from the same territory before.

QUESTION: Is there a chance of another famine this year, as Cardinal Innitzer asserts?
ANSWER: Everyone in the Soviet Union to whom I mentioned this question just laughs. Reasons for the laughter are:
Two bumper crops in 1933 and 1934.
A billion bushels of grain in state hands, enough to feed the cities and non-grain farmers for two years.
A grain surplus in farmers’ hands that has sufficed to increase calves 94% and pigs 118 percent in a single year.
The abolition of bread rationing because of surplus in grain.
The abolition of nearly half a billion rubles of peasant debts incurred for equipment during the organizing of collective farms–this as the result of an actual budget surplus in the government.
Tales of continued famine are Nazi propaganda on which to base a future invasion of the Ukraine [which did occur by the way].
Strong, Anna Louise. “Searching Out the Soviets.” New Republic: August 7, 1935, p. 357

DURANTY SEES NO FAMINE IN 1933

Kharkov, September 1933–I have just completed a 200 mile auto trip through the heart of the Ukraine and can say positively that the harvest is splendid and all talk of famine now is ridiculous…. The population, from the babies to the old folks, looks healthy and well nourished.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 318

STALIN'S VIEW OF CAUSE OF UKRAINIAN CROP FAILURES

[Footnote] In Stalin's view, Ukrainian crop failures were caused by enemy resistance and by the poor leadership of Ukrainian officials.
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 230

COLLECTIVE HARVESTS WERE NOT GOOD PRIOR TO 1933

One harvest was not enough to stabilize collectivization. In 1930, it was put over by poorly organized, ill-equipped peasants through force of desire. In the next two years, the difficulties of organization caught up with them. Where to find good managers? Bookkeepers? Men to handle machines? In 1931, the harvest fell off from drought in five basic grain areas. In 1932, the crop was better but poorly gathered. Farm presidents, unwilling to admit failure, claimed they were getting it in. When Moscow awoke to the situation, a large amount of grain lay under the snow.
Causes were many. Fourteen million small farms had been merged into 200,000 big ones, without experienced managers or enough machines. Eleven million workers had left the farms for the new industries. The backwardness of peasants, sabotage by kulaks, stupidities of officials, all played a part. By January 1933 it was clear that the country faced a serious food shortage, two years after it had victoriously "conquered wheat."
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 41

1933 HARVEST WAS THE BEST SINCE 1930 WHICH WAS A RECORD

From one end of the land to the other, there was shortage and hunger–and a general increase in mortality from this. But the hunger was distributed–nowhere was there the panic chaos that is implied by the word "famine."
The conquest of bread was achieved that summer, a victory snatched from a great disaster. The 1933 harvest surpassed that of 1930, which till then had held the record. This time, the new record was made not by a burst of half-organized enthusiasm, but by growing efficiency and permanent organization.
Victory was consolidated the following year by the great fight the collective farmers made against a drought that affected all the southern half of Europe…. In each area where winter wheat failed, scientists determined what second crops were best; these were publicized and the government shot in the seed by fast freight. This nationwide cooperation beat the 1934 drought, securing a total crop for the USSR equal to the all-time high of 1933. Even in the worst regions, most farms came through with food for man and beast with strengthened organization.

Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 44-45

FAMINE WAS NOT CAUSED BY THE COMMUNIST LEADERSHIP

CHUEV: Among writers, some say the famine of 1933 was deliberately organized by Stalin and the whole of your leadership.
MOLOTOV: Enemies of communism say that! They are enemies of communism! People who are not politically aware, who are politically blind.
…If life does not improve, that's not socialism. But even if the life of the people improves year to year over a long period but the foundations of socialism are not strengthened, a crack-up will be inevitable.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 243

This destruction of the productive forces had, of course, disastrous consequences: in 1932, there was a great famine, caused in part by the sabotage and destruction done by the kulaks. But anti-Communists blame Stalin and the `forced collectivization' for the deaths caused by the criminal actions of the kulaks.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 79 [p. 66 on the NET]

In 1931 and 1932, the Soviet Union was in the depth of the crisis, due to socio-economic upheavals, to desperate kulak resistance, to the little support that could be given to peasants in these crucial years of industrial investment, to the slow introduction of machines and to drought.
Charles Bettelheim. L'Economie soviEtique (Paris: ƒditions Recueil Sirey, 1950), p. 82
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 93 [p. 78 on the NET]

Recent evidence has indicated that part of the cause of the famine was an exceptionally low harvest in 1932, much lower than incorrect Soviet methods of calculation had suggested. The documents included here or published elsewhere do not yet support the claim that the famine was deliberately produced by confiscating the harvest, or that it was directed especially against the peasants of the Ukraine.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 401

In view of the importance of grain stocks to understanding the famine, we have searched Russian archives for evidence of Soviet planned and actual grain stocks in the early 1930s. Our main sources were the Politburo protocols, including the ("special files," the highest secrecy level), and the papers of the agricultural collections committee Komzag, of the committee on commodity funds, and of Sovnarkom. The Sovnarkom records include telegrams and correspondence of Kuibyshev, who was head of Gosplan, head of Komzag and the committee on reserves, and one of the deputy chairs of Komzag at that time. We have not obtained access to the Politburo working papers in the Presidential Archive, to the files of the committee on reserves or to the relevant files in military archives. But we have found enough information to be confident that this very a high figure for grain stocks is wrong

and that Stalin did not have under his control huge amounts of grain, which could easily have been used to eliminate the famine.
Stalin, Grain Stocks and the Famine of 1932-1933 by R. W. Davies, M. B. Tauger, S.G. Wheatcroft.Slavic Review, Volume 54, Issue 3 (Autumn, 1995), pp. 642-657.

This is in response to Ms. Chernihivaka's note about the book of German letters and the reference to what she termed the "Ukrainian Famine" of the early 1930s.
I would just like to point out that I and a number of other scholars have shown conclusively that the famine of 1931-1933 was by no means limited to Ukraine, was not a "man-made" or artificial famine in the sense that she and other devotees of the Ukrainian famine argument assert, and was not a genocide in any conventional sense of the term. We have likewise shown that Mr. Conquest's book on the famine is replete with errors and inconsistencies and does not deserve to be considered a classic, but rather another expression of the Cold War.
I would recommend to Ms. Chernihivaka the following publications regarding the 1931-1933 famine and some other famines as well. I will begin with my own because I believe that these most directly relate to her question. "The 1932 Harvest and the Soviet Famine of 1932-1933," and the "Natural Disaster and Human Actions in the Soviet Famine of 1931-1933." These two articles show that the famine resulted directly from a famine harvest, a harvest that was much smaller than officially acknowledged, that this small harvest was in turn, the result of a complex of natural disasters that [with one small exception] no previous scholars have ever discussed or even mentioned. The footnotes in the Carl Beck paper contain extensive citations from primary sources as well as Western and Soviet secondary sources, among others by Penner, Wheatcroft and Davies that further substantiate these points, and I urge interested readers to examine these works as well.
Ukrainian Famine by Mark Tauger. E-mail sent on April 16, 2002

I am not a specialist on the Ukrainian famine but I am familiar with the recent research by several scholars on the matter, and think rather a lot of the deep and broad research that Mark Tauger has conducted over many years.
That familiarity leads me to believe that there are no simple answers to this. A "man-made" famine is not the same as a deliberate or "terror-famine". A famine originally caused by crop failure and aggravated by poor policies is "man aggravated" but only partially "man-made". Why in this field do we always insist on absolutes, especially categorical, binary and polemical ones? True/false. Good/evil. Crop failure/Man made.
Many questions have ambiguous answers.

1. Why was the Ukraine sealed off by the Soviet authorities?

Not necessarily to punish Ukrainians. It was also done to prevent starving people from flocking into non-famine areas, putting pressure on scarce food supplies there, and thereby turning a regional disaster into a universal one. This was also the original reason for the internal passport system, which was adopted in the first instance to prevent the movement of hungry and desperate people and, with them, the spread of famine.

2. Why were foreign journalists, even Stalin apologists like Duranty, refused access to the famine areas?

For the same reason that US journalists are no longer allowed into US combat zones (Gulf War, Afghanistan) since Vietnam. No regime is anxious to take the chance on bad press if they can control the situation otherwise.

3. Why was aid from other countries refused?

Obviously to deny the “imperialists” a chance to trumpet the failure of socialism. Certainly politics triumphed over humanitarianism. Moreover, in the growing paranoia of the times (and based on experience in the Civil War) the regime believed that spies came along with relief administration.

4. Why do I read and hear stories of families who tried to take supplies from other regions to help their extended families through the period having all foodstuffs confiscated as they crossed back into the famine regions?

The regime believed, reasonably I think, that speculators were trying to take advantage of the disaster by buying up food in non-famine (but nevertheless food-short) regions, moving it to Ukraine, and reselling it at a higher price. In true Bolshevik fashion, there was no nuanced approach to this, no distinguishing between families and speculators, and everybody was stopped. As with point 1 above, regimes facing famine typically try to contain the disaster geographically. This is not the same as intending to punish the victims.

5. If it was a harvest failure, why was the burden of that failure not simply shared across the Soviet Union?

It was. No region had a lot of food in 1932-33. Food was short and expensive everywhere. Everybody was hungry.

With the above suggestions, I do not mean to make excuses or apologies for the Stalinists. Their conduct in this was erratic, incompetent, and cruel and millions of people suffered unimaginably and died as a result. But it is too simple to explain everything with a “Bolsheviks were just evil people” explanation more suitable to children than scholars. It was more complex than that. Although the situation was aggravated in some ways by Bolshevik mistakes, their attempts to contain the famine, once it started, were not entirely stupid, nor were they necessarily gratuitously cruel. The Stalinists did, by the way, eventually cut grain exports and did, by the way, send food relief to Ukraine and other areas. It was too little too late, but there is no evidence (aside from constantly repeated assertions by some writers) that this was a deliberately inflicted “terror-famine.”

6. To deny the Jewish genocide quite rightly brings opprobrium. Surely to deny the terror famine of 1932-33 ought to provoke the same response.

This is a position that I personally find grotesque, insulting and at least shallow. Nobody is denying the famine or the huge scale of suffering, (as holocaust-deniers do), least of all Tauger and other researchers who have spent much of their careers trying to bring this tragedy to light and give us a factual account of it. Admittedly, what he and other scholars do is different from the work of journalists and polemicists who indiscriminately collect horror

stories and layer them between repetitive statements about evil, piling it all up and calling it history. A factual, careful account of horror in no way makes it less horrible.
Ukrainian Famine by J. Arch Getty, E-mail sent on May 7, 2002

“There is no evidence, it [1932-33 famine] was intentionally directed against Ukrainians,” said Alexander Dallin of Stanford, the father of modern Sovietology. “That would be totally out of keeping with what we know–it makes no sense.”

“I absolutely reject it,” said Lynne Viola of SUNY– Binghamton, the first US historian to examine Moscow’s Central State archive on collectivization. “Why in god’s name, would this paranoid government consciously produce a famine when they were terrified of war [with Germany]?”

“He’s [Conquest] terrible at doing research,” said veteran Sovietologist Roberta Manning of Boston College. “He misuses sources, he twists everything.”

Which leaves us with a puzzle: Wouldn’t one or two or 3.5 million famine-related deaths be enough to make an anti-Stalinist argument? Why seize a wildly inflated figure that can’t possibly be supported? The answer tells much about the Ukrainian nationalist cause, and about those who abet it.
“They’re always looking to come up with a number bigger than 6 million,” observed Eli Rosenbaum, general counsel for the World Jewish Congress. “It makes the reader think: ‘My God, it’s worse than the Holocaust’.”
IN SEARCH OF A SOVIET HOLOCAUST [A 55 Year Old Famine Feeds the Right] by Jeff Coplon. Village Voice, New York City, January 12, 1988

The severity and geographical extent of the famine, the sharp decline in exports in 1932-1933, seed requirements, and the chaos in the Soviet Union in these years, all lead to the conclusion that even a complete cessation of exports would not have been enough to prevent famine. This situation makes it difficult to accept the interpretation of the famine as the result of the 1932 grain procurements and as a conscious act of genocide. The harvest of 1932 essentially made a famine inevitable.
…The data presented here provide a more precise measure of the consequences of collectivization and forced industrialization than has previously been available; if anything, these data show that the effects of those policies were worse than has been assumed. They also, however, indicate that the famine was real, the result of failure of economic policy, of the “revolution from above,” rather than of a “successful” nationality policy against the Ukrainians or other ethnic groups.
Tauger, Mark. “The 1932 Harvest and the Famine of 1933,” Slavic Review, Volume 50, Issue 1 (Spring, 1991), 70-89.

Conquest replies,
Perhaps I might add that my own analyses and descriptions of the terror-famine first appeared in the USSR in Moscow in Russian journals such as Voprosy Istorii and Novyi Mir, and that the long chapter printed in the latter was specifically about the famine in Ukraine and hence relied importantly on Ukrainian sources.

Tauger replies,

Mr. Conquest does not deal with these arguments. He most nearly approaches in his assertion that in Ukraine and certain other areas “the entire crop was removed.” Since the regime procured 4.7 million tons of grain from Ukraine in 1932, much less than in any previous or subsequent year in the 1930’s, this would imply that the harvest in Ukraine was only on that order of magnitude or even less than my low estimate! Obviously this could not have been the case or the death toll in Ukraine would have been not four million or five million but more than 20 million because the entire rural population would have been left without grain….
I have yet to see any actual central directive ordering a blockade of Ukraine or the confiscation of food at the border. The sources available are still too incomplete to reach any conclusion about this.
Tauger, Mark & Robert Conquest. Slavic Review, Volume 51, Issue 1 (Spring, 1992), pp. 192-194.

Tauger replies further,
Robert Conquest’s second reply to my article does not settle in his favor the controversy between us over the causes of the 1933 famine. On his initial points, I noted that the famine was worse in Ukraine and Kuban than elsewhere, in great part because those regions’ harvests were much smaller than previously known. I rejected his evidence not because it was not “official” but because my research showed that it was incorrect.
Conquest cites the Stalin decree of January 1933 in an attempt to validate Ukrainian memoir accounts, to discredit the archival sources I cited and to prove that the Soviet leadership focused the famine on Ukraine and Kuban. The decree’s sanctions, however, do not match memoir accounts, none of which described peasants being returned to their villages by OGPU forces. The experiences described in those accounts instead reflect enforcement of a September 1932 secret OGPU directive ordering confiscations of grain and flour to stop illegal trade. Since this was applied throughout the country, the Ukrainian memoir accounts reflect general policy and not a focus on the Ukraine.
Several new studies confirm my point that hundreds of thousands of peasants fled famine not only in Ukraine and Kuban, but also in Siberia, the Urals, the Volga basin, and elsewhere in 1932-1933. Regional authorities tried to stop them and in November 1932 the Politburo began to prepare the passport system that soon imposed constraints on mobility nationwide. The January decree was thus one of several measures taken at this time to control labor mobility, in this case to retain labor in the grain regions lest the 1933 harvest be even worse. Its reference to northern regions suggests that it may even have been used to send peasants from those areas south to provide labor. Neither the decree itself nor the scale of its enforcement are sufficient to prove that the famine was artificially imposed on Ukraine.
…Ukrainian eyewitness accounts, on the other hand, are misleading because very few peasants from other regions had the opportunity to escape from the USSR after World War II. The Russian historian Kondrashin interviewed 617 famine survivors in the Volga region and explicitly refuted Conquest’s argument regarding the famine’s nationality focus. According to these eyewitnesses, the famine was most severe in wheat and rye regions, in other words, in part a result of the small harvest.
…Both Russian and western scholars such as Kondrashin…and Alec Nove…now acknowledge that the 1932 harvest was much smaller than assumed and was an important factor in the famine.
Tauger, Mark. Slavic Review, Volume 53, Issue 1 (Spring, 1994), pp. 318-320.

FIGURES ON FAMINE DEATHS ARE ABSURD AND FAR TOO HIGH

CHUEV: But nearly 12 million perished of hunger in 1933….
MOLOTOV: The figures have not been substantiated.
CHUEV: Not substantiated?
MOLOTOV: No, no, not at all. In those years I was out in the country on grain procurement trips. Those things couldn't have just escaped me. They simply couldn't. I twice traveled to the Ukraine. I visited Sychevo in the Urals and some places in Siberia. Of course I saw nothing of the kind there. Those allegations are absurd! Absurd! True, I did not have occasion to visit the Volga region….
No, these figures are an exaggeration, though such deaths had been reported of course in some places.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 243

What can one say about Conquest's affirmation of 6,500,000 `massacred' kulaks during the different phases of the collectivization? Only part of the 63,000 first category counter-revolutionaries were executed. The number of dead during deportations, largely due to famine and epidemics, was approximately 100,000. Between 1932 and 1940, we can estimate that 200,000 kulaks died in the colonies of natural causes. The executions and these deaths took place during the greatest class struggle that the Russian countryside ever saw, a struggle that radically transformed a backward and primitive countryside. In this giant upheaval, 120 million peasants were pulled out of the Middle Ages, of illiteracy and obscurantism. It was the reactionary forces, who wanted to maintain exploitation and degrading and inhuman work and living conditions, who received the blows. Repressing the bourgeoisie and the reactionaries was absolutely necessary for collectivization to take place: only collective labor made socialist mechanization possible, thereby allowing the peasant masses to lead a free, proud and educated life.
Through their hatred of socialism, Western intellectuals spread Conquest's absurd lies about 6,500,000 `exterminated' kulaks. They took up the defence of bourgeois democracy, of imperialist democracy.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 98 [p. 82 on the NET]

Lies about the collectivization have always been, for the bourgeoisie, powerful weapons in the psychological war against the Soviet Union.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 98 [p. 85 on the NET]

The borders of the Ukraine were not even the same in 1926 and 1939. The Kuban Cossaks, between 2 and 3 million people, were registered as Ukrainian in 1926, but were reclassified as Russian at the end of the twenties. This new classification explains by itself 25 to 40 per cent of the `victims of the famine-genocide' calculated by Dushnyck–Mace.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 107 [p. 91 on the NET]

(Alec Nove)

Additionally, the figures on famine-related deaths cannot be precise, for “definitional” reasons…. Ukrainian statistics show a very large decline in births in 1933-34, which could be ascribed to a sharp rise in abortions and also to the non-reporting of births of those who died in infancy.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 269

Concerning the scale of the famine in 1932/33, we now have much better information on its chronology and regional coverage amongst the civilian registered population. The level of excess mortality registered by the civilian population was in the order of 3 to 4 million… which is still much lower than the figures claimed by Conquest and Rosefielde and Medvedev.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 290

The evidence presented to establish a case for deliberate genocide against Ukrainians during 1932-33, remains highly partisan, often deceitful, contradictory, and consequently highly suspect. The materials commonly used can almost invariably be traced to right-wing sources, anti-Communist “experts,” journalists or publications, as well as the highly partisan Ukrainian Nationalist political organizations. An important role in the thesis of genocide is assumed by the number of famine deaths–obviously it is difficult to allege genocide unless deaths are in the multi-millions. Here, the methodology of the famine-genocide theorists can at best be described as eclectic, unscientific; and the results, as politically manipulated guesstimates.
A “landmark study” in the numbers game is the article “The Soviet Famine of 1932-1934,” by Dana Dalrymple, published in Soviet Studies, January 1964. According to historian Daniel Stone, Dalrymple’s methodology consists of averaging “guesses by 20 Western journalists who visited the Soviet Union at the time, or spoke to Soviet emigres as much as two decades later. He averages the 20 accounts which range from a low of one million deaths (New York Herald Tribune, 1933) to a high of 10 million deaths (New York World Telegram, 1933.”
As Professor Stone of the University of Winnipeg suggests, Dalrymple’s method as no scientific validity; his “method” substitutes the art of newspaper clipping for the science of objective evidence gathering. This becomes apparent when one discovers the totally unacceptable use of fraudulent material built into the attempt to develop sensational mortality figures for the famine.
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 45

While it is not possible to establish an exact number of casualties, we have seen that the guesstimates of famine-genocide writers have given a new meaning to the word hyperbole. Their claims have been shown to be extreme exaggerations fabricated to strengthen their political allegations of genocide.
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 74

The scope of the hardships is chauvinistically restricted, distorted, and politically manipulated. Other nationalities who suffered–Russians, Turkmen, Kazaks, Caucasus groups– are usually ignored, or if mentioned at all are done so almost reluctantly in passing.
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 99

Dr. Hans Blumenfeld, writing in response to Ukrainian Nationalist allegations of Ukrainian genocide, draws on personal experience in describing the people who came to town in search of food:
“They came not only from the Ukraine but in equal numbers from the Russian areas to our east. This disproves the “fact” of anti-Ukrainian genocide parallel to Hitler’s anti-semitic Holocaust. To anyone familiar with the Soviet Union’s desperate manpower shortage in those years, the notion that its leaders would deliberately reduce that scarce resource is absurd…. Up to the 1950s the most frequently quoted figure was 2 million [victims]. Only after it had been established that Hitler’s holocaust had claimed 6 million [Jewish] victims, did anti-Soviet propaganda feel it necessary to top that figure by substituting the fantastic figure of 7 to 10 million….”
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 100

Had the 1941 population of Soviet Ukraine consisted of the remnants and survivors of a mass multi-million holocaust of a few years previous, or if they had perceived the 1932-1933 famine as genocide, deliberately aimed at Ukrainians, then doubtless fascism would have met a far different reception; Soviet Ukrainians would have been as reluctant to defend the USSR as Jewish survivors would have been to defend Nazi Germany.
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 102

STALIN HAD TO EXPROPRIATE GRAIN IN THE WEST TO PREPARE FOR WAR WITH JAPAN

What happened was tragic for the Russian countryside. Orders were given in March, at the beginning of the spring sowing period in the Ukraine and North Caucasus and Lower Volga, that 2 million tons of grain must be collected within 30 days because the Army had to have it. It had to be collected, without argument, on pain of death. The orders about gasoline were hardly less peremptory. Here I don’t know the figures, but so many thousand tons of gasoline must be given to the Army. At a time when the collective farms were relying upon tractors to plow their fields.
That was the dreadful truth of the so-called “man-made famine,” of Russia’s “iron age,” when Stalin was accused of causing the deaths of four or 5 million peasants to gratify his own brutal determination that they should be socialized… or else. What a misconception! Compare it with the truth, that Japan was poised to strike and the Red Army must have reserves of food and gasoline.
… the fact remained that not only kulaks or recalcitrant peasants or middle peasants or doubtful peasants, but the collective farms themselves, were stripped of their grain for food, stripped of their grain for seed, at the season when they needed it most. The quota had to be reached, that was the Kremlin’s order. It was reached, but the bins were scraped too clean. Now indeed the Russian peasants, kulaks, and collectives, were engulfed in common woe. Their draft animals were dead, killed in an earlier phase of the struggle, and there was no gas for the tractors, and their last reserves of food and seed for the spring had been torn from them by the power of the Kremlin, which itself was driven by compulsion, that is by fear of Japan….
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 192

Their [peasants] living standards were so reduced that they fell easy prey to the malnutrition diseases–typhus, cholera, and scurvy, always endemic in Russia–and infected the urban populations….
Russia was wasted with misery, but the Red Army had restored its food reserves and its reserves of gasoline, and cloth and leather for uniforms and boots. And Japan did not attack. In August, 1932, the completion of the Dnieper Dam was celebrated in a way that echoed around the world. And Japan did not attack. Millions of Russian acres were deserted and untilled; millions of Russian peasants were begging for bread or dying. But Japan did not attack.
…The shortages of food and commodities in Russia were attributed, as Stalin had intended, to the tension of the Five-Year Plan, and all that Japanese spies could learn was that the Red Army awaited their attack without anxiety. Their spearhead, aimed at Outer Mongolia and Lake Baikal, were shifted, and her troops moved southwards into the Chinese province of Jehol, which they conquered easily and added to ” Manchukuo.” Stalin had won his game against terrific odds, but Russia had paid in lives as heavily as for war.
In the light of this and other subsequent knowledge, it is interesting for me to read my own dispatches from Moscow in the winter of 1932-33. I seem to have known what was going on, without in the least knowing why, that is without perceiving that Japan was the real key to the Soviet problem at that time, and that the first genuine improvement in the agrarian situation coincided almost to a day with the Japanese southward drive against Jehol.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 193

It meant, to say it succinctly, that Stalin had won his bluff: Japan moved south, not north, and Russia could dare to use its best men….
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 195

WHAT FAMINE THERE WAS IN THE EARLY 30’S WAS CAUSED BY THE KULAKS

There was famine in the Ukraine in 1932-1933. But it was provoked mainly by the struggle to the bitter end that the Ukrainian far-right was leading against socialism and the collectivization of agriculture.
During the thirties, the far-right, linked with the Hitlerites, had already fully exploited the propaganda theme of `deliberately provoked famine to exterminate the Ukrainian people’. But after the Second World War, this propaganda was `adjusted’ with the main goal of covering up the barbaric crimes committed by German and Ukrainian Nazis, to protect fascism and to mobilise Western forces against Communism.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 113 [p. 96 on the NET]

The peasants passive resistance, the destruction of livestock, the complete disorganization of work in the kolkhozes, and the general ruin caused by continued dekulakization and deportations all lead in 1932-33 to a famine that surpassed even the famine of 1921-22 in its geographical extent and the number of its victims.
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 238

Was there or was there not a famine in the USSR in the years 1931 and 1932?

Those who think this a simple question to answer will probably already have made up their minds, in accordance with nearly all the statements by persons hostile to Soviet Communism, that there was, of course, a famine in the USSR; and they do not hesitate to state the mortality that it caused, in precise figures–unknown to any statistician–varying from three to six and even to 10 million deaths. On the other hand, a retired high official of the Government of India, speaking Russian, and well acquainted with czarist Russia, who had himself administered famine districts in India, and who visited in 1932 some of the localities in the USSR in which conditions were reported to be among the worst, informed the present writers at the time that he had found no evidence of there being or having been anything like what Indian officials would describe as a famine.

Footnote: Skepticism as to statistics of total deaths from starvation, in a territory extending to 1/6 of the Earth's landmass, would anyhow be justified. But as to the USSR there seems no limit to the wildness of exaggeration. We quote the following interesting case related by Mr. Sherwood Eddy, an experienced American traveler in Russia: "Our party, consisting of about 20 persons, while passing through the villages heard rumors of the village of Gavrilovka, where all the men but one were said to have died of starvation. We went at once to investigate and track down this rumor. We divided into four parties, with four interpreters of our own choosing, and visited simultaneously the registry office of births and deaths, the village priest, the local soviet, the judge, the schoolmaster and every individual peasant we met. We found that out of 1100 families three individuals had died of typhus. They had immediately closed the school and the church, inoculated the entire population and stamped out the epidemic without developing another case. We could not discover a single death from hunger or starvation, though many had felt the bitter pinch of want. It was another instance of the ease with which wild rumors spread concerning Russia."

Without expecting to convince the prejudiced, we give, for what it may be deemed worth, the conclusion to which our visits in 1932 and 1934, and subsequent examination of the available evidence, now lead us. That in each of the years 1931 and 1932 there was a partial failure of crops in various parts of the huge area of the USSR is undoubtedly true. That is true also of British India and of the United States. It has been true also of the USSR, and of every other country at all comparable in size, in each successive year of the present century. In countries of such vast extent, having every kind of climate, there is always a partial failure of crops somewhere. How extensive and how serious was this partial failure of crops in the USSR of 1931 and 1932 it is impossible to ascertain with any assurance. On the other hand, it has been asserted, by people who have seldom had any opportunity of going to the suffering districts, that throughout huge provinces there ensued a total absence of foodstuffs, so that (as in 1891 and 1921) literally several millions of people died of starvation. On the other hand, soviet officials on the spot, in one district after another, informed the present writers that, whilst there was shortage and hunger, there was, at no time, a total lack of bread, though its quality was impaired by using other ingredients than wheaten flower; and that any increase in the death-rate, due to diseases accompanying defective nutrition, occurred only in a relatively small number of villages. What may carry more weight than this official testimony was that of various resident British and American journalists, who traveled during 1933 and 1934 through the districts reputed to have been the worst sufferers, and who declared to the present writers that they had found no reason to suppose that the trouble had been more serious than was officially represented. Our own impression, after considering all the available evidence, is that the partial failure of crops certainly extended to only a fraction of the USSR; possibly to no more, than 1/10 of the geographical area. We think it plain that this partial failure was not in itself sufficiently serious to cause actual

starvation, except possibly, in the worst districts, relatively small in extent. Any estimate of the total number of deaths in excess of the normal average, based on a total population supposed to have been subjected to famine conditions of 60 millions, which would mean half the entire rural population between the Baltic and the Pacific (as some have rashly asserted), or even 1/10 of such a population, appears to us to be fantastically excessive. On the other hand, it seems to be proved that a considerable number of peasant households, both in the spring of 1932 and in that of 1933, found themselves unprovided with a sufficient store of cereal food, and specially short of fats. To these cases we shall return. But we are at once reminded that in countries like India and the USSR, in China, and even in the United States, in which there is no ubiquitous system of poor relief, a certain number of people–among these huge populations even many thousands–die each year of starvation, or of the diseases endemic under these conditions; and that whenever there is even a partial failure of crops this number will certainly be considerably increased. It cannot be supposed to have been otherwise in parts of the southern Ukraine, the Kuban district and Daghestan in the winters of 1931 and 1932.

But before we are warranted in describing this scarcity of food in particular households of particular districts as a “famine,” we must inquire how the scarcity came to exist. We notice among the evidence the fact that the scarcity was “patchy.” In one and the same locality, under weather conditions apparently similar if not identical, there are collective farms which have in these years reaped harvests of more than average excellence, whilst others, adjoining them on the north or on the south, have experienced conditions of distress, and may sometimes have known actual starvation. This is not to deny that there were whole districts in which drought or cold seriously reduced the yield. But there are clearly other cases, how many we cannot pretend to estimate, in which the harvest failures were caused, not by something in the sky, but by something in the collective farm itself. And we are soon put on the track of discovery. As we have already mentioned, we find a leading personage in the direction of the Ukrainian revolt actually claiming that “the opposition of the Ukrainian population caused the failure of the green-storing plan of 1931, and still more so, that of 1932.” He boasts of the success of the “passive resistance which aimed at a systematic frustration of the Bolshevik plans for the sowing and gathering of the harvest.” He tells us plainly that, owing to the efforts of himself and his friends, “whole tracks were left unsown,” and “in addition, when the crop was being gathered last year [1932], it happened that, in many areas, especially in the south, 20, 40 and even 50% was left in the fields, and was either not collected at all or was ruined in the threshing.”

So far as the Ukraine is concerned, it is clearly not Heaven which is principally to blame for the failure of crops, but the misguided members of many of the collective farms. What sort of “famine” is it that is due neither to the drought nor the rain, heat nor cold, rust nor fly, weeds nor locusts; but to a refusal of the agriculturists to sow (“whole tracks were left unsown”); and to gather up the wheat when it was cut (“even 50% was left in the fields”)?

Footnote: [“Ukrainia under Bolshevik Rule” by Isaac Mazepa, in Slavonic Review, January 3, 1934, pages 342-343.] One of the Ukrainian nationalists who was brought to trial is stated to have confessed to having received explicit instructions from the leaders of the movement abroad to the effect that “it is essential that, in spite of the good harvest (of 1930), the position of the peasantry should become worse. For this purpose it is necessary to persuade the members of the kolkhosi to harvest the grain before it has become ripe; to agitate among the kolkhosi members and to persuade them that, however hard they may work, their grain will be taken away from them by the State on one pretext or another; and to sabotage the proper calculation of the labor days put into harvesting by the members of the kolkhosi so

that they may receive less than they are entitled to by their work" (Speech by Postyshev, secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party, to plenum of the Central Committee, 1933).
Footnote: It can be definitely denied that the serious shortage of harvested grain in parts of southern Ukraine was due to climatic conditions. "In a number of southern regions, from 30 to 40% of the crop remained on the fields. This was not the result of the drought which was so severe in certain parts of Siberia, the Urals, in the Middle and Lower Volga regions that it reduced there the expected crops by about 50%. No act of God was involved in the Ukraine. The difficulties experienced in the sowing, harvesting, and grain collection campaign of 1931 were man-made" ("Collectivization of Agriculture in the Soviet Union," by W. Ladejinsky, Political Science Quarterly, New York, June 1934, page 222).
The other district in which famine conditions are most persistently reported is that of Kuban, in the surrounding areas, chiefly inhabited by the Don Cossacks, who, as it is not irrelevant to remember, were the first to take up arms against the Bolshevik Government in 1918, and so begin the calamitous civil war. These Don Cossacks, as we have mentioned, had enjoyed special privileges under the tsars, the loss of which under the new regime has, even today, not been forgiven. Here there is evidence that whole groups of peasants, under hostile influences, got into such a state of apathy and despair, on being pressed into a new system of cooperative life which they could not understand and about which they heard all sorts of evil, that they ceased to care whether their fields were tilled or not, or what would happen to them in the winter if they produced no crop at all. Whatever the reason, there were, it seems, in the Kuban, as in the Ukraine, whole villages that sullenly abstained from sowing or harvesting, usually not completely, but on all but a minute fraction of their fields, so that, when the year ended, they had no stock of seed, and in many cases actually no grain on which to live. There are many other instances in which individual peasants made a practice, out of spite, of surreptitiously "barbering" the ripening wheat; that is, rubbing out the grain from the ear, or even cutting off the whole ear, and carrying off for individual hoarding this shameless theft of community property.
Unfortunately it was not only in such notoriously disaffected areas as the Ukraine and Kuban that these peculiar "failures of crops" occurred.
To any generally successful cultivation, he [Kaganovich] declared, "the anti-soviet elements of the village are offering fierce opposition. Economically ruined, but not yet having lost their influence entirely, the kulaks, former white officers, former priests, their sons, former ruling landlords and sugar-mill owners, former Cossacks and other anti-soviet elements of the bourgeois-nationalist and also of the social-revolutionary and Petlura-supporting intelligentsia settled in the villages, are trying in every way to corrupt the collective farms, are trying to foil the measures of the Party and the Government in the realm of farming, and for these ends are making use of the backwardness of part of the collective farm members against the interests of the socialized collective farm, against the interests of the collective farm peasantry.
Penetrating into collective farms as accountants, managers, warehouse keepers, brigadiers and so on, and frequently as leading workers on the boards of collective farms, the anti-soviet elements strive to organize sabotage, spoil machines, sow without the proper measures, steal collective farm goods, undermine labor discipline, organize the thieving of seed and secret granaries, sabotage grain collections–and sometimes they succeed in disorganizing kolkhosi.
However much we may discount such highly colored denunciations, we cannot avoid noticing how exactly the statements as to sabotage of the harvest, made on the one hand by the Soviet Government, and on the other by the nationalist leaders of the Ukrainian

recalcitrants, corroborate each other. To quote again the Ukrainian leader, it was “the opposition of the Ukrainian population” that “caused the failure of the grain-storing plan of 1931, and still more so, that of 1932.” What on one side is made a matter for boasting is, on the other side, a ground for denunciation. Our own inference is merely that, whilst both sides probably exaggerate, the sabotage referred to actually took place, to a greater or less extent, in various parts of the USSR, in which collective farms had been established under pressure. The partial failure of the crops due to climatic conditions, which is to be annually expected in one locality or another, was thus aggravated, to a degree that we find no means of estimating, and rendered far more extensive in its area, not only by “barbering” the growing wheat, and stealing from the common stock, but also by deliberate failure to sow, failure to weed, failure to thresh, and failure to warehouse even all the grain that was threshed. But that is not what it is usually called a famine.

What the Soviet Government was faced with, from 1929 onward, was, in fact, not a famine but a widespread general strike of the peasantry, in resistance to the policy of collectivization, fomented and encouraged by the disloyal elements of the population, not without incitement from the exiles at Paris and Prague. Beginning with the calamitous slaughter of live-stock in many areas in 1929-1930, the recalcitrant peasants defeated, during the years 1931 and 1932, all the efforts of the Soviet Government to get the land adequately cultivated. It was in this way, much more than by the partial failure of the crops due to drought or cold, that was produced in an uncounted host of villages in many parts of the USSR a state of things in the winter of 1931-1932, and again in that of 1932-1933, in which many of the peasants found themselves with inadequate supplies of food. But this did not always lead to starvation. In innumerable cases, in which there was no actual lack of rubles, notably in the Ukraine, the men journeyed off to the nearest big market, and (as there was no deficiency in the country as a whole) returned after many days with the requisite sacks of flour. In other cases, especially among the independent peasantry, the destitute family itself moved away to the cities, in search of work at wages, leaving its rude dwelling empty and desolate, to be quoted by some incautious observer as proof of death by starvation. In an unknown number of other cases–as it seems, to be counted by the hundred thousand–the families were forcibly taken from the holding which they had failed to cultivate, and removed to distant places where they could be provided with work by which they could earn their substance.

The Soviet Government has been severely blamed for these deportations, which inevitably caused great hardships. The irresponsible criticism loses, however, much of its force by the inaccuracy with which the case is stated. It is, for instance, almost invariably taken for granted that the Soviet Government heartlessly refused to afford any relief to the starving districts. Very little investigation shows that relief was repeatedly afforded where there was reason to suppose that the shortage was not due to sabotage or deliberate failure to cultivate. There were, to begin with, extensive remissions of payments in-kind due to the government. But there was also a whole series of transfers of grain from the government stocks to villages found to be destitute, sometimes actually for consumption, and in other cases to replace the seed funds which had been used for food.

Footnote: Thus: “On February 17, 1932, almost six months before the harvesting of the new crop the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR and the Central Committee of the Communist Party, directed that the collective farms in the eastern part of the country, which had suffered from the drought, be loaned over 6 million quintals of grain for the establishment of both seed and food funds.”

("Collectivization of Agriculture in the Soviet Union," by W. Ladejinsky, Political Science Quarterly, New York, June 1934, page 229).
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, p. 199-205

UKRAINIAN PARTY ORDERS CAUSES OF FAMINE BE EXPOSED AND PEOPLE BE HELPED

[Supplement to minutes of the Ukrainian Party Kiev bureau, Feb. 22, 1933, instructing that the famine be alleviated and that "all who have become completely disabled because of emaciation must be put back on their feet" by March 5]

… 10. In view of the continued attempts by our enemies to use these facts against the creation of collective farms, the Raion Party Committees are to conduct systematic clarification work bringing to light the real causes of the existing famine (abuses in the collective farms, laziness, decline in labor discipline, etc.).
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 418

FAMINE LIES BEGAN WITH HEARST AGENT WALKER

In the fall of 1934, an American using the name Thomas Walker entered the Soviet Union. After tarrying less than a week in Moscow, he spent the remainder of his 13-day journey in transit to the Manchurian border, at which point he left the USSR never to return. This seemingly uneventful journey was the pretext for one of the greatest frauds ever perpetrated in the history of 20th century journalism.
Some four months later, on Feb. 18, 1935, a series of articles began in the Hearst press by Thomas Walker, "noted journalist, traveller and student of Russian affairs who has spent several years touring the Union of Soviet Russia." The articles, appearing in the Chicago American and the New York Evening Journal for example, described in hair-raising prose a mammoth famine in the Ukraine which, it was alleged, had claimed "6 million" lives the previous year. Accompanying the stories were photographs portraying the devastation of the famine, for which it was claimed Walker had smuggled in a camera under the "most adverse and dangerous possible circumstances."
In themselves, Walker's stories in the Hearst press were not particularly outstanding examples of fraud concerning the Soviet Union. Nor were they the greatest masterpieces of yellow journalism ever produced by the right-wing corporate press. Lies and distortions had been written about the Soviet Union since the days of the October Revolution in 1917. The anti-Soviet press campaigns heated up in the late 20s and '30s, directed by those, like Hearst, who wanted to keep the USSR out of the League of Nations and isolated in all respects.
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 5

However, the Walker famine photographs are truly remarkable in that, having been exposed as utter hoaxes over fifty years ago, they continue to be used by Ukrainian nationalists and university propaganda institutes as evidence of alleged genocide. The extent of Walker's

fraud can only be measured by the magnitude and longevity of the lie they have been used to portray.

Horror stories about Russia were common in the Western press, particularly among papers and journalist of conservative or fascist orientation. For example, The London Daily Telegraph of November 28, 1930, printed an interview with a Frank Woodhead who had “just returned from Russia after a visit lasting seven months.” Woodhead reported witnessing bloody massacres that November, a slaughter which left “rows of ghastly corpses.”

Louis Fisher, an American writer for the New Republic and The Nation, who was in Moscow at the time of the alleged atrocities, discovered that not only had such events never occurred, but that Woodhead had left the country almost 8 months before the scenes he claimed to have witnessed. Fisher challenged Woodhead and the London Daily Telegraph on the matter; both responded with embarrassed silence.

When Thomas Walker’s articles appeared in the Hearst press, Fisher became suspicious–he had never heard of Walker and could find no one who had. The results of his investigation were published in the March 13, 1935 issue of The Nation:

“Mr. Walker, we are informed, ‘entered Russia last spring.’ that is the spring of 1934. He saw famine. He photographed its victims. He got heartrending, first-hand accounts of hunger’s ravages. Now famine in Russia is ‘hot’ news. Why did Mr. Hearst keep these sensational articles for ten months before printing them? My suspicions grew deeper….

I felt more and more sure that he was just another Woodhead, another absentee journalist. And so I consulted Soviet authorities who had official information from Moscow. Thomas Walker was in the Soviet Union once. He received a transit visa from the Soviet Consul in London on Sept. 29, 1934. He entered the USSR from Poland by train on October 12, 1934, (not the spring of 1934 as he says). He was in Moscow on the 13th. He remained in Moscow from Saturday, the 13th, to Thursday, the 18th, and then boarded a trans-Siberian train which brought him to the Soviet-Manchurian border on Oct. 25, 1934, his last day on Soviet territory. His train did not pass within several hundred miles of the black soil and Ukrainian districts which he ‘toured’ and ‘saw’ and ‘walked over’ and ‘photographed.’ It would have been physically impossible for Mr. Walker, in the five days between Oct. 13 and Oct. 18, to cover one-third of the points he ‘describes’ from personal experience. My hypothesis is that he stayed long enough in Moscow to gather from embittered foreigners the Ukrainian ‘local color’ he needed to give his articles the fake verisimilitude they possess.

Mr. Walker’s photographs could easily date back to the Volga famine in 1921. Many of them might have been taken outside the Soviet Union. They were taken at different seasons of the year…. One picture includes trees or shrubs with large leaves. Such leaves could not have grown by the ‘late sprang’ of Mr. Walker’s alleged visit. Other photographs show winter and early fall backgrounds. Here is the Journal of the 27th. A starving, bloated boy of 15 calmly poses naked for Mr. Walker. The next moment, in the same village, Mr. Walker photographs a man who is obviously suffering from the cold despite his sheepskin overcoat. The weather that sprang must have been as unreliable as Mr. Walker to allow nude poses one moment and require furs the next.

It would be easy to riddle Mr. Walker’s stories. They do not deserve the effort. The truth is that the Soviet harvest of 1933, including the Soviet Ukraine’s harvest, in contrast to that of 1932, was excellent; the grain-tax collections were moderate; and therefore conditions even remotely resembling those Mr. Walker portrays could not have arisen in the spring of 1934, and did not arise.”

Fisher challenged the motives of the Hearst press in hiring a fraud like Walker to concoct such fabrications:

"…Mr. Hearst, naturally does not object if his papers spoil Soviet-American relations and encourage foreign nations with hostile military designs upon the USSR. But his real target is the American radical movement. These Walker articles are part of Hearst's anti-red campaign. He knows that the great economic progress registered by the Soviet Union since 1929, when the capitalist world dropped into depression, provides Left groups with spiritual encouragement and faith. Mr. Hearst wants to deprive them of that encouragement and faith by painting a picture of ruin and death in the USSR. The attempt is too transparent, and the hands are too unclean to succeed."
In a post-script, Fisher added that a Lindsay Parrott had visited the Ukraine and had written that nowhere in any city or town he visited "did I meet any signs of the effects of the famine of which foreign correspondents take delight in writing." Parrott, says Fisher, wrote of the "excellent harvest" in 1933; the progress, he declared, "is indisputable." Fisher ends: "The Hearst organizations and the Nazis are beginning to work more and more closely together. But I have not noticed that the Hearst press printed Mr. Parrott's stories about a prosperous Soviet Ukraine. Mr. Parrott is Mr. Hearst's correspondent in Moscow."
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 7-8

WALKER ROUTINELY LIED AND WAS A CRIMINAL

In any event, it will be recalled that Walker was never in the Ukraine in 1932-1933.
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 11

Not only were the photographs a fraud, the trip to Ukraine a fraud, and Hearst's famine-genocide series a fraud, Thomas Walker himself was a fraud. Deported from England and arrested on his return to the United States just a few months after the Hearst series, it turned out that Thomas Walker was in fact escaped convict Robert Greene. The New York Times reported: "Robert Greene, a writer of syndicated articles about conditions in Ukraine, who was indicted last Friday by a Federal grand jury on a charge of passport fraud, pleaded guilty yesterday before Federal Judge Francis Caffey. The judge learned that Green was a fugitive from Colorado State Prison, where he escaped after having served two years of an 8-year term for forgery."
Robert Greene, it was revealed, had run-up an impressive criminal record spanning three decades. His trail of crime led through five U.S. states and four European countries, and included convictions on charges of violating the Mann White Slave Act in Texas, forgery, and "marriage swindle."
Evidence at Walker's trial revealed that he had made a previous visit to the Soviet Union in 1930 under the name Thomas Burke. Having worked briefly for an engineering firm in the USSR, he was–by his own admission–expelled for attempting to smuggle a "a whiteguard" out of the country. A reporter covering the trial noted that Walker "admitted that the 'famine' pictures published with his series in the Hearst newspapers were fakes and they were not taken in Ukraine as advertised."
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 11

(Actually, one must recall, Walker never set foot in Ukraine, and entered the Russian Federation in the fall of 1934.)
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 59

Mace and his Harvard colleagues have the further audacity to state, in their introduction to Walker's material: "American newspapermen… Thomas Walker… wrote plainspoken and graphic accounts of the Famine based on what he had witnessed in Ukraine in 1933." Ignoring the fraudulent nature of the Walker series exposed over 50 years ago, the Harvard scholars conveniently backdate Walker's stated 1934 trip to 1933….
Not only is this "scholarship" riddled with inaccuracies, exaggeration, distortion, and fraud, it resorts uncritically to Nazi sources without informing the reader of the spurious nature of the sources.
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 61

HERRIOT TRAVELED THE UKRAINE AND SAID HE SAW NO FAMINE

It was following Hearst's trip to Nazi Germany that the Hearst press began to promote the theme of "famine-genocide in Ukraine." Prior to this, his papers had at times reflected a different perspective. For example, the October 1, 1934 Herald and Examiner, carried an article about the former French Premier, Herriot, who had recently returned from traveling around Ukraine. Herriot noted: "… the whole campaign on the subject of famine in the Ukraine is currently being waged. While wandering around the Ukraine, I saw nothing of the sort."
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 15

FAKE PHOTOS OF EARLY 20'S FAMINE WERE APPLIED TO EARLY 30'S

Indeed, a wide assortment of photos and documentary film footage was taken in Russia, Ukraine, Eastern Europe and Armenia during the period of World War I, the Russian Revolution, Civil War, and foreign intervention, events which contributed to the Russian famine of 1921-22. These photos–taken by journalists, relief agencies, medical workers, soldiers and individuals–were frequently published in the newspapers and brochures of the period. Such photos were the most likely source for the famine-genocide photographic "evidence": they could be easily culled from archives, collections, and newspaper morgues and grafted onto accounts of the 1930s.
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 31

Overall, the film's [Harvest of Despair] producers, Nowytsky and Luhovy, have managed to slap together a patchwork of material. Film reviewer Leonard Klady noted that co-producer Luhovy "admits most of his income comes from editing feature films of dubious quality. He has a reputation as a good 'doctor'–someone who's brought in to salvage a movie which is deemed unreleasable by film exhibitors and distributors." In Harvest of Despair it appears that the doctor delivered one of the great cinema miscarriages of all time. Objectivity and scientific presentation are sacrificed on the altar of Cold War psychological warfare. According to the Winnipeg Free Press, Luhovy "personally viewed more than one million feet of historic stock footage to find roughly 20 minutes (720 feet) of appropriate material for the film." This says less about his research than about the total lack of photographic evidence of famine-genocide.
Indeed, not one documented piece of evidence is presented in the film to back up the genocide thesis. Instead, in a montage of undocumented stills, the viewer is subjected to Walker/Ditloff forgeries; numerous scenes stolen from the bi-now familiar publications

covering the 1921-1922 Russian famine, Ammende photos (with all their contradictions noted earlier); 1920s photos used in the Nazi organ Volkischer Beobachter in 1933. Certain Harvest of Despair photos can also be traced to Laubenheimer's Nazi propaganda books, as well as to a Ukrainian-language publication published in Berlin in 1922.
Other scenes both borrow from the past and from the future. For example, footage of marching soldiers has Red Army men wearing uniforms from the days of the Russian Civil War. Footage of impoverished women cooking is also of Civil War vintage. Other scenes display peasant costumes from the Volga Russian area of the immediate post-World War 1 period, not Ukrainians in 1933. Footage of miners pulling coal sledges on their hands and knees is actually of Czarist-era origins. Scenes of peasants at meetings wearing peculiar tall peaked caps date from earlier periods; further, their clothing is not consistent with Ukrainian costume. Material filched from Soviet films of the 1920s can be identified, including sequences from Czar Hunger (1921-1922) and Arsenal (1929), and even from pre-revolutionary newsreels.
Flipping forward to the future, the film shows scenes of military manufacturing of tank models not produced until later in the 1930s. As well: "the episode of bread distribution in Nazi besieged Leningrad (taken from 'The Siege of Leningrad,' one film of the epic 'An Unknown War') was used by the authors of the videofraud as 'filmed evidence' of food shortage… in Ukraine in the 1930s." And so on, and so on.
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 78

It seems that like others before them, the producers of Harvest of Despair scrounged through the archives looking for bits and pieces of old war-and-starvation shots that might be spiced into the film to great subliminal effect–bound together with narrative and interspersed partisan interviews. As much has been admitted, as we will see.
In November 1986, Ukrainian Nationalists in alliance with right-wing school board officials, made an attempt to place their famine-genocide propaganda in the Toronto high school curriculum. Toward this end, a film showing of Harvest of Despair was arranged at the Education Center. Panelists advertised for the event included then vice-chairman of the Toronto Board Of Education Nola Crewe, Dr. Yury Boshyk, Research Fellow at Harvard's Ukrainian Research Institute and Marco Carynnyk, writer and researcher associated with Harvest of Despair in its research stage.
Confronted by this author in the discussion portion of the meeting, that the stills and footage used in the film were fraudulent, the panelists were forced to admit openly that this author's charges were true. Though reluctant to acknowledge the full extent of the fraud, deliberate deceit was confirmed. As the Toronto Star reported:
"Researcher Marco Carynnyk, who says he originated the idea of the film, says his concerns about questionable photographs were ignored. Carynnyk said that none of the archival film footage is of the Ukrainian famine and that very few photos from 1932-1933 appear that can be traced as authentic. A dramatic shot at the film's end of an emaciated girl, which has also been used in the film's promotional material, is not from the 1932-1933 famine, Carynnyk said.
"I made the point that this sort of inaccuracy cannot be allowed," he said in an interview. "I was ignored."

Perhaps this is why, to use the term of B.S. Onyschuk, vice-chairman of the Ukrainian Famine Research Committee, Carynnyk was "let go" from the film before its completion.

In light of the above, one wonders why Carynnyk waited several years before coming forward publicly with the truth, and even then only after a public challenge and exposure by this author.
In a quite incredible admission from an academic, Orest Subtelny, a history professor at York University, justified the use of frauds. Noting that there exist very few pictures of the 1933 famine, Subtelny defended the actions of the film's producers: "You have to have visual impact. You want to show what children dying from a famine look like. Starving children are starving children."
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 79

Dr. Ditloff, it will be recalled, was Director of the German government's agricultural concession in the North Caucasus under an agreement between the German government and the Soviets. When Hitler took power in early 1933, Ditloff did not resign in protest. He remained as Director for the project's duration, indicating that the Nazis did not consider him inimical to their interests. Following his return to Nazi Germany later that year, Ditloff gathered or fronted for a spurious assortment of famine photographs. These, as has been shown, included photos stolen from 1921-1922 famine sources. In addition, at least 25 of the Ditloff photos can be shown to have been released by the Nazis, many of which were passed to or picked up by various anti-Soviet and pro-fascist publishers abroad.
Some of Ditloff's photos were published in the Nazi party organ Volkischer Beobachter (Aug. 18, 1933).
Whatever the actual mechanics of the distribution of the Ditloff-Walker photographs, their fraudulence is well-established. Those intent on propagating the famine-genocide myth for political/purposes have not hesitated to use these photographs repeatedly to this day–without adding a shred of authenticating evidence to this questionable material.
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 34-35

NAZIS TRY TO BLAME SOVIET FOR MASS EXECUTIONS IN THE UKRAINE

Included in Volume 1 of The Black Deeds of the Kremlin is a special section devoted to Nationalist allegations of Soviet mass executions…in Vynnitsya. Unearthed in 1943 during the Nazi occupation, the graves were "examined" by a Nazi-appointed "Commission" and were featured in Nazi propaganda films….
Post-war testimony of German soldiers, however, exposes the unearthing of mass graves at Vynnitsya as a Nazi propaganda deception.
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 37

According to Israel's authoritative Yad Washem Studies, Oberleutnant Erwin Bingel testified that on Sept. 22, 1941, he witnessed the mass execution of Jews by the SS and Ukrainian militia. This included a slaughter carried out by Ukrainian auxiliaries in Vynnitsya Park, where Bingel witnessed "layer upon layer" of corpses buried. Returning to Vynnitsya later in the war, Bingel read of the experts brought in by the Nazis to examine the exhumed graves of "Soviet" execution victims in the same Park. Upon personal verification, Bingel concluded that the "discovery" had been staged for Nazi propaganda purposes and that the number of corpses he saw corresponded to those slaughtered by Ukrainian Fascists in 1941.
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 40

NYT CORRESPONDENT DENNY SAYS HE SEES NO FAMINE IN THE UKRAINE

By all credible accounts, the crops of 1933 and 1934 were successful. As a tribute to this fact, very few, if any famine-genocide hustlers today support claims of a 1934 famine. However, both Ammende [Author in 1936 of the famine-genocide book entitled Human Life in Russia], and following him Dalrymple, seemed to have been determined to starve Ukraine to death in 1934 as well. In fact, Dalrymple's Ammende source for the list of 20 is Ammende's letter to the New York Times published on July 1, 1934 under the heading "Wide Starvation in Russia Feared." In a follow-up letter the following month, Ammende wrote that people were dying on the streets of Kiev. Within days, New York Times correspondent Harold Denny cabled a refutation of Ammende's allegations. Datelined August 23rd, 1934, Denny charged: "This statement certainly has no foundation…. Your correspondent was in Kiev for several days last July about the time people were supposed to be dying there, and neither in the city, nor in the surrounding countryside was their hunger." Several weeks later, Denny reported: "Nowhere was famine found. Nowhere even the fear of it. There is food, including bread, in the local open markets. The peasants were smiling too, and generous with their foodstuffs. In short, there was no air of trouble or of impending trouble." Obviously, nobody had informed the peasants that they were supposed to be falling prostrate with hunger that year.
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 50

Before departing Dalrymple's list, let it be noted that a significant number of the sources have been shown to be either complete frauds, hearsay based on "foreign residents" (an interesting journalistic term) or hearsay altogether, former Nazis and Ukrainian collaborators, while at least three of the estimates are cited from the anti-Soviet campaigns of the neo-fascist Hearst–Scripps-Howard style press and another five from books published in the Cold War years of 1949-53, save one which was printed in Nazi Germany.
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 51

In the hands of Dalrymple and others, the dead seem to multiply at a most phenomenal rate. Hearsay, gossip, political testimonies, confessions of defectors, yellow journalism, Nazi and Ukrainian Rightists, all interconnect in an incestuous embrace throughout the famine-genocide campaigns.
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 52

Almost all the collective farms established in 1931 and 1932 were shockingly mismanaged. What else could be expected when every village in Russia had been the scene of bitter internal strife, when animals had been slaughtered or allowed to die through incompetence, and grain had been buried, and barns and houses burned? It has been estimated that livestock dropped by 50% during those tragic years and there were large areas, as I saw with my own eyes in the North Caucasus in 1933, where miles of weeds and desolation replaced the former grainfields….
In that summer I drove nearly 200 miles across country between Rostov and Krasnodar through land that was lost to the weeds and through villages that were empty, yet even there I found a striking contrast. There was one communal farm in the south which had been

established not long after the Civil War and remained under much the same management. It was an oasis of happiness and plenty in a stricken land. The people and their animals were plump and contented. Every family had two or three rooms. There was a day-nursery with screened windows and beds for the children, a communal restaurant which served excellent food neatly and cheaply, a fish pond, a pig and poultry farm, even a novel and profitable cultivation of castor-oil plants as lubricant for airplanes. This little community compared favorably with any farming outfit in the West. They weren't, of course, so wealthy as American farmers, but they had overcome the age-old enemies of the Russian peasant–hunger, insecurity, ignorance, and disease, and were all busy as beavers, eager and full of hope.
Duranty, Walter. Stalin & Co. New York: W. Sloane Associates, 1949, p. 77

DALRYMPLE SAYS FAMINE DENIERS ARE LYING BUT OFFERS NO PROOF

Having categorized the Webb's [Sydney and Beatrice], Herriot and Maynard as "dupes," Dalrymple claims that Walter Duranty and "some other newsman" (whom he chooses not to name), "knew of the famine but avoided referring to it explicitly because of government pressure." Dalrymple offers no proof of this allegation, but doubtless true to form, some hearsay or off-the-record gossip can be dredged up.
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 53

USING DEMOGRAPHICS TO PROVE FAMINE IS BOGUS

Another contribution to the recent revival of the famine-genocide campaign is Walter Dushnyck's 50 Years Ago: The Famine Holocaust in Ukraine.
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 66

Attempting to shore up his thesis of famine-genocide, Dushnyck turns to an "examination" of the number of famine deaths. Rather than averaging hearsay estimates a la Dalrymple, Dushnyck's "method" consists of projecting an anticipated population growth rate, based on the 1926 census, onto the listed population of the 1939 census for Ukraine. The difference between the hypothetical estimate and the 1939 census listing is then pronounced to be "famine victims."
For example, Dushnyck states: "taking the data according to the 1926 census… and the January 17, 1939 census… and the average increase before the collectivization… (2.36% per year), it can be calculated that Ukraine… lost 7 1/2-million people between the two censuses."
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 69

Though this "method" of calculating famine deaths is widely employed by famine-genocide theorists, the frequency of its use does not make it any more scientifically valid. U.S. sociologist Albert Szymanski, in criticizing an estimate of 3 million deaths, has noted:
"This estimate assumes: (1) that even in the conditions of extreme famine, instability and virtual Civil War, peasants would conceive at the same rate as in less precarious periods; (2) that abortion or infanticide (intentional or not) did not significantly increase; (3) that there were as many women of maximum reproductive age in 1932-1933 as before or after. All of

these assumptions are erroneous. All peasants have traditional techniques of birth control and are thus able to limit their reproduction to a significant degree; it is the economic benefit attendant upon having large families which is operative… (Further) legal abortion was so widely practiced in this period that, in 1936, the state banned it as part of the campaign to increase the population."

A decline in the birth rate could thus have been expected, and not only due to the reasons outlined by Szymanski. In examining the demographics of the famine era, Wheatcroft states: "As is well known, the First World War, Civil War and the early years of the 1920s caused a great gap in births in these years. The age cohort born in 1914 would have been 16 in 1930 and so would have been just entering the period of major reproduction. Consequently, Lorimer and other scholars have concluded that the age structure of the population would have led to a decline in births throughout the early 1930s and until the missing populations born into the 1914-1922 age cohorts have passed on well into the future."

[Following in the footsteps of Dushnyck] Harvard's James Mace states: "If we subtract our estimate of the post-famine population from the pre-famine population, the difference is 7,954,000, which can be taken as an estimate of the number of Ukrainians who died before their time." But, as respected demographers Barbara Anderson and Brian Silver have pointed out, Mace is confusing population deficits with excess mortality. By making no allowance for a decline in the birth rate, Mace equates those who were never borne with those who "died before their time."
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 71

The Mace -Dushnyck methodology also ignores other factors: change of declared nationality, intermarriage, assimilation, migration, etc., all of which have an impact on census figures. For example, Wixman has pointed out that in the late 1920s–between the two censuses in question–the Kuban Cossacks were reclassified from Ukrainian to Russian (they live in Russia). Anderson and Silver note: "If the reclassified Ukrainians numbered 2-3 million suggested by Waxman, then between 25-40% of Mace's estimated deficit of Ukrainians could be accounted for in this way."
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 72

But Medvedev himself lends credence to the less wild estimates by citing an estimate, made on the basis of gaps in the age structure and demographic projections, of as many as 3 million infant deaths owing to the 1932-33 famine. This [false] estimate assumes: (a) that even in conditions of extreme famine, instability, and virtual civil war, peasants would conceive and give birth at the same rate as in less precarious periods; (2) that abortion or infanticide (intentional or not) did not significantly increase; and (3) that there were as many women of maximum reproductive age in 1932-33 as before or after. All of these assumptions are erroneous. All peasants have traditional techniques of birth control and are thus able to limit their reproduction to a significant degree; it is the economic benefit attendant upon having large families which is operative–a factor not applicable during famines–not ignorance of birth control. Legal abortion was so widely practiced in this period that, in 1936, the state banned it as part of the campaign to increase the population.
Other exaggerated estimates of the number who died during these periods are based on apparent discrepancies between the 1926 and 1939 (or 1959) census figures, and the number of people who should have been in the census categories assuming earlier rates of

population growth or, alternatively, the actual rate of growth of other populations at the same time. Such estimates assume that a decline in the reported population, or its failure to grow at its 'normal' rate, is largely a reflection of deaths from famine, abuse, or execution. Not only are fewer live births to be expected during times of famine and trouble–as well as disproportionately high infant mortality–many people emigrate from areas of famine in search of food, work, or refuge. In the Soviet Union in the 1930-33 period millions of destitute peasants migrated to the cities to take up jobs in the industrializing urban economy, others left the regions of greatest destitution to settle elsewhere; some left the Soviet Union altogether….
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 225-226

[In his report to the 17th Party Congress in January 1934 Stalin stated] We had an increase in the population of the Soviet Union from 160,500,000 at the end of 1930 to 168 million at the end of 1933.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 13, p. 343

REAL NATURAL CAUSES OF THE FAMINE ARE IGNORED BY CRITICS

"Evidence" prominently featured in the famine-genocide campaign has been shown to be fraudulent or suspect. Fake photographs, unscientific statistics-juggling and politically motivated hearsay and testimony are among the many devices employed to embellish allegations of famine-genocide. Subject to similar manipulation are the [actual] causes of the famine: drought, sabotage, soviet amateurish planning, excesses and mistakes in history's first mass socialization of agriculture in the context of a hostile international environment. Throughout the history of the famine-genocide campaign, the factors of drought and sabotage have been ignored, denied, downplayed or distorted. Soviet excesses and mistakes, in contrast, are emphasized, given an "anti-Ukrainian" motivation, described as deliberately and consciously planned, and the results exaggerated in depictions of starvation deaths in the multi-millions. The central event–the collectivization of agriculture as part of socialist development–is never given anything but a classically anti-Communist interpretation….
For some promoters of "famine-genocide," anything other than man-made causes are ignored or denied. Natural causes, such as drought, are alleged never to have taken place; claims that drought was a contributing factor are denounced as Soviet inventions. One might then expect that no non-Soviet source could be cited to substantiate drought.
However, A History of Ukraine by Mikhail Hrushevsky–described by the Nationalists themselves as "Ukraine's leading historian"–states: "Again a year of drought coincided with chaotic agricultural conditions; and during the winter of 1932-33 a great famine, like that of 1921-1922 swept across Soviet Ukraine…." Indeed, nowhere does History of Ukraine claim a deliberate, man-made famine against Ukrainians, and more space is actually devoted to the famine of 1921-1922.
More recent histories can also be cited on the subject of drought. Nicolas Riasnovsky, former visiting professor at Harvard University's Russian Research Center, notes in his History of Russia that drought occurred in both 1931 and 1932. Michael Florinsky, immediately following a description of the mass destruction wrought by kulak resistance to collectivization, states: "Severe droughts in 1930 and 1931, especially in the Ukraine, aggravated the plight of farming and created near famine conditions." Professor Emeritus at

Columbia and a prolific writer on the USSR, Florinsky can hardly be accused of leftist sympathies: born in Kiev, Ukraine, he fought against the Bolsheviks in the Civil War.

While drought was a contributing factor, the main cause of the famine was the struggle around the collectivization of agriculture which raged in the countryside in this period.
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 91-92

Nonetheless, two studies discuss the harvests in those years. Robert Davies and Stephen Wheatcroft argue that the 1931 and 1932 harvests were small due to drought and difficulties in labor and capital, especially the decline in draft animals….
In this essay I re-examine the harvests of 1931 and especially 1932 on the basis of newly available archival documents and published sources, including some that scholars have never utilized. I show that the environmental context of these famines deserves much greater emphasis than it has previously received: environmental disasters reduced the Soviet grain harvest in 1932 substantially and have to be considered among the primary causes of the famine. I argue that capital and labor difficulties were significant but were not as important as these environmental factors, and were in part a result of them. I also demonstrate that the Soviet leadership did not fully understand the crisis and out of ignorance acted inconsistently in response to it. I conclude that it is thus inaccurate to describe the Soviet famine of 1932-1933 as simply an artificial or man-made famine, or otherwise to reduce it to a single cause. Overall, the low harvest, and hence the famine, resulted from a complex of human and environmental factors, an interaction of man and nature, much as most previous famines in history.
Tauger, Mark. Natural Disaster and Human Actions in the Soviet Famine of 1931-1933 Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2001, p. 6

Soviet agronomic literature and other published and archival sources from the 1930s, however, which no previous scholarship on the famine has discussed, indicate that in 1932 Soviet crops suffered from an extraordinarily severe combination of infestations from crop diseases and pests.
The most important infestation in 1932 came from several varieties of rust, a category of fungi that can infest grains and many other plants.
Tauger, Mark. Natural Disaster and Human Actions in the Soviet Famine of 1931-1933 Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2001, p. 13

While rust infestations were not a new problem in Russia, the extreme outbreak in 1932 took agronomists by surprise, and they did not fully understand it.
Tauger, Mark. Natural Disaster and Human Actions in the Soviet Famine of 1931-1933 Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2001, p. 16

…losses from rust and smut in 1932 reached approximately 9 million tons, 13% of the official harvest figure and nearly 20% of the lowest archival harvest estimate. It should also be noted that while these estimates are approximate, they are also the only concrete estimates, based on any even remotely scientific evidence, of overall 1932 grain harvest losses from any environmental or human factors available in any published or archival sources that I have been able to find.
Tauger, Mark. Natural Disaster and Human Actions in the Soviet Famine of 1931-1933 Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2001, p. 17

The warm, humid weather in 1932 also led to severe insect infestations, including locusts, field moths, and other insects on grain and sugar beets. An agronomic journal reported that in 1932 a “mass multiplication” of Asian locusts took place in all the important breeding grounds of the desert zone, including Daghestan, the Lower Volga, the Ural River delta, the North Caucasus, and the Kalmyk Oblast. OGPU reports during the spring of 1932 noted infestations of locusts, meadow moths, hessian flies, beet weevils, and other insects. A report of 28 May noted that beet weevils had infested nearly 100,000 hectares of beets in Ukraine; in one district the weevils destroyed almost 500 hectares in three hours.
Tauger, Mark. Natural Disaster and Human Actions in the Soviet Famine of 1931-1933 Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2001, p. 18

As will be seen below, these natural disasters were only part of a complex of factors that made 1931-1932 disastrous agricultural years. Nonetheless, drought, rain, and infestations destroyed at least 20% of the harvest, and this would have been sufficient on its own to have caused serious food shortages or even famine. If these factors had not been in evidence in 1931 and 1932 agricultural production would have been considerably larger, and while procurements could have caused shortages in specific regions, they would not have caused a famine like that of 1933….
Tauger, Mark. Natural Disaster and Human Actions in the Soviet Famine of 1931-1933 Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2001, p. 20

My research on Soviet farm labor policies and actual peasant practices and my reading of this literature, however, has made me skeptical of the argument for labor resistance as the exclusive or even dominant cause of the low harvests and famine in the early 1930s. First, while some peasants were so resentful of collectivization and procurements that they attempted to sabotage the farms, for peasant resistance to have been sufficient to cause the low 1932 harvest an extremely large number of peasants would have had to act this way, that is, to have avoided work and attempted to destroy the harvest. In other words, the argument asserts that the majority of peasants attempted to deprive their families and fellow villagers of sufficient food to last until the next harvest. This interpretation, therefore, requires us to believe that most peasants acted against their own and their neighbors’ self-interest. This viewpoint is difficult to accept both on general human terms and particularly when applied to peasants in Russia and Ukraine. The great majority of these peasants had lived for centuries in corporate villages that had instilled certain basic cooperative values, and the kolkhosi perpetuated basic features of these villages.
Second, the argument is reductionist because it attempts to explain everything that happened in this crisis by human actions, specifically by the conflict between the Soviet government and the peasants, with an emphasis on peasant resistance as a kind of heroic struggle against the oppressive regime. Such reductionism is problematic because it does not account for actions that do not fit the pattern of resistance, that took place outside the nexus of resistance. If the situation had been as conflictual as this interpretation implies, if the great majority of peasants did little or no farm work and performed the work they did do neglectfully and poorly out of spite, then the harvest in 1932 would not have been even 50,000,000 tons but practically nothing.
Tauger, Mark. Natural Disaster and Human Actions in the Soviet Famine of 1931-1933 Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2001, p. 26

On the basis of the above discussion, I contend that an understanding of the Soviet famine of 1932-1933 must start from the background of chronic agricultural crises in the early Soviet years, the harvest failures of 1931 and 1932, and the interaction of environmental and human factors that caused them. In 1932, extremely dry weather reduced crops in some regions, and unusually wet and human weather in most others fostered unprecedented infestations. These conditions from the start reduced the potential yield that year, as drought had…in 1931. At the same time, the regime's procurements from the 1931 harvest left peasants and work livestock starving and weakened. Crop failures, procurements that reduced fodder resources, peasant neglect, overuse of the limited number of tractors, and shortages of spare parts and fuel all combined to reduce available draft power. Farm work consequently was performed poorly in many kolkhosi and sovkhozy, often even when peasants were willing to put in the effort. Finally, farming activities combined with other environmental problems–soil exhaustion, weeds, and mice–to further reduce the 1932 harvest to famine levels.
Tauger, Mark. Natural Disaster and Human Actions in the Soviet Famine of 1931-1933 Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2001, p. 45

Any study that asserts that the harvest was not extraordinarily low and that the famine was a political measure intentionally imposed through excessive procurements is clearly based on an insufficient source base and an uncritical approach to the official sources. The evidence cited above demonstrates that the 1932-1933 famine was the result of a genuine shortage, a substantial decline in the availability of food caused by a complex of factors, each of which decreased the harvest greatly and which in combination must have decreased the harvest well below subsistence. This famine therefore resembled the Irish famine of 1845-1848, but resulted from a litany of natural disasters that combined to the same effect as the potato blight had 90 years before, and in a similar context of substantial food exports. The Soviet famine resembles the Irish case in another way as well: in both, government leaders were ignorant of and minimized the environmental factors and blamed the famines on human actions (in Ireland, overpopulation, in the USSR, peasant resistance) much more than was warranted….
If we are to believe that the regime starved the peasants to induce labor discipline in the farms, are we to interpret starvation in the towns as the regime's tool to discipline blue and white-collar workers and their wives and children? While Soviet food distribution policies are beyond the scope of this article, it is clear that the small harvests of 1931-1932 created shortages that affected virtually everyone in the country and that the Soviet regime did not have the internal resources to alleviate the crisis.
Tauger, Mark. Natural Disaster and Human Actions in the Soviet Famine of 1931-1933 Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2001, p. 46

The evidence and analysis I have presented here show that the Soviet famine was more serious and more important an event than most previous studies claim, including those adhering to the Ukrainian nationalist interpretation, and that it resulted from a highly abnormal combination of environmental and agricultural circumstances.
Tauger, Mark. Natural Disaster and Human Actions in the Soviet Famine of 1931-1933 Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2001, p. 47

…the famine resulted directly from a famine harvest, a harvest that was much smaller than officially acknowledged, and that this small harvest was in turn the result of a complex of

natural disasters that [with one small exception] no previous scholars have ever discussed or even mentioned. The foot notes in the Carl Beck Paper contain extensive citations from primary sources as well as Western and Soviet secondary works, among others by D'Ann Penner and Stephen Wheatcroft and R. W. Davies that further substantiate these points and I urge interested readers to examine those works as well.
Tauger, Mark. His comments at random.

THERE WAS A FAMINE FOR MANY REASONS

Soviet mistakes and excesses, drought and the organized campaign of sabotage and resistance resulted in the famine of 1932-1933. There was no plan to wipe out Ukrainians as a people; the mistakes–even when accompanied by tragic and unforgivable excesses– do not constitute "pre-planned genocide."
The famine was compounded by typhus epidemics. Internationally acclaimed urban planner and recipient of the Order of Canada, Dr. Hans Blumenfeld worked as an architect in the Ukrainian city of Makeyevka at the time the famine. He writes:
"There was indeed a famine in 1933, not just in Ukraine, but also in… the lower Volga and the North Caucasus;… There is no doubt that the famine claimed many victims. I have no basis on which to estimate their number… Probably most deaths in 1933 were due to epidemics of typhus, typhoid fever, and dysentery. Waterborne diseases were frequent in Makeyevka; I narrowly survived an attack of typhus fever.
Dr. Hans Blumenfeld offers a useful personal summary of the period:
… [The famine was caused by] a conjunction of a number of factors. First, the hot dry summer of 1932, which I had experienced in northern Vyatka, had resulted in crop failure in the semiarid regions of the south. Second, the struggle for collectivization had disrupted agriculture. Collectivization was not an orderly process following bureaucratic rules. It consisted of actions by the poor peasants, encouraged by the Party. The poor peasants were eager to expropriate the "kulaks," but less eager to organize a co-operative economy. By 1930 the Party had already sent out cadres to stem and correct excesses…. After having exercised restraint in 1930, the Party put on a drive again in 1932. As a result, in that year the kulak economy ceased to produce, and the new collective economy did not yet produce fully. First claim on the inadequate product went to urban industry and to the armed forces; as the future of the entire nation, including the peasants, depended on them, it can hardly be otherwise….
In 1933 rainfall was adequate. The Party sent its best cadres to help organize work in the kolkhozes. They succeeded; after the harvest of 1933 the situation improved radically and with amazing speed. I had the feeling that we had been pulling a heavy cart uphill, uncertain if we would succeed; but in the fall of 1933 we had gone over the top and from then on we could move forward at an accelerating pace.
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 96-97

Under these conditions there was little reason for anti-Russian or separatist tendencies among the Ukrainians, and I never encountered them. I was therefore rather surprised to read recently in the respected French paper Le Monde, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the starvation of 1933, that was due to a planned "genocide" of the Ukrainian nation. Given the dire shortage of labor in the Soviet Union at the time, this hypothesis is rather absurd. It is equally absurd to assume that any government could be so stupid as to

believe that starvation could be an effective means to break national resistance–in the face of the experience of the Irish famine of the 1840s and many others….

There was indeed a famine in 1933, not just in the Ukraine, but also in other semiarid regions of the USSR, the Lower Volga and the North Caucasus; and Makeyevka, located near the junction of these three regions, felt the full impact of it. Many peasants from there came to the city; the steelworks tried to employ some of them but most left, finding the work too hard. Some were already too far gone, with swollen limbs. There were also many lost children, which were either taken into children's institutions or, very frequently, adopted by urban families; two of my old friends, building workers from Vienna who at the time worked in Makeyevka, each adopted one such child. Only once did I see a child with spindly legs and a swollen belly; it was in the garden of a nursery school at the hand of a nurse waiting for the doctor. Nor did I ever see a corpse lying in a street….

There is no doubt that the famine claimed many victims. I have no basis on which to estimate the number, and I doubt if anybody has. What were the reasons and what could have been done to avoid this terrible calamity?

There was a conjunction of a number of factors. First, the hot dry summer of 1932, which I had experienced in northern Vyatka, had resulted in crop failure in the semiarid regions of the South. Second, the struggle for collectivization had disrupted agriculture. Collectivization was not an orderly process following bureaucratic rules. It consisted of actions by the poor peasants, encouraged by the Party. The poor peasants were eager to expropriate the "kulaks," but less eager to organize a cooperative economy. By 1930 the Party and already sent out cadres to stem and correct excesses. One of the cadres engaged in this work later reported his experience: the local Communists had told him, "We are building socialism in the village, and you and your Stalin are stabbing us in the back." After having exercised restraint in 1930, the Party put on a drive again in 1932. As a result, in that year the kulak economy ceased to produce, and the new collective economy did not yet produce fully. First claim on the inadequate product went to urban industry and to the armed forces; as the future of the entire nation, including the peasants, depended on them, it could hardly be otherwise. In addition, the depression in the West destroyed the market for oil and timber, with which the Soviets had hoped to pay the debts incurred during the First Five-Year Plan. So, instead of being able to import grain, the Soviet Union actually exported some. What alternatives did they have? I can see only two: use their gold reserve, or get a loan in the West. They tried to do the latter, but obtained it only in 1934 when they no longer needed it. If blame for the terrible suffering of 1932 has to be assigned, it falls in equal parts on the Soviet Government for refusing to part with their gold reserve, and on the West for refusing to loan when it was needed.

…Probably most deaths in 1933 were due to epidemics of typhus, typhoid fever, and dysentery. Waterborne diseases were frequent in Makeyevka; I narrowly survived an attack of typhus fever….

In 1933 rainfall was adequate. The Party sent its best cadres to help organize work in the kolkhozes. They succeeded; after the harvest of 1933 the situation improved radically and with amazing speed. I had the feeling that we had been pulling a heavy cart uphill, uncertain if we would succeed; but in the fall of 1933 we had gone over the top and from then on we could move forward at an accelerating pace. Certainly, stupidity and callousness inflicted much avoidable suffering during the process of collectivization, and many Soviet kolkhozes continued to suffer from the fact that they started on the wrong foot–in contrast to those in other countries such as East Germany and Hungary, which have learned from the mistakes

made in the Soviet Union. But Soviet agriculture is not the monumental failure which it is often regarded as in the West.
Blumenfeld, Hans. Life Begins at 65. Montreal, Canada: Harvest House, c1987, p. 152-154

The Soviet government did have small reserves of grain, but continually drew these down to allocate food to the population. Since virtually the entire country experienced shortages of food, indicating that the procurement and distribution data are reasonably accurate, clearly the Soviet Union faced a severe shortage, and the most important cause of that shortage has to have been small harvests in 1931 and 1932.
Tauger, Mark. Natural Disaster and Human Actions in the Soviet Famine of 1931-1933 Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2001, p. 5

DESTRUCTION BY THE KULAKS ALONG WITH DROUGHT CAUSED THEIR OWN STARVATION

Even in the winter of 1931-1932, with the great scarcity of grain, we somehow managed to survive because of our vegetables. But the year of 1932 had not been normal. That sprIng we had a massive famine during which the people consumed even the seeds for planting, so there was nothing left with which to plant the vegetable gardens. Most gardens remained overgrown with weeds. The meager allotment of food received from the collective farm as advance payment was soon consumed. With no additional help forthcoming starvation set in.
Dolot, Miron. Execution by Hunger. New York: W.W. Norton, c1985, p. 164

… the slaughter of cattle and the feasting went on–there was no way of stopping it. Animals were killed because no fodder was left or because they had become diseased from neglect; and even the bednyaks who, having joined the kolkhozes, had every interest in preserving their wealth, went on dissipating it and stuffing their own long-starved stomachs. Then followed the long and dreadful fast: the farms were left without horses and without seed for the sowing; the kolkhozniki of the Ukraine and of European Russia rushed to central Asia to buy horses, and, having returned empty-handed, harnessed the few remaining cows and oxen to the ploughs; and in 1931 and 1932 vast tracts of land remained untilled and the furrows were strewn with the bodies of starved muzhiks. The smallholder perished as he had lived, in pathetic helplessness and barbarism; and his final defeat was moral as well as economic and political.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 119

MISMANAGEMENT BY SOVIET OFFICIALS WAS A MAJOR CAUSE OF THE FAMINE

How far this famine was “man-made” in the sense that Stalin and his government deliberately provoked it by wholesale collectivization is another story. Evidence gathered on the spot showed that the lack of efficiency of the peasants themselves was partly to blame, that in some regions crop prospects were bright enough before the harvest but that harvesting was shockingly mismanaged; vast quantities of grain were hidden or simply wasted, because collection and distribution of foodstuffs disintegrated in the prevailing chaos. On the other hand, it can fairly be argued that the authorities were responsible because they had not foreseen the muddle and mess and taken steps beforehand to correct

it. The proof of this is that things took a marked turn for the better in the following year, when the Communist Party set its hand, almost literally, to the plow….
Yet it is interesting to note that Stalin did directly and specifically assume responsibility for what had occurred. In a speech of January 11, 1933, to the Central Committee of the Communist Party, he said: "…. Why blame the peasants?… For we are at the helm; we are in command of the instruments of the state; it is our mission to lead the collective farms; and we must bear the whole of the responsibility for the work in the rural districts."
Duranty, Walter. Stalin & Co. New York: W. Sloane Associates, 1949, p. 78-79

FAMINE WAS CAUSED BY DROUGHT, INFESTATIONS, WEATHER AND FUNGUSES

Despite this, and despite the anecdotal evidence that resistance scholars present, however, clear and substantial evidence shows that harvests varied in the 1930s primarily and mostly from environmental factors. Serious droughts reduced the harvest in 1931 and 1936 drastically…and those of 1934 and 1938 moderately, and a complex of natural disasters made the 1932 harvest the lowest of the decade and a primary cause of the famine of 1932-33.
While peasant resistance did take place in the 1930s, it is extremely difficult to document its effect on production. In 1931, for example, peasants sowed a record area; although some was sown too late, under better weather conditions the crop would have been much larger. By the same token, the improved harvest of 1933, and the good harvest of 1935 and 1937, resulted first of all from favorable weather. Other scholars have emphasized the primary importance of environmental factors in the 1930s, showing for example that soil exhaustion, drought and other circumstances reduced harvests in 1931-32. A Russian scholar showed in a recent study of kolkhozy in the Urals that the most important influence on kolkhoz labor productivity was climate.
Tauger, Mark. "Soviet Peasants and Collectivization, 1930-39: Resistance and Adaptation." In Rural Adaptation in Russia by Stephen Wegren, Routledge, New York, NY, 2005, Chapter 3, p. 77.

Kolkhozy in 1932 faced extremely difficult conditions. The 1931 harvest was extremely low, despite a large sown area, primarily because of drought, but also because of organizational and supply problems. The low harvest and grain procurements left many farms with little or no food by early 1932, especially in the drought regions of the Volga, Kazakhstan, the Urals and Ukraine. This led many peasants to flee their villages seeking food. Reforms in February 1932 tied remuneration more closely to work and prohibited equalizing income distribution, but many farms misunderstood or ignored them, or implemented them incorrectly, and famine conditions encouraged equalizing distribution. The regime issued food aid and seed loans, but these were often delayed and insufficient….
During the 1932 harvest season Soviet agriculture experienced a crisis. Natural disasters, especially plant diseases spread and intensified by wet weather in mid-1932, drastically reduced crop yields. OGPU reports, anecdotal as they are, indicate widespread peasant opposition to the kolkhoz system. These documents contain numerous reports of kolkhozniki, faced with starvation, mismanagement and abuse by kolkhoz officials and others, and desperate conditions: dying horses, idle tractors, infested crops, and incitement by itinerant people. Peasants' responses varied: some applied to withdraw from their farms,

some left for paid work outside, some worked sloppily, intentionally leaving grain on the fields while harvesting to glean later for themselves.
Tauger, Mark. “Soviet Peasants and Collectivization, 1930-39: Resistance and Adaptation.” In Rural Adaptation in Russia by Stephen Wegren, Routledge, New York, NY, 2005, Chapter 3, p. 81.

My study of the Ukrainian famine of 1928-29 shows, first, that the grain crisis had a substantial material basis in severe regional crop failures, especially in Ukraine, caused by an array of natural disasters. Whether the Soviet Union had an absolute shortage of food in 1928-29 is impossible to say because the harvest statistics are suspect, but the country certainly had much less food available in 1928-29 than in the good years of NEP, 1926-27. No shift in price policies (to which the grain crisis is often attributed) could have prevented the harsh weather conditions of these years. The agricultural measures introduced in response to the 1924 crop failure and famine had not protected Ukraine from this disaster. As Rykov, stated in September 1928 while in Ukraine examining relief efforts, “For over four years we have been fighting drought in Ukraine. The effectiveness of our expenditures obviously cannot be considered sufficient.” Given the thin margin of surplus that Soviet agriculture produced in these years, a regional natural disaster of this sort could cause a famine and have disastrous repercussions throughout the economy.
Tauger, Mark. “Grain Crisis or Famine?” in Provincial Landscapes, Local Dimensions of Soviet Power, 1917-1953 by Don Raleigh, Univ. of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, Penn., 2001, Chapter 7, p. 167.

PEASANTS WORKED EVEN HARDER AND PRODUCED MORE AFTER THE 1932 FAMINE

Peasants in the famine regions were weak, and estimates are that between four and 7 million people died of the famine in villages and towns. Yet, somehow, on the whole peasants worked harder in 1933 than in 1932. By June 1933, the farms had sown a larger area than by that date in the previous three years (1930-32). The German agricultural attachE Otto Schiller drove 6000 miles through the main agricultural regions in the summer of 1933 and described a greatly strengthened and consolidated kolkhoz system. He attributed this both to administrative pressure and hunger as a motivating force, and also to effective management and labor organization. Reports from all over the USSR indicated that peasants who had avoided working in the kolkhoz now competed with each other to work, and had a ‘better attitude’ towards work in the kolkhoz than before. And the result, as documented in Table 2, was a dramatic increase in the harvest in 1933…. Thus there can be no doubt that the general pattern of intensified work, improved conditions and higher output evident from the statistics was in fact representative of conditions throughout the country.
Tauger, Mark. “Soviet Peasants and Collectivization, 1930-39: Resistance and Adaptation.” In Rural Adaptation in Russia by Stephen Wegren, Routledge, New York, NY, 2005, Chapter 3, p. 83.

Studies conducted in the mid-1930s found that kolkhozniki actually worked harder than non-collectivized peasants had worked in the 1920s, clear evidence of significant adaptation to new system.

Tauger, Mark. “Soviet Peasants and Collectivization, 1930-39: Resistance and Adaptation.” In Rural Adaptation in Russia by Stephen Wegren, Routledge, New York, NY, 2005, Chapter 3, p. 87

SOVIET GOVT TRIED TO AID FAMINE VICTIMS

That year (1931) was one of severe drought in the Volga, Western Siberia, parts of Ukraine, and other regions. Acknowledging this, the regime publicly sent procured grain back to drought regions as food relief and seed, organized a conference of specialists to discuss measures against drought, and began implementation of some of the measures proposed.
Tauger, Mark. “Statistical Falsification in the Soviet Union: a Comparative Case Study of Projections, Biases, and Trust.” The Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington, 2001, p. 44.

5th Column

FIFTH COLUMNISTS

What is the fifth column? It commonly consists of a fairly large group of the so-called “best people” who object to their country’s government and are ready to overthrow it even, if necessary, with the aid of foreign powers. Country after country in Europe collapsed at the first touch of the Nazi Army — sometimes before the arrival of the Army — because the upper officialdom had rotted from within.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 121

All governments have the problem of “subversion” by enemy agents or disaffected citizens. Seldom is it handled quite sanely by due process of law. Often–we note our own land–it becomes a source of which-hunts and neighborhood terror. This lack of balance doubtless comes from the fact that the offenders are not ordinary criminals, easy to catalogue, with penalties to match. They are men of different loyalties from those demanded by the state. A stable or confident regime is not greatly worried by them; for they are a small minority. But in times of war, or to any regime under stress, they are more disturbing than ordinary criminals.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 58

The Quislings and Lavals were not all in the West: the Soviet Union provided many collaborators and traitors of its own. Only 20-odd years had elapsed since the revolution and there were still many people who felt aggrieved by the regime. Many others were motivated by fear of the Nazis or the desire to adapt and survive, while yet others, especially in 1941, believed that the Germans had come for good. Finally there were weak, venal or just plain criminal types who were prepared to commit treason.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 440

…Later, Hitler’s “fifth column” so penetrated many governments of Europe that they collapsed at the first touch of war. Broadly speaking, this fifth column included men like Prime Minister Chamberlain and Premier Daladier, who weakened the defenses of their nations by destroying democracy in Spain and, later, by giving the Czech fortifications to

Hitler, in order to tempt his armies eastward. It included American industrialists who sold scrap iron to Japan, and strengthened her against the USA. None of these people considered themselves traitors. Nor, probably, did Quisling and Laval and others who, with various excuses, took part in puppet governments serving the invader.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 58

…The picture is clearly not a simple one of Stalin, as despot, getting rid of his enemies. It is a complex picture, combining the acts of many groups. Stalin's responsibility was that, being "distrustful and suspicious"–a not unnatural state in a man whose close friend has been assassinated and who has heard in open court that his own assassination was planned–he appointed Yezhov, gave orders to hurry up the investigations and sentences, and devised the theory that enemies multiplied as socialism nears success. Yezhov, later found to be a madman, gave the affective orders. The Central Committee, convinced by Stalin's argument and Yezhov's reports, also approved the acts. The actual initiators, as stated by Khrushchev, were "provocateurs"–i.e., agents of Nazi-fascism–and "conscienceless careerists"–i.e., men who invented plots to advance their own jobs.
This analysis by Khrushchev does not greatly differ from that of my exiled friend, who said that the Nazi fifth-column "penetrated high in the GPU and arrested the wrong people."…
The Soviet investigators who are reviewing the cases will, I think, eventually get to the bottom of them. They will find the key, most probably, in actual, extensive penetration of the GPU by a Nazi fifth-column, in many actual plots, and in the impact of these on a highly suspicious man who saw his own assassination plotted and believed he was saving the Revolution by drastic purge.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 68

… In Dniepropetrovsk, the NKVD had discovered that such 'born scoundrels" as Generalov (Shura's husband), though they took formal oaths of loyalty to the Party, had in fact organized 'spy nests and Trotskyist underground groupings'. They were working for 'world capitalism'.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 47

Volodya continues, "The country was approaching war, and an opposition party had been formed with an underground regional committee, printing press and so on. It had a relatively large army which was ready to act at any moment. All this forced Stalin to take measures to liquidate what we called the fifth column.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 141

FOREIGN AGENT INFILTRATION

The Soviet secret police had long guarded against routine foreign espionage. In 10 years they caught no less than 10,000 agents of foreign powers, creeping illegally across their borders. But the investigation of the Kirov murder led into higher and higher ranks of the Communist party, and seemed to indicate connection with the enemy even in these ranks. It was the first time that any nation in Europe began to glimpse the tactics that the world today knows as the Nazi fifth column — the penetration by the enemy into the citadel of power itself.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 128

QUESTION: Why were so many people executed after the Kirov assassination? Were any of them punished because they were political opponents of the present regime?

ANSWER: One hundred and three persons were executed as members of murder gangs who crossed the Soviet border with revolvers and hand grenades to commit murder and other acts of violence against Communists and Soviet officials. Such gangs have existed ever since the revolution drove out the White Guard armies, but Berlin gave them shelter after Hitler came to power. They have for two years been bragging in newspapers published in Berlin and Yugoslavia of their successes in murder and destruction beyond the Soviet frontier. Today the whole world knows about Nazi terrorist tactics across frontiers.
These cases were handled by border guards until the assassination of Kirov aroused a storm of popular resolutions calling for drastic action against terrorists. A court martial composed of well-known members of the Supreme Court thereupon made a rapid clean-up of all these cases in several cities, publishing the fact that the terrorists had been armed when arrested, had run the border from Poland and Rumania and had plotted and carried out murders. The trials were in camera, since open discussion of details was tantamount to accusing several governments of acts that rank as causes of war.
Strong, Anna Louise. “Searching Out the Soviets.” New Republic: August 7, 1935, p. 357

Domestic realities were crucial. The VKP’s membership screenings in 1933-1935 provided “evidence”–real or perceived–that “enemy agents” posing as emigres had infiltrated the USSR and the party. The possibility that a fifth column existed within the VKP prompted a shift in party attitudes toward foreign comrades. From that assumption flowed the concern that “enemy agents” “masked” as students and political emigres had infiltrated party schools, factories, and other Soviet institutions.
Chase, William J., Enemies Within the Gates?, translated by Vadim A. Staklo, New Haven: Yale University Press, c2001, p. 411.

GPU HEAD IS TRAITOR

In the Far East, the chief of the G.P.U. fled to Japan, and many of his subordinates were arrested as Japanese spies and wreckers.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 134

ALL THE CONSPIRATORS PUT TOGETHER FORMED A SMALL PART OF THE POPULATION

For much as these events preoccupied the press of the outside world, the fact remains that all the elements of the counter Revolution–Trotsky supporters, NEP men, and kulak’s–together formed a comparatively small proportion of the vast population of the Soviet Union.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 165

Who was under investigation? We know comparatively few names but Medvedev notes the following groups: “jurists,” “educational administrators,” “scholars,” “biologists,” “technical intelligentsia,” “designers in the garments industry,” “executives, chief engineers, plant

managers," "painters, actors, musicians, architects, film people," "military commanders." If to these we add kulaks, largely engaged in agricultural sabotage, it appears that the opposition to the dictatorship of the proletariat came, as we might expect, primarily from the upper professionals and the wealthier peasants. This group of professionals engaged in sabotage–economic, political, or cultural–and other anti-socialist activities, may have been large, but apparently, from the continuing efficient functioning of the nation, they constituted but a small proportion of the population or of the professional class.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 130

The anti-Soviet commentators and Khrushchev give the impression of an all-encompassing "terror" which virtually paralyzed Soviet life. But this was clearly false. Industrial production increased at a rapid rate between 1936 and 1940, the life of the average Soviet citizen went on much as before, for some it even took a special swing upward:
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 132

TROTSKY HEADED THE NAZI 5TH COLUMN IN THE SU

From the moment Hitler took power in Germany, the international counter-revolution became an integral part of the Nazi plan of world conquest. In every country, Hitler mobilized the counterrevolutionary forces which for the past fifteen years had been organizing throughout the world. These forces were now converted into the Fifth Columns of Nazi Germany, organizations of treason, espionage, and terror. These Fifth Columns were the secret vanguards of the German Wehrmacht.
One of the most powerful and important of these Fifth Columns operated in Soviet Russia. It was headed by a man who was perhaps the most remarkable political renegade in all history.
The name of this man was Leon Trotsky.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 185

When the Third Reich came into being, Leon Trotsky was already the leader of an international anti-Soviet conspiracy with powerful forces inside the Soviet Union. Trotsky in exile was plotting the overthrow of the Soviet government, his own return to Russia, and the assumption of that personal power he had once so nearly held.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 185

In the winter of 1921-1922, the leading Trotskyite, Krestinsky, had become the Soviet ambassador to Germany. In the course of his duties in Berlin, Krestinsky visited general Seeckt, Commander of the Reichswehr. Seeckt knew from his intelligence reports that Krestinsky was a Trotskyite. The German general gave Krestinsky to understand the Reichswehr was sympathetic with the aims of the Russian Opposition led by War Commissar Trotsky.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 197

In Moscow, a few months later, Krestinsky reported to Trotsky what general Seeckt had said. Trotsky was desperately in need of funds to finance his growing underground organization. He told Krestinsky that the Opposition in Russia needed foreign allies and must be prepared

to form alliances with friendly powers. Germany, Trotsky added, was not an enemy of Russia, and there was no likelihood of an early clash between them:
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 197

This High Command of the Opposition was named the “Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites.” It was constructed on three different levels or layers. If one of a layers was exposed, the others would carry on.
The first layer, the Trotskyite-Zinovievite Terrorist Center headed by Zinoviev, was responsible for the organization and direction of terrorism.
The second layer, the Trotskyite Parallel Center, headed by Pyatakov, was responsible for the organization and direction of sabotage.
The third and most important layer, the actual Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites, headed by Bucharin and Krestinsky, comprised most of the leaders and highest ranking members of the combined Opposition forces.
The entire apparatus consisted of not more than a few thousand members and some 20 or 30 leaders who held positions of authority in the Army, foreign office, Secret Service, industry, trade unions, party and government offices.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 230-31

The conspiratorial apparatus of the Trotskyites, Rights, and Zinovievites was, in fact, the Axis Fifth Column in Soviet Russia.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 233

Trotsky began by stating flatly that “the seizure of power in Russia could be consummated only by force.” But the conspiratorial apparatus alone was not strong enough to carry out a successful coup and to maintain itself in power without outside aid. It was therefore essential to come to a concrete agreement with foreign states interested in aiding the Trotskyites against the Soviet government for their own ends.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 237

By the autumn of 1934, Trotskyite and Right terrorist groups were functioning throughout the Soviet Union.
A list had been compiled of the Soviet leaders who were to be assassinated. At the head of the list was the name of Joseph Stalin. Among the other names were Voroshilov, Molotov, Kirov, Kaganovich, Zhdanov, Menzhinsky, Gorky, and Kuibyshev.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 245

The official public records of these trials, comprising more than 1,500 pages of detailed testimony, are not only fascinating reading but also represent the most comprehensive public expose ever made of a contemporary secret state conspiracy. In addition, these records contain the first full disclosures of the inner workings of an Axis Fifth Column. They are an invaluable source of material for this period in world history, in which the Axis Fifth Columns played a major role.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 409

In this conjunction of men and motives, the killers who held power in Berlin and Tokyo found their opportunity. In the capitalist democracies they found allies among industrialists,

aristocrats, anti-semites, native fascists, reactionary army officers, political adventurers, and prostituted journalists and politicians. In the USSR a corps of potential Quislings could be recruited only from the ranks of the secret dissenters within the Party and from such diplomats and army commanders as favored continued Soviet collaboration with the Reichswehr against the Western Powers rather than a program of collective security designed to checkmate Japan and the Axis. The elements of such a “Fifth Column” were in fact organized and partially mobilized for action with the aid of Trotsky, Tukhachevsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Pyatakov, Bukharin, Rykov, Yagoda, and other dissidents. Thanks to the vigilance of the NKVD and to the inhibitions, confusions, and quarrels among the conspirators, the plot ended in failure, exposure, belated repentance, and punishment.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 267

Had the plot not been exposed and crushed, the Soviet Union in the early 1940s would have suffered the fate of Spain, Czechoslovakia, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Yugoslavia, and Greece. The Nazi technique which prepared 16 other countries for occupation, subjugation, and partial extermination between 1938 and 1941 was precisely the technique set forth in the confessions of the accused in the Moscow trials. Had the conspiracy not been ruthlessly suppressed, Hitler and Hirohito would have won their war not only against Soviet Union but against Britain and America as well.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 268

The truly shocking result that Trotsky, whose services to the Revolution had been magnificent and honored as such by Lenin, became in the last sad end the chief tool of his country’s foes.
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, Inc., 1941, p. 72

The testimony of Radek, Sokolnikov, and Pyatakov outlined the following version. Trotsky conducted negotiations with Hess, the deputy chairman of the Nazi party. Referring to these negotiations, Trotsky told the “center” that in 1937 Germany was planning to attack the USSR. In this war, Trotsky felt, the Soviet Union would inevitably suffer a defeat in which “all the Trotskyist cadres would also perish in the ruins of the Soviet state.” In order to save these cadres from destruction, Trotsky obtained a promise from the leaders of the Third Reich to allow the Trotskyists to come to power, promising them “compensation” in turn: they would be granted concessions and Germany would be sold important economic objects of the USSR; she would be provided with raw materials and produce at prices below the world market, as well as territorial concessions in the form of satisfying German wishes for expansion in the Ukraine. Analogous concessions would be made to Japan, to whom Trotsky promised to give the Priamur and Primore regions in the Far East; he also pledged to guarantee oil “in case of war with the USA.” In order to expedite the defeat of the USSR, Trotsky ordered the “center” to prepare a series of the most important industrial enterprises to be taken out of commission at the start of the war. Radek and Sokolnikov “confirmed Trotsky’s right to speak in the name of Soviet Trotskyists” in negotiations with the fascist powers, and in conversations with German and Japanese diplomatic representatives they promised the support of “realistic politicians” in the USSR for Trotsky’s position.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 118

Who was united under Trotsky's Fascist banner? All the counter-revolutionary elements rallied under that banner. What means did the conspiracy use? High treason, the defeat of their own country, sabotage, espionage, and terror."
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 92

HITLER PRAISES TROTSKY'S BOOK

Hitler read Trotsky's autobiography as soon is it was published. Hitler's biographer, Conrad Heiden, tells in Der Fuehrer how the Nazi leader surprised a circle of his friends in 1930 by bursting into rapturous praises of Trotsky's book. "Brilliant!" cried Hitler, waving Trotsky's My Life at his followers. "I have learnt a great deal from it, and so can you!"
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 216

ANTI-STALIN GROUPS FORM UNDER TROTSKY'S LEADERSHIP

The chief defendant at all of the three Moscow trials was a man 5000 miles away.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 312

By the summer of 1932, an agreement to suspend past rivalries and differences, and to work together under Trotsky's supreme command, was under discussion between Pyatakov, as Trotsky's lieutenant in Russia, and Bucharin, the leader of the Right Opposition. The smaller group headed by the veteran oppositionists, Zinoviev and Kamenev, agreed to subordinate its activities to Trotsky's authority.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 230

KAMENEV UNHAPPY THAT STALIN WAS NOT KILLED

"A pity," said, Kamenev, when the terrorist Bakayev reported the failure of one of his plots to kill Stalin. "Let's hope the next time we'll be more successful."
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 247

TROTSKY MAKES HIS PEOPLE PAWNS OF THE GERMANS AND JAPANESE

"From now on," wrote Trotsky, "the diversive acts of the Trotskyites in the war industries" would have to be carried out under the direct "supervision of the German and Japanese high commands." The Trotskyites must undertake no "practical activity" without first having obtained the consent of their German and Japanese allies.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 276

TROTSKY TALKS WITH HESS

It was clear to Pyatakov that Trotsky had not invented this information. Trotsky now revealed to Pyatakov that for some time past he had been "conducting rather lengthy negotiations with the Vice Chairman of the German National Socialist Party — Hess."

As a result of these negotiations with Hitler's deputy, Trotsky had entered into an agreement, "an absolutely definite agreement," with the government of the Third Reich. The Nazis were ready to help the Trotskyites to come to power in the Soviet Union.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 281

Trotsky had agreed (1) to guarantee a generally favorable attitude towards the German government and the necessary collaboration with it in the most important questions of international character; (2) to agree to territorial concessions–the Ukraine; (3) to permit German industrialists, in the form of concessions, to exploit enterprises in the USSR essential as complements to the German economy (iron ore, manganese, oil, gold, timber, and so forth); (4) to create in the USSR favorable conditions for the activities of German private enterprise; (5) in time of war to develop extensive diversive activities in enterprises of the war industry and at the front. These diversive activities to be carried on under Trotsky's instructions, agreed upon with the German General Staff.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 281

Pyatakov, as Trotsky's chief lieutenant in Russia, was concerned that this out and out deal with Nazism might be difficult to explain to the rank and file members of the Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 281

GROUPS ALLIED AGAINST SU WERE RUTHLESS AND DETERMINED

The USSR was an arena in which the enemy met defeat in political warfare years before he failed in military warfare. The secrecy of each maneuver and counter move makes it impossible as yet to reconstruct the intricacies of the plots within plots and wheels within wheels whereby the Soviet Citadel was attacked and defended. Every aspect of this hidden war is still wrapped in a haze of speculation and controversy, save only the central fact that the attack was unscrupulous, merciless, and ineffective and that the defense was ruthless, relentless, and successful. What is beyond question, although wholly ignored in most contemporary comments, is that fascist conspirators did all in their power during the 1930's to disrupt and weaken the Soviet Union, as they were doing simultaneously in other communities earmarked for subjugation. Their arsenal of weapons, here as elsewhere, included assassination, sabotage, bribery, blackmail, treason, and rebellion.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 257

As the present century has amply and bloodily demonstrated, wherever the working class moves toward power, the bourgeoisie will work to destroy it by every means at its disposal, war, terrorism, massacre, counter-revolution, sabotage, subversion, lies. If a working class in power is not able to thwart these attempts it will be defeated and socialism destroyed.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 132

TROTSKY ADVOCATED KILLING STALIN

No one can know the precise time at which Trotsky made up his mind that Stalin's leadership of the party must be destroyed by violence.

Footnote: but in the Bulletin of the Opposition, October 1933, Trotsky wrote: “the Stalin bureaucracy… Can be compelled to hand over power to the proletarian vanguard only by FORCE” He later told the New York American (Hearst), January 26, 1937: “Stalin has put himself above all criticism and the state. It is impossible to displace him except by assassination.”
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 264

Moral revulsion at assassination as a political weapon was a sentiment unknown to Trotsky, for all his initial Marxist objections to individual terrorism.
“We were never concerned,” wrote Trotsky, “with the Kantian-priestly and vegetarian-Quaker prattle about the sacredness of human life. We were revolutionaries in opposition, and have remained revolutionaries in power. To make the individual sacred we must destroy the social order which crucifies him. And this problem can be solved only by blood and iron.”
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 267

…Trotsky made his papers available to an international commission that investigated and disproved the charge that he had supported the policy of assassination, and Sedov also answered the false charge in Livre sur Le Proces de Moscou. His assistant while writing a book, which was published in 1937, was Mark Zborowsky, a penetration agent whose code name on his NKVD file was TULIP.
Zborowsky had so successfully ingratiated himself into Sedov’s circle by 1937 that he was regarded as totally loyal in Trotskyist circles. The TULIP file reveals that it was from Zborowsky that Stalin, in January 1937, obtained material that was claimed to be evidence to renew his charges against Trotsky. But TULIP, who can hardly have been unaware of Sedov’s real views, appears simply to have relayed to Moscow information that he believed “The Boss” wanted to hear. For example he wrote to the Center: “On Jan. 22 Sedov, during our conversation in his apartment on the subject of the second Moscow trial and the role of the different defendants, declared, ‘Now we shouldn’t hesitate. Stalin should be murdered.’ ”
“Stalin’s deep fear of assassination would, therefore, have been inflamed by a more detailed report of the intentions revealed by Sonny–as Sedov was known by the NKVD–which Zborowsky dispatched to Moscow on Feb. 11:
“Not since 1936 had SONNY initiated any conversation with me about terrorism. Only about two or three weeks ago, after a meeting of the group, SONNY began speaking on this subject again. On this occasion he only tried to prove that terrorism is not contrary to Marxism. “Marxism”, according to SONNY’s words, “denies terrorism only to the extent that the conditions of class struggle don’t favor terrorism. But there are certain situations where terrorism is necessary.” The next time SONNY began talking about terrorism was when I came to his apartment to work. While we were reading newspapers, SONNY said that the whole regime in the USSR was propped up by Stalin; it was enough to kill Stalin for everything to fall to pieces.”
Costello, John and Oleg Tsarev. Deadly illusions. New York: Crown, c1993, p. 282

The evidence showed that for a long while there existed in the Soviet Union the two groups of Oppositionists, that led by Trotsky from abroad, and the Zinoviev-Kamenev group. They had hated each other almost as much as they had hated Stalin and the other leaders of the Soviet government. With the success of Socialistic construction, however, both groups began to realize that what little mass support they might have had in the beginning had completely fallen away from them. In desperation emissaries from Zinoviev and Kamenev

went abroad to meet Trotsky's agents and Trotsky himself. They hoped by joining forces to make up some of the ground they had lost.
But Trotsky had no such illusions. He knew that mass support could never be won again in the face of the triumphant success recorded by the Soviet Government. Therefore he suggested, and insisted, that only the murder of the present leaders could pave the way to the return of the Trotsky-Zinoviev group to influence in the Soviet Union.
Shepherd, W. G. The Moscow Trial. London: Communist Party of Great Britain, 1936, p. 7

And then–this was a truly fascist touch–all those tools that they had used in the various Commissariats to help them carry through their plans were to be assassinated too, so that none would be left alive who could tell the world of their crimes.
On one point all the accused men spoke with one voice: Every communication received from Trotsky harped on the theme: Kill Stalin.
One of the defendants described a meeting in Kamenev's flat, with both Zinoviev and Kamenev present. This defendant, Lurie, had expressed his qualms at working with the "Gestapo." Zinoviev had brushed the objection aside. "The ends justify the means," he declared.
Shepherd, W. G. The Moscow Trial. London: Communist Party of Great Britain, 1936, p. 8

Berman Yurin was another of the accused who confessed to having entered the USSR expressly for the purpose of murdering Stalin.
"Stalin must be physically destroyed" was the point emphasized to me over and over again by Trotsky in personal conversation, said Yurin, narrating his conversations in Copenhagen with Trotsky.
Mrachkovsky, one of Trotsky's closest confidents since 1923, told the court how Trotsky had made terrorism and assassination of basic condition on which he would agree to the merging of the groups.
By the time the hearing had ended there was no doubt of the guilt of the men in the dock, and that they richly deserved the death penalty that awaited them.
Shepherd, W. G. The Moscow Trial. London: Communist Party of Great Britain, 1936, p. 9

TROTSKY ALSO WORKED WITH THE GERMANS BUT SOLD OUT HIS FOLLOWERS

Trotsky, in 1934, in his impatience to recover the power he had lost, was less discreet [than Lenin]. He entered into negotiation with the Germans, and tried at the same time to start negotiations with the Japanese. He had to have something to negotiate with, and so he offered territorial concessions to both those probable adversaries of Soviet Russia. Rather a reduced Russia than a Russia ruled by Stalin! Being an autocrat with an exaggerated notion of his own importance, he did not ask any of his supporters in Russia whether they agreed with him. To show the support he had in Russia, he gave away the names of his supporters in the course of his negotiations, and the information was promptly used, particularly by the Japanese, in the interest of their intelligence service. Trotsky's supporters in Russia found themselves in an appalling situation, for they did not share his view of the future. It is, moreover, extraordinarily difficult to fulfill one's duties during the day to the best of one's abilities and then to undo it all secretly at night. Consequently, most of Trotsky's followers disregarded his orders.

Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 293

FOREIGN SPIES WORMED THEIR WAY INTO SOVIET GOVERNMENT

Yet more: in this great purge the fact was established that the German, Japanese, and Polish espionage services had wormed their way far into Russia, gaining access to the highest circles. The Deputy People's Commissar for Agriculture, a Galacian Ukrainian, proved to have been for many years a Polish spy. The Soviet ambassador in Turkey, Karakhan, was shot as a German spy…. Karakhan fell into the hands of a beautiful German woman, and as a result into the hands of the Hitlerist intelligence service.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 304

Another important personality, though not so famous, was Boris Steiger, the official head of the foreign section of the Fine Arts Department. In reality he was an important representative of the secret police for liaison with the foreign diplomats, and an influential adviser of the Foreign Ministry. The Japanese had found out something compromising in his past, and had blackmailed him. He became a Japanese spy. He, too, was shot.
Thus there had been discovered a whole series of high officials who had been carrying out espionage for foreign Powers. A morbid fear of espionage spread over Russia. Large numbers of foreigners, the remainder of the foreign specialists in the Soviet Union, and Communist refugees from Hitler, were arrested, some on suspicion of espionage, others because they were supposed to be in close touch with members of the Russian opposition.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 305

MANY HIGH GOVT OFFICIALS WERE FOREIGN AGENTS

It has not been realized in the world outside the Soviet Union that in these trials of 1936 to 1938 the most widespread conspiracy in the world's history came to judgment. In that conspiracy were involved not only ex-leaders of the party and a former head of the government, but also fully a dozen members of the Government who were still in office, and the supreme commander of the army, the Chief of Staff, almost all the army commanders, and in addition a considerable number of senior officers; the Minister of Police and the highest police officials; the Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, almost all the ambassadors and ministers representing the Soviet Union abroad, almost the whole of the diplomatic staff of the ministry in Moscow; and also highly-placed judges and members of the governments of the federal republics.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 308

… but power was passing altogether from Stalin to a still somewhat nebulous motley of adventurers, militarists, and political police bosses and imperialists. They already were sufficiently strong to hold up a decision of the Government.
When we had all returned to Karlshorst, I was visited in my office by a comrade standing very high indeed. For though powerless still to overthrow the regime, we revolutionary Democrats were by this time strong enough to have our men in many key places.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 354

At least in the official rhetoric of the day, not a great deal distinguished “spies” from White Guards, kulaks, Trotskyites, and Zinovievites. From the Stalinist viewpoint, they may have operated from different perspectives, but they were all seen as threats to the USSR. Considered this way, the 43,072 discovered in these categories up until December 1935 was large, especially considering that many of these people had held responsible posts. Imagine the outcry, and the fear, if in 1948 the FBI had announced that more than 40,000 enemies of the United States had been discovered operating inside the country’s ruling bodies. The allegation that one person, Alger Hiss, had been a Soviet agent was enough to send America into a minor frenzy, even though our enemies were on the other sides of the oceans. Forty thousand real and desperate foes, all presumably busy recruiting others, could inflict tremendous damage on any country.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 31

There is one important earlier case generally recognized as that of a genuine spy– Konar, who became Assistant People’s Commissar of Agriculture until accidentally exposed. He was a Polish agent who had been given the papers of a dead Red Army soldier in 1920, and in ten years had thus risen high in the hierarchy, until exposed by someone who chanced to have seen the real Konar.
Conquest, Robert. he Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 270

[At the Feb. March 1937 Plenum Stalin stated]: Comrades! From the reports and discussions held previously at the plenum, it is obvious that we have here a problem that could be characterized by three basic facts.
First–the harmful and diversionary espionage of foreign country agents, in whose ranks the Trotskyites played a very active part. They managed to involve practically all of our organizations to a greater or lesser degree industrial, administrative, and party organizations.
Secondly–agents of foreign countries, including Trotskyites, have managed to worm themselves not only into the lower party organs, but also they managed to get some top ranking posts in the government and party.
Thirdly–some of our leading comrades, in the Central Committee and in regions of the country, not only were not able to expose these agents, diversionists, spies, and assassins, but they became unwilling tools in this anti-State work and even unknowingly appointed some of these agents to responsible positions. These are undeniable facts, according to the reports and documents that we heard during this plenum.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 227

WHY DID THE VAST INTERNAL CONSPIRACY FAIL

This is by no means a complete list. How was it that this vast conspiracy was entirely unsuccessful? It failed simply because its membership was too exalted. There were generals, but they had no army. There were persons in high office, but nobody to execute their orders. Around the conspirators, and, still more important, beneath them, were everywhere the members of the new official class. Thus the conspiracy had no solid basis and could not grow into an effective movement.

The conspirators might have sent one of their members to Stalin to shoot him down during an audience. They actually discussed this, but no one had the courage to make the attempt. Thus all they did was to come together in groups at long intervals, and talk and whisper, without any practical result–until, after several years, the first attempt was made, much too late. The first attempt at once betrayed everything.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 308-09

TO GET HELP THE OPPOSITION PROMISED THE NAZIS LAND LIKE THE UKRAINE

Also leading the Germans into war, was their belief in the internal weakness of Russia and the alleged widespread disaffection against Stalin. Much of this fantastic idea may have resulted from the conversations which Stalin has always insisted took place between Trotsky and the opposition leaders and the Nazi Party heads. Among the principal accusations leveled against Trotsky had been the treacherous liaison with Hitler, to whom the minority groups were said to have promised the Ukraine and certain districts in Western Russia in return for military help against Stalin.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 119

SOVIET OFFICIAL SAYS GOVT IS INFESTED WITH SPIES AND TRAITORS

On October 7, 1937, Ambassador Davies wrote in his diary, “Ambassador Troyanovsky [Soviet Ambassador to the US] came in and spent an hour with me. He gave rather an interesting account of conditions here that justified the executions. He described the naivete of his people even in the government in extending their trust and making party membership a guarantee of reliability. He stated that the country was in fact infested with spies of hostile countries, which spies were for years engaged upon this service as members of the Communist Party and even the government itself. He stated that he himself had had suspicions many times; that England and France were similarly infested; that Stalin might later give the world “his side” of this situation.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 225

Stalin gives the impression of a strong mind which is composed and wise. His brown eye is exceedingly kindly and gentle. A child would like to sit in his lap and a dog would sidle up to him. It is difficult to associate his personality and this impression of kindness and gentle simplicity with what has occurred here in connection with these purges and shootings of the Red Army generals, and so forth. His friends say, and Ambassador Troyanovsky assures me, that it had to be done to protect themselves against Germany–and that someday the outside world will know “their side.”
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 356

[At the Feb. March 1937 Plenum Stalin stated], Then the question has to be asked as to where and how the present enemies have the influence? Their strength is that they hold the party card in their hands, thus giving them the respectability to do their dirty work… doors open into our most important governmental posts.

They completely worm themselves into favor, becoming more patriotic than the best dedicated communist; they heap slavish praise upon the leadership in every section that they are in. They thus were able to get the top government secrets and thus, give them to foreign enemy powers. Thus, they were easily enmeshed in foreign secret services. Our mistakes are that we did not try earlier to unmask these enemies, thus weakening our fight against these present-day enemies.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 235

…sometime in January the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, after accusing Ukraine of deliberately sabotaging the fulfillment of grain quotas, had sent Postyshev, a sadistically cruel Russian chauvinist, as its viceroy to Ukraine….
As we listened to these harangues, we often thought that perhaps there was hidden sabotage at work to discredit the Communist Party.
Dolot, Miron. Execution by Hunger. New York: W.W. Norton, c1985, p. 210-211

SECRET POLICE GATHERING EVIDENCE AGAINST AND INVESTIGATING STALIN ALSO

It had so happened that earlier, while working in Moscow, I'd once asked that Lukashov be sent to Poland and Lithuania to purchase onion seeds and vegetables. When he was arrested, he was pressured to testify that his trade mission to Poland had actually been a secret political assignment to establish contacts with anti-Soviet organizations abroad. He refused to confess and was released–a rare thing. I told Stalin about the episode.
"Yes," he said, "I know what you mean; there are these kinds of perversions. They're gathering evidence against me, too."
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 108

I was astounded also to discover that Molotov had my uncle's personal secretariat so honeycombed with his own spies that he knew everything that went on in Stalin's entourage, and even more amazed to learn that the GPU kept even Stalin under surveillance.
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 70

"Good day, Budu," he [Stalin] said. "You see I've succeeded in getting your articles. I read them carefully. You're quite right. There's nothing anti-Marxist in them at all. I'm going to talk to Molotov about it."
I told him why I had come to see him and about all the difficulties that had been put in my way. His face turned a pale gray from rage. He was beside himself.
"I won't stand for anyone intercepting Nadia's letters or phone calls," he exploded. "She's my wife. I guarantee her. The GPU has no business interfering with her!"
He picked up the telephone and called Dzerzhinsky.
"Felix Dzerzhinsky," he said, when the GPU president answered, "will you come over to my apartment at once?"
He hung up and turned back to me.
"You stay, Budu," he directed me. "We're going to have this out."

Dzerzhinsky arrived 15 minutes later. His face was twisted and lined with deep wrinkles. Dark circles surrounded his eyes. It was not difficult to see that the illness which had long beset him was getting worse.
He greeted me in a friendly fashion.
“Look here, Felix,” Stalin attacked, “your organization is going a little too far. My nephew here, Budu Svanidze, was called in by Artuzov for a strictly personal matter which concerns me alone. In the future, I want the GPU to keep its nose out of my private affairs.”
“What happened?” Dzerzhinsky asked.
“The GPU has been intercepting phone calls and opening letters addressed to us here.”
Dzerzhinsky became very serious.
“There must be some mistake, Comrade Stalin. There is an order of the Politburo covering that point. Letters addressed to members of the Politburo are never opened.”
“Let’s get it quite straight,” Stalin said. “I’m not speaking only of letters addressed to me personally. I do not want any surveillance of Comrade Alliluyeva [Stalin’s wife] and I do not want any discussions at the GPU concerning my conversations with my nephew. Make that clear to Artuzov.”
Dzerzhinsky promised that there would be no repetition of the offense. He stayed for a few moments longer, talking with my uncle, and then left after taking a cup of tea, which my aunt offered him.
When he had gone, Stalin said to me, “You see how it is, Budu, the GPU is becoming all-powerful. They don’t want to let anyone alone.”
I knew that Dzerzhinsky, who was an old member of the Party, affected an attitude of complete independence toward the Politburo. But I hadn’t dreamed up to now that the GPU would dare to spy on the secretary-general of the Party.
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 77

Ordjonikidze himself was being increasingly harassed. Police officers arrived at Ordjonikidze’s flat with a search warrant. Humiliated and frantic with rage, he spent the rest of the night trying to get through to Stalin on the telephone. As morning came he finally got through and heard the answer [from Stalin]. “It is the sort of organ that is even liable to search my place. That is nothing extraordinary….”
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 168

It is unclear whether the “neighbors” had been tapping Koba’s telephone on their own initiative or with the permission of Mekhlis.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 217

While Ordjonikidze was at the Commissariat, a search was conducted of his apartment. When he found out about this, Ordjonikidze immediately telephoned Stalin and expressed his indignation. Stalin said in reply: “It’s such an organ, that it might carry out a search at my place. Nothing to get upset about….”
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 194

These few examples reveal the GPU’s in method of operation. The system was similar in the control organ of the party. In the Fourth Section of the army it was considerably different because most of the staff was salaried. But there, too, the same system of investigating and spying reached everywhere. Nobody was spared, not even Stalin: there was a dossier on him, too.

Tuominen, Arvo, The Bells of the Kremlin: Hanover: University Press of New England, 1983, p. 184

WHEN STALIN AND HIS ALLIES TRIED TO BE LENIENT THEY WERE STABBED

It is no more than just to observe the Stalin was patient and acted slowly. Against those who wanted to execute Trotsky he urged exile, then banishment from the country. When Zinoviev and Kamenev committed acts which according to both Communist Party rules and Soviet law were treason, they were permitted to make repeated pledges to change their ways and given positions of some responsibility. Their pledges were found to be insincere. Their word of “honor” was continually violated.
Then, on December 1, 1934, Stalin received a wire that Kirov had been murdered. Stalin’s patience was exhausted.
Stalin’s attitude can be determined from statements he had made earlier. In reply to a question from the German writer Emil Ludwig as to why he was governing with such severity, Stalin had said that it was because they had been too lenient at certain times. He cited the fact that when General Krasnov marched on Leningrad and was arrested, his action merited death. But the Bolsheviks gave the General freedom on his pledged word that he would not take up arms again. He promptly went over to the counter-revolution. “It became clear,” Stalin said, “that with this policy we were undermining the very system we were endeavoring to construct.”
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 28

If one leaves rumor and gossip aside, one finds numerous signs that Stalin favored what the Old Bolshevik would have called liberal policies. Indeed, as one scholar has recently shown, Stalin had identified himself with more relaxed social and educational policies as early as 1931. Stalin made conciliatory gestures to the “bourgeois specialists” and relaxed educational restrictions that had excluded sons and daughters of white-collar specialists. In May 1933, Stalin and Molotov ordered the release of half of all labor inmates whose infractions were connected with collectivization. The following summer, the political police (NKVD) were forbidden to pass death sentences without the sanction of the procurator of the USSR. The November 1934 plenum of the Central Committee abolished food rationing and approved new collective farm rules that guaranteed kolkhozniki the right to “private plots” and personal livestock.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 94

As a member of the war council of the 32nd Army on the Western front, he [Zhilenkov] had been encircled and taken prisoner. As a time-server with no principles and suddenly finding himself among senior party officers, he soon became a collaborator. The same was true of another of Vlasov’s aides, Lt. Gen. Malyshkin, chief of staff 19th Army. He had been arrested in 1938 and released at the beginning of the war. When Beria reported on a number of generals who had been condemned and then released, Stalin wanted to know who had petitioned on Malyshkin’s behalf. He begrudged the time wasted on having to hear about all the traitors he had overlooked in the 1930s.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 446

One of the first decrees of the Council of Commissars abolished the death sentence, in spite of Lenin's protests. The Cossack General Krasnov who marched on Petersburg to overthrow the Bolsheviks and disperse the Soviets was taken prisoner by the Red Guards and released on his solemn pledge that he would not resume the fight. Later Krasnov headed one of the White armies in southern Russia. It took time before the revolution, amid the gruelling experiences of civil war, wiped away its tears, ceased to trust the pledges of its foes, and learned to act with that fanatical determination which gave it some new and repulsive features, but to which it owed its survival. We shall soon find the 'man of steel' among those who weaned the revolution from its sensitive–or was it sentimental?–idealism.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 178

A few days later these Yunkers were released. A second time they were paroled and a second time they broke faith with their liberators–they went South and joined the White Guard Armies mobilizing against the Bolsheviks.
With like acts of treachery thousands of Whites repaid the Bolsheviks for their clemency. Over his own signature general Krasnov solemnly promised not to raise his hand against the Bolsheviks, and was released. Promptly he appeared in the Urals at the head of a Cossack army destroying the Soviets. Burtsev was liberated from Peter-Paul prison by order of the Bolsheviks. Straightway he joined the Counter-Revolutionists in Paris and became editor of a scurrilous anti-Bolshevik sheet. Thousands, who thus went forth to freedom by mercy of the Bolsheviks, were to come back later with invading armies to kill their liberators without ruth or mercy.
Surveying battalions of comrades slaughtered by the very men whom the Bolsheviks had freed, Trotsky said: "The chief crime of which we were guilty and those first days of the Revolution was excessive kindness."
Williams, Albert. Through the Russian Revolution. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967, p. 160

[In a talk with the German author Emil Ludwig on December 13, 1931 Stalin stated] When the Bolsheviks came to power they at first treated their enemies mildly. The Mensheviks continued to exist legally and publish their newspaper. The Socialist-Revolutionaries also continued to exist legally and had their newspaper. Even the Cadets continued to publish their newspaper. When General Krasnov organized his counter-revolutionary campaign against Leningrad and fell into our hands, we could at least have kept him prisoner, according to the rules of war. Indeed, we ought to have shot him. But we released him on his "word of honor." And what happened? It soon became clear that such mildness only helped to undermine the strength of the Soviet Government. We made a mistake in displaying such mildness towards enemies of the working class. To have persisted in that mistake would have been a crime against the working class and a betrayal of its interests. That soon became quite apparent. Very soon it became evident that the milder our attitude towards our enemies, the greater their resistance. Before long the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries–Gotz and others–and the Right Mensheviks were organizing in Leningrad a counter-revolutionary action of the military cadets, as a result of which many of our revolutionary sailors perished. This very Krasnov, whom we had released on his "word of honor," organized the whiteguard Cossacks. He joined forces with Mamontov and for two years waged an armed struggle against the Soviet Government. Very soon it turned out that behind the whiteguard generals stood the agents of the western capitalist states– France, Britain, American–and also Japan.

We became convinced that we had made a mistake in displaying mildness. We learnt from the experience that the only way to deal with such enemies is to apply the most ruthless policy of suppression to them.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 13, p. 110

The period of increasing tolerance in Soviet history ended abruptly on December 1, 1934, when Kirov, the head of the Leningrad Party organization, and probably the second most influential party leader in the country, was assassinated at the Leningrad party headquarters by a discontented young party member.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 235

SPIES WERE EVERYWHERE UNDER THE CZARS

People talk about personally conducted tours under the Bolsheviks, but under Tsarism the secret police trailed me twenty-four hours a day, using three shifts.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 34

CHURCHILL DID EVERYTHING HE COULD TO DESTROY SOCIALISM

Churchill was socialism's most outspoken opponent. He took such a dislike to communism that he did everything he could to set up barricades around the capitalist world, to organize it, and to position it against communism in hopes of reining in the socialist countries.
He did not just want to prevent the development of socialism; he did all he could to destroy it. Dulles picked up where Churchill left off.
Schecter, Jerrold. Trans & Ed. Khrushchev Remembers: the Glasnost Tapes. Boston: Little, Brown, c1990, p. 68

… in the days when the country was invaded by the armies of "14 states." You will recall the threat of the notorious Churchill of an invasion by 14 states.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 291

… the inveterate Bolshevik-hater Winston Churchill (Chancellor of the Exchequer), was mounting a war against the USSR.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 280

Churchill had been the world's loudest advocate of a crusade against Soviet Russia in the Civil War. He had referred to the Bolsheviks as baboons and had called for the October Revolution to be "strangled" in its cradle.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 462

STALIN KNOWS THERE ARE ALWAYS ENEMIES INSIDE THE PARTY

Stalin was aggravated by such talk [Gottwald's contention that the Czech CP had no internal enemies]. Inside our own circle, behind Gottwald's back, Stalin called him "a blind man, a

pussycat. Gottwald, what does he know? He argues that there are no enemies inside his party. That cannot be!"
Schecter, Jerrold. Trans & Ed. Khrushchev Remembers: the Glasnost Tapes. Boston: Little, Brown, c1990, p. 132

As soon as our advisers arrived in Czechoslovakia, we started to get material on individual leaders….
Then material started to come in on Rudolf Slansky and other leaders of the Czech Communist party. They turned him into an enemy of the people. I do know how long it took, but not long, once Stalin got negative material on him. Stalin was triumphant because he had been proven right. He said he had sensed Slansky's real nature all along. Gottwald, who had assured Stalin that he had no enemies within the party leadership, really had turned out to be a pussycat, and a blind man who could not see what his enemies were doing right under his nose. Gottwald, as they say, threw in the towel.
Schecter, Jerrold. Trans & Ed. Khrushchev Remembers: the Glasnost Tapes. Boston: Little, Brown, c1990, p. 133

Yes, Gorbachev would spit on Stalin–but carefully.
Remnick, David. Lenin's Tomb. New York: Random House, c1993, p. 49

GREATER FREEDOM AND MORE LENIENCY ALLOWED WHEN THREATS ARE LESS SERIOUS

…The tendency since the abolition of the Cheka has, however, been toward restricted powers and activity–a tendency broken now and then by the pressure of some foreign threat of attack on the Soviet regime, or some internal crisis….
…The terror in Russia is and has been almost directly in proportion to hostile foreign movements against the Soviet state. Fear of intervention from without or of counter-revolutionary activity within have dictated its severity.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 195

But it is most probable also that terrorism by the Soviet political police would in the absence of foreign pressure have been vastly reduced–certainly to a point at which the word "terror" could not fairly be applied.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 196

To be sure, some signs of political liberalization did appear in the mid-1930s.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 101

[When] the level of tolerance and repression of those who oppose the Soviet socialist system is carefully compared with the history of repression of those who have opposed the dominant institutions of U.S. society over the 200 years of U.S. history, …[one] concludes that there is no qualitative difference between the two types of societies in this respect. The states of both the USSR and the USA have always done whatever was necessary to preserve their dominant system of property. Periods of increased repression in both

countries have corresponded to the degree of the threat to the dominant class, while periods of tolerance have corresponded to periods of latency of opposition movements.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 29

ANTI-SOVIET ELEMENTS WORMED THEIR WAY INTO THE PARTY

[Zhdanov] frankly declared "…There were numerous cases of hostile elements who had wormed their way into the party, taking advantage of the purges to persecute and ruin honest people. There is no necessity for the method of the mass purge."
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 179

SUBVERSIVES PLANNED TO "DISMISS" STALIN

Shkiriatov said at the Central Committee plenum of Jan. 7-12, 1933,
"Regarding the leader of our party, Comrade Stalin–what means did they employ in their struggle against Comrade Stalin? According to Comrade Nikolsky's statement, they said that they were prepared to remove Comrade Stalin, whereas in their testimony, Eismont and others tried to replace one word with another: they had spoken not of "removing" but of "dismissing" him. But we know what a discussion about "dismissing" the leader of the party could mean. We hold congresses, we hold plenum sessions, but as you can see, there is no question here of "dismissal" at a congress. Instead, discussions are carried on about "dismissal" in other ways. Anyone who has the slightest understanding in this matter knows by what methods Smirnov and others had planned to attempt this "dismissal." And indeed Eismont doesn't deny in his testimony that he had spoken with Smirnov about this. He said that "he must be dismissed." We, on the other hand, consider, that all of these words–change, dismiss, remove–are one and the same thing, that there is no difference whatsoever between them. In our opinion it all amounts to violent dismissal.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 84

Rudzutak said the following at the Central Committee plenum of Jan. 7-12 1933,
"Smirnov…maintains that he never said that it was necessary to remove Stalin while all his friends in the group assert that these discussions did take place."
"In the materials given to you there is testimony by Poponin, whom Eismont had tried to recruit, seeking to convince him that the present leadership is leading the party and country to ruin, that it was necessary to replace the leadership, to replace General Secretary Stalin. In this exchange of theirs, they discussed and "selected" possible candidates who might be able to replace Comrade Stalin. Moreover, Eismont asked Poponin: "Couldn't you, as a former military man, be of some use to us?" What does it mean when the question of replacing the leadership is discussed, when the question of electing candidates is discussed? What does it mean when the question "Couldn't you, as a former military man, be of some use to us?" is posed? Does this not testify to the fact that this is a real organization, openly set against the party and calculating on the use of violent measures, an organization that had been checking up on the sentiments of military officials toward Comrade Stalin? In any case, we can consider it an established fact that the preparation for the implementation of this counter-revolutionary venture had commenced, and that Eismont had begun to seek out military officials appropriate for it….
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 91

At the January 1933 plenum, too, the last of the new cycle of plots was exposed. The distinguished Old Bolshevik A.P. Smirnov, Party member since 1896 and formerly member of the Central Committee's "Orgburo," was charged with two other Old Bolsheviks, Eismont and Tolmachev (members since 1907 and 1904, respectively), with forming an anti-Party group. A. P. Smirnov's group is said to have had contact with Old Bolshevik workers, mainly in the trade unions, in Moscow, Leningrad, and other cities. Realizing that no legal methods could break Stalin's grip, they had to a large degree gone underground, with a view to organizing for a struggle. Their programs seems to have covered the revision of the unbalanced industrial schemes, the dissolution of most of the kolkhozes, the subjection of the OGPU to Party control, and the independence of the trade unions. Above all, they had discussed the removal of Stalin. When taxed at the plenum Eismont said, "Yes, there were such conversations among us. A. P. Smirnov started them." Unlike Ryutin and his friends, none of the three had had any connection with the Trotskyite or Rightist oppositions. The exposure of this plot was described in the Khrushchev era as "the beginning of reprisals against the old Leninist cadres."
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 26

YEZHOV DESCRIBES THE DEGREE OF SUBVERSIVE PENETRATION OF THE KREMLIN

[The June 6, 1935 speech of Yezhov to the Central Committee plenum]
For the party and country, the murder of Comrade Kirov is the most poignant political event of the past decade.
…These facts show that during the investigation of the circumstances surrounding the murder of Comrade Kirov in Leningrad, the role of Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Trotsky in the preparation of terroristic acts against the leaders of the party and Soviet state has not yet been fully revealed. The latest events show that they were not only the instigators but in fact the active organizers of the murder of Comrade Kirov, as well as of the attempt on the life of Comrade Stalin that was being prepared within the Kremlin.
Soon after the murder of Comrade Kirov, a new network of Zinovievist-Kamenevist and Trotskyist-white guard terrorist cells was uncovered.
What makes this so grave is that several of these terrorist groups were uncovered in the Kremlin itself.
The entire country, all of us, considered the Kremlin to be the most well defended, the most inaccessible and inviolate territory, where the protection of our leaders is properly secured. But in fact the very opposite turned out to be the case. Thanks to the total blunting of political and classic vigilance of many Communists holding responsible positions in the Central Executive Committee of the USSR and, first and foremost, Comrade Yenukidze, the class enemy has succeeded in organizing terrorist cells within immediate range of the headquarters of our revolution. As you will see from the facts that shall be presented to you, this blunting of political and class vigilance nearly cost Comrade Stalin his life and borders on treason against the interests of party and country.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 162

…Comrade Yenukidze was in fact responsible for all order in the Kremlin, including its security.

The investigation conducted by the NKVD revealed five terroristic groups that were connected with one another yet acting independently of one another.
Two groups were organized within the Kremlin and three outside the Kremlin. They all set as their chief task the murder of Comrade Stalin….
Utilizing their time-tested tactics of double dealing, Zinoviev and Kamenev took all measures to evade responsibility for the murder of Comrade Kirov and for preparations of an attempt on the life of Comrade Stalin.
Only under the pressure of absolutely indisputable facts, as expressed in the depositions of dozens of their closest supporters, were they forced to acknowledge their "political and moral" responsibility for this whole affair. Nevertheless, they continue obstinately to deny their direct participation in organizing these terroristic groups….
In his deposition, Kamenev says the following:
"My counter-revolutionary conversations with Zinoviev promoted the creation of an atmosphere of embitterment against Stalin. Consequently, this might have created a situation justifying terror as regards Stalin much as Kerensky created a situation for carrying out violence against Lenin. I confess that I have committed a grave crime against the party and against the Soviet state. My counterrevolutionary actions and those of Zinoviev not only created an atmosphere of malice and hatred toward Stalin. They also served to incite the counter-revolutionaries to acts of terrorism. There is no doubt now in my mind that Rosenfeld perceived our attacks and slander on Stalin as a program of terror. I take responsibility for the fact that, as a result of the situation created by Zinoviev and me and as a result of our counter-revolutionary actions, a counter-revolutionary organization has arisen whose participants were intent on perpetrating the vilest crime of all: the murder of Stalin."
I believe that it is difficult to expect Kamenev, in his position, to confess to any more than that. But there is no need for any more confessions on his part. The investigators have at their disposal an absolutely sufficient quality of facts that prove direct participation by Kamenev and Zinoviev in the organizing of terroristic groups, facts that follow fully from the policies of their own programs, which they issued to their supporters in their struggle against the party and government.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 163

[Yezhov continues], These facts and ideological positions show that Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Trotsky, embittered by the successes of the Revolution, have, in their hopeless attempt to make their way into the leadership of the party and country, slid down definitively into the mire of the White emigre world and have advanced to the most extreme forms of struggle–namely, terror.
These facts now show that the murder of Comrade Kirov was organized by Zinoviev and Kamenev and that it constitutes only one link in a chain of terroristic plans of the Zinovievist-Kamenevist and Trotskyist groups.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 165

Making reference to a personal assignment from Stalin, Yezhov announced that he would "get rid of all of that scum which the revolution and the Civil War had sent sloshing into the organs of state security. People who have come from the Central Committee Orgburo will sweep out all that grime with an iron broom."
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 30

Yezhov received me very courteously in his office. It was adorned with a large Kherossan carpet… stained in places. Yezhov is said to have shot several people in his office…. He shook my hand. He said Stalin had confidence in me… then he added that there were "enemies of the people" in the Narkomindel as well as in other Commissariats…. I tried to find out who were these "enemies of the people"…. He smiled enigmatically and then said, "You know, even Stalin does not expect to be notified of the names of persons to be arrested…. The technique of our work does not permit this…. Complete and unconditional secrecy is essential….
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 256

YEZHOV DENOUNCES TROTSKYISTS INTERNAL ORGANIZATION AND TACTICS

[From Yezhov's September 25th, 1935 report to a conference of regional party secretaries]
Please permit me, comrades, at this time, to briefly dwell on certain matters which have become very important today. The first matter concerns the expulsion of Trotskyists.
One thing is clear beyond dispute: it seems to me that Trotskyists undoubtedly have a center somewhere in the USSR. It is impossible for a Trotskyist center from abroad, located relatively far from the USSR and poorly informed about our conditions–it is impossible, I say, for it to direct with such detail those Trotskyist organizations which have unfortunately held out in our country and which, we believed, had been crushed.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 200

[Yezhov continues] Everywhere the same methods are practiced by Trotskyists who have held out in our party. Trotskyists try at all costs to remain in the party. They strive by every device to infiltrate the party. Their first device is to remain at all costs in the party, to give voice everywhere to the general line, to speak out everywhere in its favor while in fact carrying on their subversive work. But nevertheless, it sometimes happens that a Trotskyist slips up and is caught, is expelled from the party, in which case he takes all measures to run off with his party card. He always has in reserve a registration card, approaches another organization and is registered. Such people are expelled three or four or even five times each. They move from one organization to another–we have quite a few people like that. Trotskyists try at all costs to keep their party card….
Their second device is not to carry out their work in the party. They do not, as a rule, carry on party work at all. They focus their attention on working among nonparty people….
Above all, Trotskyists strive to infuse the nonparty people with the spirit of Trotskyism….
Foreign intelligence officers, saboteurs, knew that there is no better cover for their espionage and subversive operations than a party card, and they relied on that fact. For this reason, it is necessary to hide behind a party card at whatever cost. And they utilized every means of deception in order to obtain a party card for a spy or for a saboteur. We can assert firmly that Poles, Finns, Czechs, and Germans have been openly gambling on this….
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 201

PEOPLE ENGAGED IN SPYING AND ESPIONAGE AGAINST THE SU

[Dec. 29, 1935 NKVD report on Trotskyists]

…Adhering to his Trotskyist convictions, Pukat attempted to leave the Soviet Union with the assistance of the Latvian Embassy in Moscow in order to continue his struggle against the party under the direct leadership of Trotsky.
According to his own testimony, Pukat was recruited in 1930 by the secretary of the Latvian Embassy, who entrusted him on one of his visits to the embassy with gathering material of an espionage character concerning enterprises in the city of Kostroma….
"…I discussed my departure for Latvia with the secretary of the Latvian mission, who, in the course of my conversation, inquired what kind of industry was to be found in Kostroma. After my explanation, he proposed that I prove my devotion to Latvia and earn my entry permit by gathering material of an espionage character. I agreed to this and, upon returning to Kostroma, I recruited my sister Anna Pukat, who joined me in my espionage activities at the Banner of Labor factory, where she was working. I also recruited Emma Mashen, who was working at the Lenta [machine-gun ribbon] factory as an industrial quality inspector, as well as Marov, a metal worker at the Rabochy metallist factory. I gave information to the Latvian mission concerning: the quality of machine gun ribbons produced by the Lenta factory, concerning the [energy] capacity of the boilers at the Znamia Truda factory, and the blueprint of the Rabochy metallist factory, which I stole from Dadze, the head of construction.
The information which I obtained was carried by my mother Anna Yanovna Pukat to the Latvian mission. On the other hand, I myself carried the blueprint of the Rabochy metallist factory [to the Latvian mission] in May of 1935."
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 202

AS SU GETS STRONGER OPPOSITION BECOME GREATER NOT SMALLER

[Plenum of the Azov-Black Sea Territorial Party Committee, "On the verification of party documents"]
The Central Committee letter concerning the murder of Comrade Kirov was a most important Party document in mobilizing Bolshevik vigilance:
"We must put an end to the opportunistic complacency that issues from a mistaken assumption that, as our strength increases, the enemy grows more tame and harmless.
"Such an assumption is fundamentally wrong. It is a throwback to the rightist deviation, which had tried to assure one and all that our enemies will crawl quietly into socialism, that in the end they will become true socialists….
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 208

Bukharin wanted us to act with greater determination. We were to snatch the initiative from the hands of the Stalin-Molotov-Kirov triumvirate. We should stimulate the younger generation of workers and peasants into a movement of opposition.
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 2

In a word, things were going fine. The Soviet Union was building a new life on its own surrounded by hostile capitalist states whose intelligence services spared no means or effort to interfere with the Soviet people's work. Our state and army were gathering strength from year to year; the ways of economic and political progress were clearly defined,…
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 142

TROTS ARE DIRECTED BY JAPANESE INTELLIGENCE THROUGH KNYAZEV

We should add that the rather large group of Trotskyists in Sverdlovsk was in fact directed by Japanese intelligence through Knyazev, formerly head of Japanese intelligence [in Sverdlovsk]…
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 305

BELOBORODOV GAVE INSTRUCTIONS TO TROTSKYIST DUKAT TO KILL STALIN

At any rate, people not only discussed the question of terror. They also concretely prepared for it. At any rate, many attempts were made to carry out terrorist acts of assassination. In particular, the Azov-Black Sea counter-revolutionary terrorist group headed by Beloborodov assigned a group under the direction of a certain Dukat from the Trotskyists, who tried to hunt down Comrade Stalin in Sochi. Beloborodov gave instructions to Dukat so that the latter would take advantage of Comrade Stalin's stay in Sochi on his vacation, so that he could find a propitious moment to carry out his assassination. When Dukat failed in his attempt, Beloborodov vilified him in every way possible for failing to organize this business.
In Western Siberia, there were direct attempts to organize an assassination attempt against Comrade Molotov, in the Urals against Comrade Kaganovich….
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 305

SHEBOLDAEV SAYS HE CAUSED HARM BECAUSE OF THE ACTIVITIES OF TROTSKYISTS

[Sheboldaev's Jan. 6, 1937 speech to the plenum of the Azov-Black Sea Territorial Committee]
… Comrades, I consider the decision of the Central App to be absolutely correct. I consider the criticism and the party sanctions levied against me personally by the Central Committee to be, in my opinion, very lenient–because of the enormous harm caused by me as a result of the activities of these Trotskyists, who occupied the most critical posts, because of the undermining of trust toward the territorial committee of the party brought on by this entire affair. All of this has caused enormous damage to the party organization.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 343

PARTY LEADERSHIP IN THE ENEMIES HANDS

[Letter from Shcherbakov in Irkutsk to Zhdanov on June 18th 1937]
I consider it necessary to inform you of the following fact:…. The united Trotskyist-"rightist," counter-revolutionary organization has been in existence here since 1930-31. At first this organization was led by Leonov, then by Razumov, so that, notwithstanding further materials, Snegov ought to be removed from his post because Murmansk is too crucial an area. The situation in East Siberia appears to be the same as in Sverdlovsk or in Rostov or perhaps even worse. The party and soviet leadership was entirely in the hands of enemies.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 456

[Aug. 3d 1937 letter by Stalin on agricultural trials]
The Central Committee of the Communist Party orders the regional committees, the territorial committees, and the central committees of the national Communist parties to organize, in each district of each region, two or three public show trials of enemies of the people–agricultural saboteurs who have wormed their way into district party, soviet, and agricultural organs. These trials should be covered in their entirety by the local press.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 457

[Postyshev's speech to the January 1938 Central Committee plenum]
POSTYSHEV:…The Soviet and Party leadership were in enemy hands, from the regional leadership at the top to the district leadership at the bottom.
MIKOYAN: All of it? From top to bottom?
POSTYSHEV: The entire district leadership…. According to my count, [the regional leadership] was riddled with enemies for 12 years. The same holds true for the Soviet leadership–it too was in enemy hands. These leaders selected their own cadres. For example, our regional executive committee was infiltrated right down to the level of technicians by the most inveterate enemies, who had confessed their sabotage and who conduct themselves [even now] in a brazen manner. Everyone, from the chairman of the regional executive committee down, including his deputy, his consultants, and his secretaries–all of them are enemies. All of the departments of the executive committee were contaminated by enemies…. Now look at the departments having to do with trade: There were enemies there, too, who promoted their supporters, who appointed them to positions everywhere.
BULGANIN: Weren't there any honest people there?!
POSTYSHEV: Of course there were.
BULGANIN: It looks like there wasn't a single honest person there.
POSTYSHEV: I'm speaking of the top leadership. There was hardly a single honest man, as it turned out, among the top leaders, which includes the secretaries of the district committees and the chairmen of the district executive committees. What's so amazing about it?
MOLOTOV: Aren't you exaggerating, Comrade Postyshev?
POSTYSHEV: No, I'm not exaggerating. Take, for example, the leadership of the regional executive committee. The evidence is there, these people are under arrest, and they have confessed. They themselves have given testimony of their activities as spies and enemies.
MOLOTOV: This evidence must be checked and verified.
POSTYSHEV: This happened quite simply as follows: Shubrikov and Levin planted many of the enemy cadres from the center. Just look around you and see how many of our people turned out to be enemies. Levin promoted all the heads of the political sections to the positions of secretaries. And the majority of them turned out to be enemies. Take the secretary of the Ulianovsk City Committee, a Red professor, an inveterate enemy. The same for the secretary of the Syzran City Committee, a Red professor, also an inveterate enemy….
KAGANOVICH: You shouldn't justify yourself by saying that they were all scoundrels.
POSTYSHEV: I never said all of them; I'm not so completely insane as to call everyone an enemy of the people. I never said that, I spoke only of the leadership of many of the district committees….
I repeat, I'm speaking of the leadership. The regional leadership turned out to be all in enemy hands–both the soviet and party leadership….

I ask you to check and verify whether the secretaries of the district committees were rightly or wrongly expelled. It is possible that there are mistakes here, but it seemed to us that they were rightfully expelled. The majority of them turned out to be enemies. This can be verified. They have confessed….
MALENKOV: What right did you have, Comrade Postyshev, to place the entire membership of the district committees of the party under the shadow of suspicion and political doubt?…
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 503-506

POLITBURO ORDERS SHOW TRIALS TO EXPOSE MASS FARMING SABOTAGE

[Oct. second 1937 Politburo decision on sabotage of livestock]
On the basis of investigative materials furnished by the NKVD of the USSR, it has been established that the subversive actions of enemies of the people in regions have taken an especially vicious form of sabotage and wrecking as it pertains to the development of animal husbandry. These actions have taken the form:
a) Of carrying on acts of bacteriological subversion by infecting cattle, horses, herds of sheep, and swine with plague, foot-and-mouth disease, anthrax, brucellosis, anemia, and other epidemic diseases.
b) Of undermining the work of supplying districts afflicted by epizootic with medications and disinfectants and by sabotage of biological factories producing serum.
c) Of sabotaging by contracting the sowing acreage of fodder cultures with the aim of narrowing the food base.
A significant number of veterinarians, zoological technicians, laboratory assistants of biological factories have been arrested for sabotage in the field of animal husbandry. As a matter of fact, it was they who organized the dissemination of infectious diseases leading to the death en mass of the livestock.
As a result of sabotage carried out in the sphere of animal husbandry, members of kolkhozy lost several hundred thousand head of cattle and horses this past year, not to mention small livestock.
With the aim of protecting the kolkhozy and sovkhozy from the sabotage of enemies of the people, the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and the Central Committee of the Communist Party have decided to crush and annihilate the cadres of wreckers in the field of animal husbandry.
The Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and the Central Committee of the Communist Party place all secretaries of regional committees, the Central Committees of the national Communist parties, all republic chairmen of councils of people's commissars, and all chairmen of executive committees of regions under the obligation of organizing forthwith show trials for saboteurs in the sphere of animal husbandry, keeping in mind both unmasked veterinarians, zoological technicians, and laboratory assistants of biological factories, as well as officials of local land and sovkhoz departments.
With this aim in mind the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and the Central Committee of the Communist Party propose that 3 to 6 open show trials be organized in each republic and region, that the broad masses of peasants be involved in them, and that the trials be widely covered in the press.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 459

YEZHNOV ADMITS MANY SUBVERSIVES WERE IN THE GOVT

[Yezhov's November 23rd, 1938 letter of resignation to Stalin]
Investigative work has also suffered from a host of major deficiencies. The main thing is that investigations of the most important detainees were conducted by conspirators in the NKVD who had not as yet been unmasked and who succeeded thereby in putting a stop to the development of the investigative case, in strangling it at the outset, and, most importantly, in concealing their co-conspirators in the Cheka.
The area in the NKVD that was most neglected turned out to be that dealing with the cadres. Instead of taking into consideration that the conspirators in the NKVD and the foreign intelligence agencies connected with them had succeeded in recruiting during the past decade–at a minimum–not only the upper echelons of the Cheka but also the middle echelons and often also officials on the lower echelons, I was content with the fact that I had crushed the upper echelons and some of the most compromised officials of the middle echelons. Many of those who were recently promoted, as has now become clear, are also secret agents and conspirators.
It is clear that I must bear responsibility for all this.
3. My most serious neglect had to do with the situation, now brought to light, in the department responsible for the security of members of the Central Committee and the Politburo.
First of all, a significant number of as yet unmasked conspirators and vile people who had worked under Pauker are still there.
Second, Kursky, who replaced Pauker and who shot himself to death afterward, and Dagin, who is now under arrest, have also turned out to be conspirators and have planted more than a few of their own people in the security service. I believed in the last two chiefs of the security service. I believed that they were honest people. I was mistaken and I must bear responsibility for this….
Third,…I was often mistaken in [my choice of] many employees. I recommended them to important posts, and now they have been exposed as spies.
Fourth, I am to blame for the fact that I manifested a careless attitude, totally unacceptable for a chekist, in the way I pursued the task of resolutely purging the department responsible for the security of members of the Central Committee and the Politburo. This carelessness is especially unforgivable as it applies to my dragging out the arrest of the conspirators in the Kremlin (Briukhanov and others).
Fifth, I am to blame for the fact that, being suspicious of the political integrity of such people as that traitor Liushkov, former head of the NKVD board for the Far Eastern region, and, recently, the traitor Uspensky, the people's commissar of the Ukrainian SSR, I did not take sufficient, chekist preventive measures. I thereby made it possible for Liushkov to escape to Japan and for Uspensky to escape who knows where, and the search for him is still going on.
…Yet, despite all these great deficiencies and blunders in my work, I must say that, thanks to the leadership exercised daily by the Central Committee, the NKVD inflicted a crushing blow on its enemies.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 539

THERE IS NO SOFT LIBERAL GROUP OPPOSING STALIN AND KEEPING HIM IN CHECK

In order to explain some of these zigzags it is also sometimes suggested that Stalin liked to play a sadistic cat-and-mouse game with his victims. Aside from the fact that there are no sources supporting this conjecture, the basic notion is nonsense. It arose as a kind of post hoc explanation of contradictory initiatives that did not fit scholars' assumptions about Stalin's plans. No one can read the discourse of the Stalinists throughout the 1930s without sensing their nervousness, even frequent panic. This was not a time for play; these were serious matters in which lives were sacrificed to save a regime its leaders felt was hanging by a thread. Stalin evidently distrusted the NKVD until late 1936 and the army until mid-1937. It would have been insufferably stupid of him to play with elite lives in such circumstances, and no one has ever accused him of being stupid.
Alternatively, it is suggested that there was a group within the Stalinist elite who attempted to block Stalin's plans for terror. This group is variously said to have included Kirov, Kuibyshev, Ordjonikidze, and Postyshev, and it has been claimed that their resistance to Stalin's plan for terror forced the dictator to zig and zag to appease or fool them. We have already noted the lack of any documentary evidence for such a group. Rather we have seen time and again how the nomenklatura "we" closed ranks against "them" as soon as doubts arose about potential enemies. They voted as a unit without dissent. Kirov was certainly no softy in Leningrad, and we have texts from Kuibyshev that are equally firm against the opposition. Now that we have considerable evidence on Postyshev's conduct and discourse, he becomes practically the last candidate for "rotten liberalism." According to the leading expert, the rumored attempts by Ordzhonikidze to save his deputy Pyatakov still lack documentary support. There was no moderate block.

By accepting a priori that Stalin planned everything and that social and political relations played no role in the 1930s, even scholars who work very closely with documents have no choice but to explain zigzags as Stalinist game playing. Such an explanation is based on no documentary evidence and is weakened by the inability to find any traces of an anti-Stalin moderate faction.
…Stalin certainly had a drive constantly to prepare his positions and to increase his personal power and authority. But there is precious little evidence for a plan for terror…. We have seen several instances in which Stalin does not seem to have had the most radical or harsh attitude toward persecuting oppositionists…. On the other hand, Stalin's "angelic patience" with the opposition (to use Mezhlauk's words) can be explained in other ways. It could reflect genuine indecision at various points about how far and when to move against his purported opponents and threats.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 580-581

Ordjonikidze, the commissar of heavy industry after 1932, is often regarded as a moderate who was opposed to Stalin. Indeed, most of his public statements after 1932 were moderate in tone–as were Stalin's…. He was in complete charge of heavy industry–the most important branch of the national economy–and it is inconceivable that Stalin would leave an opponent in such a position.

Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 128

On the one hand, Stalin and his closest associates may already have been preparing for a major purge and attempting to set in place a series of decisions, personnel, and practices designed to facilitate a subsequent unleashing of terror. According to this explanation, the countervailing soft-line measures were the result of a liberal faction within the leadership that tried to block Stalin's plans. Said to consist of Kirov, Kuibyshev, or Ordjonikidze, and others, this group would have favored a general relaxation of the dictatorship; now that capitalism and the hostile class forces had been defeated, there was no reason to maintain a high level of repression.
But the documents now available make this view untenable. There is little evidence for such a plan on Stalin's part nor of the existence of a liberal faction within the Politburo. Above and beyond routine squabbles over turf or the technicalities of implementation, neither the public statements nor the documentary record shows any serious political disagreement within the Stalin group at this time.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 102

Kirov's speech to the 1934 party congress, often taken as a sign of his liberalism, actually praised the secret police's use of forced labor and ridiculed the opposition. The thunderous applause Kirov received is sometimes used to show that he was more popular than Stalin. But Kirov was identified with Stalin, and the parts of his speech producing general ovations were the parts in which he praised Stalin and abused the opposition. Applause for him and his accomplishments in Leningrad was rare and only polite. Careful scrutiny of Kirov's speeches and writings reveals little difference between them and Stalin's utterances, and Soviet scholars familiar with closed party archives scoff at the notion that Kirov was a moderate, an opponent of Stalin, or the leader of any bloc.
[Footnote: The memoir of one of Kirov's Leningrad co-workers can remember nothing from his experience with Kirov that suggests "liberal" opposition to Stalin.]
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 45

MOLOTOV SAYS A TERRORIST ATTEMPT WAS MADE ON HIS LIFE IN 1932

…In 1932, after I had already been appointed chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, I went to Siberia to procure grain.
There, apparently, an attempt on my life was made. In a road accident we rolled over into a ditch.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 242

HIGH OFFICIALS LOST FAITH IN THE CAUSE

Past mistakes and losses of life had been great because we proved too trusting of individuals who could no longer be trusted. Their degeneration was already complete, and we got rid of them belatedly…. But why should those individuals have initially proceeded in one direction and then made a U-turn to march in the opposite direction? Personal ambition

would be something petty and narrow. The trouble was that they no longer believed; they had lost all faith in the cause and consequently had to seek a way out. But only implacable enemies of Soviet power could point to another way out. Either I defend the October Revolution or I am against it and look for allies among its enemies.
You see, it's never easy when you must grapple with difficulties. Not everyone has sufficient stamina for it. But the party keeps moving forward. It keeps advancing. The opposition desperately looked for a crack in which to hide. No way. You are known by the public. You are Trotsky, you are Bukharin. You feel you are supposed to say what you have always said. They repeated their past affirmations of faith, but down deep they no longer believed in the cause. Here you have what turned them into such spineless creatures in the end….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 266-267

In the Politburo itself were people who did not believe in our cause. Rykov, for example. And Zinoviev, too.
…The kulak mentality can still be seen today, and on a grand scale, too. Party members defend the kulaks! "They're hard workers…" some argue. Many writers say such things. Complete blockheads!
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 269

REPRESSIONS OF WIVES AND CHILDREN WERE NECESSARY

CHUEV: Why were the repressions extended to wives and children?
MOLOTOV: What do you mean, why? They had to be isolated somehow. Otherwise they would have served as conduits of all kinds of complaints. And a certain amount of demoralization. That's a fact, definitely. That was evident at the time….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 277

TROTSKY WORKED WITH THE NAZIS

In his writings published abroad he implied–and in his letters to partisans in the USSR explicitly ordered–that now the struggle against the party should resort to all means up to and including terror and wrecking within the country, and dirty, traitorous political deals with governments of bourgeois states, including Hitlerite Germany. Trotsky and others maintained ties with the intelligence services of bourgeois countries with a view to speeding up an armed attack on the USSR by the aggressive imperialist nations.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 288

STALIN WANTS TROTSKY OUT OF THE WAY BECAUSE WAR IS COMING

Trotsky and his followers were a significant challenge to the Soviet Union, competing with us to be the vanguard of the world Communist revolution. Beria suggested I should be put in charge of all anti-Trotskyite NKVD operations so as to inflict the decisive blow on the headquarters of the movement….
Then Stalin stiffened, as if giving an order, and said, "Trotsky should be eliminated within a year, before war inevitably breaks out. Without the elimination of Trotsky, as the Spanish experience shows, when the imperialists attack the Soviet Union we cannot rely on our allies in the international Communist movement. They will face great difficulties in fulfilling their

international duty to de-stabilize the rear of our enemies by sabotage operations and guerrilla warfare if they have to deal with treacherous infiltrations by Trotskyites in their ranks.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 67

Contrary to what was later written by General Volkogonov, who was not in the room that night, Stalin did not rage over the failure of the assassination attempt. If he was angry, he masked it in his determination to proceed with the elimination of Trotsky. Certainly, he was displeased that the attempt had been botched, but he appeared to be patient and prepared to play for higher stakes, putting his whole agent network on the line in a final effort to rid himself of Trotsky.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 77

Stalin and Trotsky opposed each other, resorting to criminal methods to achieve their ends. The main difference was that during his exile abroad Trotsky opposed not only Stalin, but also the Soviet Union. This confrontation was a state of war that had to be resolved through victory or death. There was no way for Stalin to treat Trotsky in exile as merely a writer of philosophical books; Trotsky was an active enemy who had to be destroyed.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 81

SECRET POLICE DID NOT KILL SEDOV

Trotsky's son, Sedov, who took his mother's name, was closely watched by our agents. He was the chief organizer of the Trotskyite movement in the 1930s after he left Turkey and moved to Paris in 1933. We used two independent networks. One was headed by Mark Zborowski,… Volkogonov, however, claims in his biography of Trotsky that Zborowski arranged the smuggling and also helped to kill Sedov in a French hospital, where he died in February 1938 under mysterious circumstances after his appendix was removed.
Sedov definitely died in Paris, but I found no evidence in his file or in the file of the Trotskyite international that he was assassinated. If that were the case, somebody would have been decorated or claimed the honor. At the time, there were accusations that heads of intelligence were taking false credit for elimination of Trotskyites, but no details or examples were provided. The conventional wisdom is that Sedov's death resulted from an NKVD liquidation operation. In fact the record shows that Shpigelglas reported Sedov's death from natural causes to Yezhov, who commented: "A good operation. We did a good job on him, didn't we?" Shpigelglas was not about to argue with Yezhov, who tried to take credit for Sedov's death when reporting it to Stalin. This contributed to the belief that the NKVD did away with Sedov.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 82

When Eitingon and I discussed with Beria the plan to eliminate Trotsky the death of Sedov was never raised. It is easy to assume that Sedov was assassinated, but I do not believe that to be the case, and the reason is very simple. He was so closely watched by us and trusted by Trotsky that his presence in Paris kept us informed about Trotskyite plans to smuggle agents and propaganda materials to the Soviet Union via Europe. His liquidation would have lost us control over information about Trotskyite operations in Europe.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 83

Sedov's operation was successful and for a few days he seemed to be making a normal recovery. Then he had a sudden relapse which baffled his doctors. Despite repeated blood transfusions, he died in great pain on Feb. 16 at the age of only 32. The contemporary files contain no proof that the NKVD was responsible for his death.
Andrew and Mitrokhin. The Sword and the Shield (Pt 1). New York: Basic Books, c1999, p. 75

On the night of 13 February 1938 he [Lyova, Trotsky's son] was seen wandering half-naked and delirious through corridors and wards, which for some reason were unattended and unguarded. He was raving in Russian…. Another operation was carried out urgently, but it brought no improvement. The patient suffered terrible agony, and the doctors tried to save him by repeated blood transfusions. It was in vain. On 16 February in 1938 he died at the age of 32.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 396

This was the third time he was mourning a child; and each time there was greater remorse in the mourning. After Nina's death, in 1928, he reproached himself for not having done enough to comfort her and not even having written to her in her last weeks. Zina was estranged from him [Trotsky] when she killed herself; and now Lyova had met his doom at the post where he had urged him to hold out.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 398

Much later, in 1939, a message of dubious trustworthiness, which reached Trotsky through an American journalist, claimed that Sergei had still been alive late in 1938; but after that nothing more was heard about him.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 402

STALIN TOLD THE SECRET POLICE TO NOT TRACK DOWN ORLOV

Vyshinsky, clearly distressed, was relieved by my final remark: "But Comrade Stalin personally ordered the NKVD not to track down Orlov or persecute members of his family."
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 231

THOSE WHO FOLLOWED STALIN REPRESSED PEOPLE

Despite my rehabilitation, my medals have not been returned to me; let no one forget that I, too, have been a victim of political repression. [But not by Stalin]
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 431

MANY IN THE OPPOSITION WORKED WITH THE NAZIS

The Bolsheviks have always prided themselves upon their dialectic materialism, that is, upon an unbiased logical interpretation of facts…. Their logic told them that Nazi Germany would attack them, and that the preliminary stages of this attack would be an attempt to win the support of every doubtful, disgruntled, subversive, and disloyal element in the country. What more fertile soil could be found than the former Opposition, whose members combined

personal hostility toward Stalin with the bitterness of defeat and the longing to regain lost power?
All this may sound complicated and far-fetched, but in reality it is simple and true, and what is more, provides the only reasonable explanation of what happened in Russia. The Bolsheviks were caught by their own logic. Once they assumed, as they did assume–rightly, as history showed–that the Nazis would attack them, it followed that there would be a German finger in every treasonable pie, large or small, cooked in Russia. If this wasn't immediately obvious, as in the Kirov case, it must be sought for and found. On that principle they proceeded, and found it because it was there. When Stalin and associates believed in 1933-35 that Hitler planned to attack them and would use the former Opposition or any other anti-Kremlin forces to further his ends, they were working to some extent on an hypothesis. As time went on this hypothesis, which as I have said was already a logical conviction to them, was confirmed by fact after fact,…
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 215

RIGHTS RESORTED TO TERROR & SABOTAGE AS THEIR SITUATION BECAME MORE DESPERATE

If the Bukharinites were to seriously oppose the Party program, if they really felt the program would destroy socialism by its economic policy and bureaucratic administration, they had to organize and act. Appeals to the Party and the workers had gotten them nowhere and the Bukharinites were, in fact, a comparatively small and isolated group. Therefore the only course open to them was one of fomenting rebellion–especially among the richer peasants–sabotage, wrecking, assassination, and terrorism. As they turned from a political group into a conspiracy, Bukharin testified, moral and psychological disintegration began….
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 68

Terrorism is a policy inconsistent with true Marxism; it is the last refuge of leaders without followers. The Opposition leaders had waited with Marxist patience for the outburst of the masses. When this not only did not take place but receded into improbability, the removal of the Party leaders by terrorism, as was admitted by Smirnov and Radek, was a logical policy.
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 215

NEAR THE END TROTSKY UNITES WITH ALL SORTS OF ANTI-SOVIET FORCES

It was clear in 1936 to anyone who was carefully analyzing the class struggle on the international scale that Trotsky had degenerated to the point where he was a pawn of all sorts of anti-Communist forces. Full of himself, he assigned himself a planetary and historic role, more and more grandiose as the clique around him became insignificant. All his energy focused on one thing: the destruction of the Bolshevik Party, thereby allowing Trotsky and the Trotskyists to seize power.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 138 [p. 120 on the NET]

By the mid-30s the Trotskyites in all countries were serving three principal purposes for world reaction:

(1) They acted as the main instrument by which Western reaction hoped to gain a foothold inside the land of socialism, the USSR, as a fifth column behind the lines of socialism which was to aid, and complement by espionage and sabotage inside the Soviet Union, the open war preparations made outside.
(2) They acted as an arsenal of right-wing reactionary propaganda and slander against the Soviet Union, the Communist parties, the militant socialists and trade unions, and the anti-fascist and peace forces, an arsenal of reactionary right-wing propaganda dressed up in left-wing words.
(3) They acted as an instrument to aid the capitalists by trying to penetrate the working-class, the popular and national liberation movements, above all the Communist parties–spying on them, confusing them, and disrupting them from inside.
Klugmann, James. From Trotsky to Tito. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1951, p. 82

TROTSKY CLAIMED COUNTER-REV COULD ONLY TAKE OVER BY A BLOODBATH NOT FROM WITHIN

Trotsky claimed that counter-revolution was impossible without a bloodbath that would cost tens of million lives. He pretended that capitalism could not be retored `from inside', by the internal political degeneration of the Party, by enemy infiltration, by bureaucratization, by the social-democratization of the Party. However, Lenin insisted on this possibility.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 141 [p. 121 on the NET]

THOSE ALLOWED TO RETURN STILL TALKED OF ASSASSINATION

Such was the atmosphere of those days; men of gentle character and high ideals, like Generalov, talked calmly of assassination.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 10

My next visit, on Generalov's suggestion, was to a man high up in the Dniepropetrovsk administration. Generalov had hopes of this man, whom we will call Brezhnov, partly because he was an underground Trotskyist. For this reason I however had misgivings about asking his assistance, but ardour overcame my convictions.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 14

SOVIET LEADERS DO NOT KNOW OF THE SECRET UNDERCOVER PILOTS

At this time, the vanguard of the opposition was in the Soviet Air Force. On May 15th, 1935 Bulganin, as Chairman of the Moscow Soviet, gave the French visitors a gala reception. Laval was taken to our principal airdrome, but also the center of our most restive airmen. The visitors were conducted by a party headed by Politburo member and People's Commissar of Defense Marshall Voroshilov. All smiles, he "presented" outstanding pilots. He invited Laval to join a particular group of senior officers, which included some of the most courageous members of the undercover opposition.

…Stalin, together with Molotov, Chubar, Voroshilov and others of the Kremlin, chose to pay an unexpected visit, on May 2nd, 1935, to the Frunze Central Military Airdrome, one of the centers of his irreconcilable enemies. Pilots were braced and even kissed and all manner of sweet, winning words were said to them.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 31-32

The enemies of Stalin, as of Lenin and socialism, were masked so cleverly that it was sometimes impossible to see through the heavy mist of falsification and outright provocations.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 77

SUBVERSIVES AND TERRORISTS DECIDE IT IS TIME TO ACT

In August, 1936,… my own conclusion was that the time for delay was past. We must make immediate preparations for a general armed uprising.

I was sure then, as I am today, that if Comrade X had chosen to send out a call to arms, he would have been joined at once by many of the big men of the USSR….

Through my mind flashed a succession of Russian terrorists of the past, women among them. No other country had so persistent a tradition of assassination as ours. Passionlessly, Klava Yeryomenko had come to the conclusion that she should take her place in that tradition. Her plan was one of stark simplicity. Stalin would come down to his palace at nearby Gagry. She would gain entry. When the principal tyrants were gathered together, she would destroy them. She too would perish, but they would be no more. She already knew officers of Stalin's bodyguard who could be won over. A clever woman, she said, could get what she wanted, especially if she was also good-looking. With the disappearance of Stalin, Molotov, and Yezhov, Comrade X could then seize the Kremlin and the principal government offices; Riz would take command of the Black Sea Fleet; Belinsky and Demokratov together would control Leningrad; Sheboldayev and Gunushvili would take over the Caucasus; Generalov the Ukraine, and so on. In two or three days it would be all over, the country would be in the hands of the new men.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 48

Our purpose this time was not only to hold discussions. We had moved a decisive step further: we went to assess the chances of an armed uprising against Stalin in the immediate future.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 156

COMRADE X TURNS DOWN ASSASSINATION OF STALIN IDEA BECAUSE 15 HAVE FAILED

Nevertheless, although in principle we were opposed to terroristic acts, I considered it right, in the changed situation, to put Klava's proposal before Comrade X. He gave it serious thought, but in the end rejected the suggestion. He pointed out that there had already been no less than 15 attempts to assassinate Stalin, none had gotten near to success, each had

cost many brave lives. ‘There is a right place and time for everything,’ he said, ‘but now (in mid-1936), Yeryomenko’s suggestion is out of place.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 49

SUBVERSIVES TRIED MANY TIMES TO KILL STALIN AND HIS ALLIES

… “In other words,” Smolninsky asked at last in a hushed voice, “you are suggesting that I should organize the assassination of Zhdanov?”

I replied that this is what I meant…. I had already sent both to him [Zhdanov] and to Malenkov letters declaring my reasons for escaping abroad and informing Zhdanov how and why, just before the war, the idea of organizing his assassination had arisen.

But, though it was I who made the suggestion in Leningrad, the initial proposal to assassinate Zhdanov was not mine. I must also stress that I had no personal motive whatsoever for desiring Zhdanov’s death, nor are acts of personal terror any part of the revolutionary democratic program. The development of events and ideas alone forced us to consider such action. Further, though there have been many successful and unsuccessful acts of terrorism against the Stalin regime, not one of them has been the work of the men grouped around Comrade X.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 157

… I remembered Klava Yeryomenko, who was then still at liberty, saying to me only the previous autumn: ‘It will be your duty to kill Stalin if he asks you to make him rockets and bombers.’
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 319

We Georgians are a very superstitious people–and very fatalistic also–and I doubted that my uncle was entirely an exception to that rule. On the eve of a battle in which he might easily lose his life–for the youth of Moscow were reading the tracts smuggled in secretly from Paris, in which Trotsky’s son Sedov was clamoring for “the immediate death of Djugachvili”–Stalin felt more assured when he had at his side a young man [me], not only of his country, but of his tribe:…

This, of course, is only my personal interpretation of Stalin’s attitude; but I believe it is correct.
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 122

[The Editors of Secret Documents state], All the facts point to a definite doing-away with Stalin. There cannot be any other conclusion. The whole gamut of lies, falsification of historical truths and documents–noticed even by foreign journalists, writers, analysts, who in 99 percent of the cases were or are anti-Communist, cannot be just pushed aside!

It is also interesting to note that many important and damaging documents in the Archives are either “missing,” or in the hands of Western Intelligence Agencies!
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 270

KILLING STALIN BEFORE THE WAR WOULD HAVE BEEN STUPID AND SPELLED ENGLAND'S DOOM

All the members of the council [our counter-revolutionary group] spoke in agreement, and a resolution was passed: Hitler was enemy No. 1; until that enemy was accounted for all anti-Stalinist activity was to cease.

Today the question is raised whether we were not mistaken, and fascist emigres have not stinted their attacks upon me since I appeared in the West [in 1948]. And not only fascist. An American Russian language newspaper, Novoye Russkoye Slovo (November 30th, 1951), has even gone so far as to accuse me of committing a crime in not shooting Stalin. This is so ridiculous a charge that it is hardly worth answering. Whose flag, do these gentlemen think, would now waive over the Elysee Palace in Paris if we had then 'assassinated' Stalin? And were we to take a step which might have brought Britain, then engaged in a moral struggle with Hitler, under Hitler's jackboot?
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 189

Mikhail Boikov claimed that in July 1936 members of a terrorist organization shot at President Kalinin while he was at a resort. Tokaev mentioned several groups that discussed assassinations and professed membership in one of them. We may recall the reports that a plot against the government existed in the armed forces. Medvedev, without specifying his sources, recounts several attempts on the life of Kirov in 1934 that constituted a "real hunt" for him.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 89

SOME PARTY MEMBERS WERE WORTHLESS

Another interesting example of the attitude of prominent personalities was given me by Col. Gorchakov. He and his young wife, Raissa, had asked me in for a drink. He said that it was years since he had had a chance to relax, but now that the 'dam Germans with their air-raids' sent a man to cover, he could put his feet up. He was already soaked in drink and I could see the expression of disgust on Raissa's face. She was better educated than her husband, for he had only been through a series of Party courses some 15 years earlier, while she had recently taken a diploma at one of Moscow's university-level colleges. Finally, as he was pressing vodka on me, she lost her patience with him and burst out: 'All you think of is that bottle. I can't imagine what the Government is paying you for. If I were Stalin, I'd send you for a fortnight's cure to steam your brain clean.'
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 207

RUSSIAN REFUGEES HAVE NO SUBSTANCE

I met many of these "Russian refugees" in the course of my work. They are one of the strangest phenomena I have found in the Western world. They are such thin shadows of the past that one even doubts if they are real at all. One hesitates to speak frankly to them less their brittle corporeality should disintegrate altogether, like thin ice in late spring.

Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 307

WESTERN SPIES ARE IMMORAL AND UNSCRUPULOUS

Here, since our subject concerns the ethics of the relations between man and man, man and the State, and one nation with another nation, I must relate the sorry sequel to my action. It is not only the men of the Soviet secret service who are devoid of moral standards, not only the USSR which is in danger of founding the protection of the State on sand. While I was away from Berlin on business, I received a letter from the diplomat to whom I had written. It was couched in terms which, to put it mildly, were brusque and unceremonious. I put this down, at the time, to his poor command of the language in which he wrote. This Allied representative wanted me to meet a certain person who would speak to me “in his name”. Disturbed though I was by the fact that the diplomat now knew my whereabouts, I decided to meet his representative. As it turned out, the meeting was an elaborate prelude to the insult he offered me. Speaking in the most condescending way–not that I stand on ceremony, but still I was not quite a nobody, and certainly not used to being addressed in such a manner–this person had the actual impudence to suggest that I should make him a secret report on the extent of Soviet knowledge of German aeronautics, and ended up by offering me 10,000 rubles for the service!

I have never in my life been more astonished. My hand for a moment rested on the butt of my automatic, but I controlled myself; even with a worm like this, I could not sink to Serov’s level. “A wonderful proposal,” I said, striving to measure my words. “Mr. So-and-so is asked by me to take steps to look after Prandtl, and the answer I get is the proposal of a dirty little spy. In Russian, we have an expression for all such scallywags which you may care to take back to your master”–and I pointed. The agent actually tried to argue back, and compelled me to draw my pistol to get rid of him. I do not suppose it had ever occurred to him or his master that the Soviet world, like the Western, is composed of individuals, and that a Soviet man may have more honor than many a lackey of the Western regime.

But this is not all. I had to unburden myself to somebody. One feels when such a thing happens as if the insult had left its trace, like the passage of a snail. I told the whole story to my personal driver, called Boldakov, an unpretentious decent Soviet man. He had a similar story to tell. An agent had offered him 500 marks–if he would get me to the Western Zone unprotected, to be kidnapped! I could have wept with mortification. I did not want to go to the West, but somehow I had considered that world to be above such things, and the thought had been a kind of encouragement. Now I had the sense of being set about by amorality on all sides. It was a blow to be made to realize that the same disease existed everywhere. It was also depressing to discover again how the two worlds intermingled.

Nor, when at last I was driven out of self-preservation to cross the frontier, did the official insults cease. I was approached by a man who, I think, represented a certain military intelligence service and offered a trifling sum of money and free passage and entry to a certain Western country–in return for information on the set-up and activities of certain opposition groups in the USSR. This man clearly knew that I myself was an active oppositionist.

Many people would like to imagine that coming from the Eastern to the Western world was like coming out of darkness into full sunlight. Alas, for me it was no such thing.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 342

… Soviet intelligence treated him [Tank] exactly as I was to be treated by the British Intelligence within a year; he found himself in a villa surrounded by armed sentries and with a pair of young intelligence officers constantly in the next room.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 351

My situation was unbearable. I wanted to be a loyal son of my country and as such to play an honorable part in trying to influence its policy at home and abroad…. And to my unutterable disgust, the war-time Ally who was loudest in denouncing the tyranny which I opposed, so far from giving our anti-Stalinist struggle its moral support, attempted to buy me, to kidnap me, spied on me mercilessly and used its knowledge to threaten to betray me to the MGB!

We were not communists at all.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 358

STALIN COMPLIMENTS TOKAEV

… Stalin, of all men, had said that the “single-mindedness and caution of Tokaev are evidence of his maturity”, and “Tokaev is not to be hampered in his work; if he makes no promises, that means he will give the country a great deal”; (these are his words as reliably reported to me).
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 345

TROTSKY ADVOCATED TERRORISM IN HIS PUBLICATION

In the Trotskyite Bulletin of the Opposition, Nos. 36-37, of October 1933, we find a number of direct references to terrorism as a method of fighting against the Soviet government. Here is an example:

“It would be childish to think that the Stalin bureaucracy can be removed by means of a Party or Soviet Congress. Normal constitutional means are no longer available for the removal of the ruling clique.

They can be compelled to hand over power to the proletarian vanguard only by force.”

Trotsky was beyond the reach of the arm of Soviet law when he wrote the above sentences in which he advocated terrorism. So none of the Trotskyite and other bourgeois critics of the trials will be able to claim that Trotsky was forced to write the above lines by the OGPU. So when the various accused at the trials declared that they had organized terrorist acts on the direct instructions of Trotsky, they were compelled to say what was actually true and, to put it in the words of Comrade Vyshinsky, “no chatter, no slander, known simulations, and no Trotskyite line can obscure this fact!”
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 226

Once again calling Trotsky's open letter from 1932 a terrorist directive, Vyshinsky added a reference to one more article written by Trotsky which contained, in his words, "in rather open, uncamouflaged form… directives for terror." This time, Vyshinsky quoted not two words, but several sentences from Trotsky's article: "It would be childish to think that the Stalinist bureaucracy can be removed by means of a party or Soviet Congress…. For removing the ruling clique there remain no normal, 'constitutional' means. The bureaucracy can be forced to transfer power to the proletarian vanguard only by force." "What can this be called," Vyshinsky declared, "if not a direct call… for terror? I can assign no other name to this."
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 123

Trotsky argued that after all the experiences of recent years it would be childish to think that it was possible to depose Stalin at a Congress of the Party or of the Soviets. "No normal constitutional ways are left for the removal of the ruling clique. Only force can compel the bureaucracy to hand over power into the hands of the proletarian vanguard."…

The Soviet Union, Trotsky reasserted, remained a workers' state.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 203

THE VERY PEOPLE WHO SHOULD HAVE PROTECTED THE STATE MOST WERE THE CRIMINALS

In order to fully realize the utter monstrosity of these crimes, one must not lose sight of the fact that not only were these crimes committed but they were committed by the very people who were entrusted with the protection of the interests of the Soviet state against every kind of encroachment. These people should have been the first to protect Soviet industry and safeguard it from all damage, but they acted like downright traitors. Pyatakov, Assistant People's Commissar of Heavy Industry, should have been the first to protect this important section of the Soviet economy but as a matter of fact he was its wrecker-in-chief. Rataichak should have been the first to safeguard the chemical industry. Livshitz, The Assistant People's Commissar of Railways; Chernov, the People's Commissar of Agriculture; Grinko, the People's Commissar of Finance; Sokolnikov, assistant People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs–all these people should have been the first to sound the alarm at the slightest sign of any danger to the interests of the Soviet state, but instead they acted as wreckers, in breach of the trust placed upon them, and in violation of their duty to the land of the Soviets. This really is monstrous and shows the utmost limits of moral depravity these people attained.
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 254

SUBVERSIVES PENETRATED THE GOVT AND WERE ELIMINATING BONA FIDE MARXISTS

The enemies of the workers' state had penetrated the Party, the State police, and the judicial system, and, as we might expect, made use of the situation to get rid of pro-socialist people in every field.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 130

…Opponents hiding within the party led conspiracies to expel the greatest possible number of loyal Communist cadres. About this question, one opponent testified:

“We endeavored to expel as many people from the party as possible. We expelled people when there were no grounds for explusion (sic). We had one aim in view—to increase the number of embittered people and thus increase the number of our allies.’
J. Arch Getty, Origins of the Great Purges: The Soviet Communist Party Reconsidered, 1933–1938 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 177.

…Furthermore, enemies of the people and foreign secret service spies penetrated the NKVD, both at the local and central level. They tried by all means to disrupt investigations. Agents consciously deformed Soviet laws, conducted massive and unjustified arrests and, at the same time, protected their acolytes, particularly those who had infiltrated the NKVD.

“The completely unacceptable defects observed in the work of the NKVD and prosecutors were only possible because enemies of the people had infiltrated themselves in the NKVD and prosecutor offices, used every possible method to separate the work of the NKVD and prosecutors from the Party organs, to avoid Party control and leadership and to facilitate for themselves and for their acolytes the continuation of their anti-Soviet activities.

“The Council of People’s Commissars and the Central Committee of the CPSU(b) resolves:

1. To prohibit the NKVD and prosecutors from conducting any massive arrest or deportation operation ….

The CPC and the CC of the CPSU(b) warn all NKVD and prosecutor office employees that the slightest deviation from Soviet laws and from Party and Government directives by any employee, whoever that person might be, will result in severe legal proceedings.

V. Molotov, J. Stalin.”
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 191 [p. 167 on the NET]

Over the Purge period, the Stalinists themselves, except for a small and peculiar personal following, were destroyed.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 446

This idea of Stalin’s was grasped best of all by Evdokimov, who declared, “The counter-revolutionary band of Trotskyists, Zinovievists, Rightists, ‘Leftists,’ and other counter-revolutionary scum has seized the leadership of the overwhelming part of the region’s cities. This band set itself the task of undermining Soviet and Party work, in order to discredit the party and the Soviet regime. It suppressed self-criticism in every way, instilled bureaucratism in the party and Soviet organizations, and persecuted people who dared to speak out against them, which was a direct mockery of the inner -party and Soviet democracy.” As confirmation of this, Evdokimov offered the testimony of arrested party functionaries about how, in order to arouse dissatisfaction with the party apparatus, they “suppressed self-criticism, smothered the living word, and left without any consequences the

declarations and complaints of workers. Anyone who tried to criticize these conditions at a meeting was persecuted."
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 245

Under the command of Menzhinsky and Yagoda, countless innocent people were arrested and many were shot just because they served Lenin faithfully and were loyal Bolsheviks. Even some of the members of Security force, loyal Bolsheviks, who worked underground against the Tsar, fought for the Revolution, then on trumped-up charges, were arrested, sometimes without Lenin or Stalin knowing about this until it was too late. How was this possible?

We must understand that the enemies were entrenched inside every important position in the NKVD and State Security–well hidden, well masked and cleverly utilizing their power, getting rid of dedicated communists.

Being chairman of the NKVD, Menzhinsky and Yagoda hired only former ruling class kulaks, barons, whiteguards who really terrorized the dedicated communists and workers, those who showed that they were absolutely loyal to the party, to the motherland, to Lenin and Stalin, and other leaders of the state. Among these lackeys of Yagoda was an officer called Ofitserov. In some cases where a member of the security team would get drunk, thus having to be given a reprimand plus five days in jail, Ofitserov, instead of the prescribed reprimand, had that person shot. On Stalin's demand, [the engineer] Nazvanov was released but not without Ofitserov putting a pistol to his back, stating, "Next time, I shall get you!"

Thus, Nazvanov [an engineer] was saved from the clutches of these hidden enemies of Lenin and Stalin, and of Socialism, hiding under the cloak of performing their duties to save the "socialist state" from "perceived enemies."
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 72

The foul murder of Comrade Kirov was the first serious warning showing that the enemies of the people will practice duplicity and, in so doing, will disguise themselves as Bolsheviks, as Party members, so as to worm their way into our confidence and open a path for themselves into our organizations….

The Central Committee of the CPSU in its closed letter of January 18, 1935, regarding the foul murder of Comrade Kirov, gave a resolute warning to the Party organizations against political complacency and parochial gaping.
Stalin, Joseph. Mastering Bolshevism. San Francisco: Proletarian Publishers, 1972, p. 4

However, the best indication that the programs of the "amnesty" and the "police purge" were endorsed, was not personnel changes–always of uncertain significance–but a decree put out by the conclave of the Party. This document recalled that the Central Committee had frequently warned against arbitrary expulsions from the Party, and then went on to condemn the procedure practiced by local and regional leaderships, of mass expulsions without careful examination of the charges. In a way that was very unusual for this kind of Party document, the decree listed a large number of cases from major regions throughout the country to show how widespread these excesses were, and then concluded that "careerists"

and in particular “disguised enemies” had instigated most of the unjust punitive actions against members, their families, and friends.

…Many organizations of the Party and their leaders have not been able to identify and unmask the skillfully disguised enemy…. The worst traitor, usually such a disguised enemy is shouting louder than anyone about vigilance, rushing to ‘unmask’ as many [people] as possible and doing all this in order to conceal his own crimes from the Party and to turn the attention of the Party organization away from the uncovering of the real enemies of the people. A vile double-dealer, such a disguised enemy is doing his best to create a climate of unwarranted suspiciousness in Party organizations, a climate where any member of the Party who stands up for a slandered communist is immediately accused of lack of vigilance and collusion with the enemy…. Instead of exposing and unmasking the instigative activities of such a disguised enemy, Party organizations and their leaders often follow their lead, create an atmosphere where honest communists can be slandered with impunity and themselves adopt the line of unfounded mass expulsions…. Moreover, even after the discovery of enemies who have been infiltrating the Party apparatus and slandering honest communists, our Party leaders often do not take measures to liquidate the consequences of sabotage in Party organizations concerning the unfair expulsion of communists from the Party. It is time for all Party organizations and their leaders to completely unmask and exterminate the disguised enemy who has been infiltrating our ranks and trying to conceal his hostility behind a false clamor for vigilance and remain in the Party to pursue in it his vile [and] treacherous work.”
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 203

The party had been infiltrated by alien and anti-Soviet elements.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 317

For seven years he [Inzhir] lived a double life. He devoted his knowledge and talents to the service of the regime he hated but thereby greatly benefited. He could not in fact do otherwise for the slightest act of sabotage in the kind of work he was doing threatened him with death. At the same time, as a secret informer of the political department of the NKVD, he took his revenge on the Bolsheviks by entangling and compromising Party members with whom he came into contact in the course of his work, and thereby helped to liquidate them.

In these activities Inzhir evidently found an inward satisfaction… As to the Bolsheviks he betrayed, his conscience did not trouble him in the least.
Berger, Joseph. Nothing but the Truth. New York, John Day Co. 1971, p. 102

THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE ATTACKS THE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY’S RECORD

[Resolution of the Plenum the Central Committee, March 3, 1937, on Yezhov’s report of what was learned from the sabotage, subversion, and espionage committed by Japanese and German Trotskyite agents]

The Plenum of the Central Committee believes that all the facts established during the investigation of the anti-Soviet Trotskyite center and its local accomplices show that the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs was at least four years late in unmasking these most vicious enemies of the people.

The Motherland's traitors–Trotskyites and other double-dealers, in union with German Japanese counterintelligence–had managed with relative impunity to carry on wrecking, sabotage, espionage, and terrorist activities and to damage socialist progress in many branches of industry and in transportation. They were able to do this not only because of defects in the work of party and economic organizations, but also because of slipshod work by the Department of state security of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs….

Despite numerous warnings by the Central Committee on redirecting all Cheka work toward a more organized and acute struggle against counter-revolution… the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs has not carried out these party and government directives and has turned out to be unable to expose the anti-Soviet Trotskyite gang in time.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 114

CULTURE DIRECTOR SAYS SOLZHENITSYN PROVED HE WAS A SUBVERSIVE FROM THE START

[Memorandum from Shauro, director of the Department of Culture, to the Central Committee, June 20, 1975, regarding the publication in the West of Solzhenitsyn's The Oak and the Calf and proposing publication of a book to expose Solzhenitsyn as a slanderer–rejected by the Writers' Union]

In his new work Solzhenitsyn declares his long-standing hatred of the socialist social order, of Lenin and Leninism, of everything Soviet. Calling himself a "writer-member of the underground," he confesses that since his youth he nurtured plans to undermine the Soviet government. The book The Oak and the Calf represents the cynical confession of an ideological saboteur.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 297

SURROUNDING WORLD CAPITALISM HAS MADE SOVIET SOCIALISM SOMETHING IT IS NOT

In a very real sense, Soviet world policy today is Our Baby. We have made it what it is. It is opposed to socialistic theory and is inimical to Soviet interests as these were conceived for 15 years after the Revolution. So the world policy is a departure from world socialism and a reluctant adaptation necessitated by a ring of armed imperial enemies.
Nearing, S. The Soviet Union as a World Power. New York: Island Workshop Press, 1945, p. 87

Communist Russia, born in the throes of foreign intervention, has never got free of its obsession that the capitalist States all around her are planning her overthrow.

Pares, Bernard. Russia. Washington, New York: Infantry Journal, Penguin books, 1944, p. 157

But far more striking and far more convincing was the new direction taken in internal policy in Russia. In insisting, day in and the out, that a united attack of the capitalist world on “the one Socialist State” was imminent, Party and Government had perhaps over-reached themselves.
Pares, Bernard. Russia. Washington, New York: Infantry Journal, Penguin books, 1944, p. 194

The intense repression in the Soviet Union in the 1930s and 1940s, far from being an inherent characteristic of socialism, was rather a result of the extraordinary crisis in which Soviet society found itself at that time.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 298

They [the Soviet leaders of the 1920s and 1930s] expected further foreign wars because it was in the nature of imperialism, as Lenin had also argued. They anticipated ceaseless struggles against the domestic enemies of revolution, whether peasant-capitalists or foreign spies. The result was a society that was kept in an almost perennial state of mobilization.
Overy, R. J. Russia’s War: Blood Upon the Snow. New York: TV Books, c1997, p. 22

Then there were the distorting effects that unremitting capitalist encirclement had up on the building of socialism. Throughout its entire 73 year history of counterrevolutionary invasion, civil war, forced industrialization, Stalinist purges and deportations, Nazi conquest, cold war, and nuclear arms race, the Soviet Union did not know one day of peaceful development.
Parenti, Michael. Blackshirts and Reds, San Francisco: City Light Books, 1997, p. 84

CAPITALIST ENCIRCLEMENT ALWAYS MEANS POSSIBLE FASCIST ATTACK

Indeed, it would be ridiculous and stupid to close our eyes to the capitalist encirclement and to think that our external enemies, the fascists, for example, will not, if the opportunity arises, make an attempt at a military attack upon the USSR. Only blind braggarts or masked enemies who desire to lull the vigilance of our people can think like that. No less ridiculous would it be to deny that in the event of the slightest success of military intervention, the interventionists would try to destroy the Soviet system. Did not Denikin and Kolchak restore the bourgeois system in the districts they occupied? Are the fascists any better than Denikin or Kolchak? Only blockheads or masked enemies, who by their boastfulness want to conceal their hostility and are striving to demobilize the people, can deny the danger of military intervention and of attempts at restoration as long as the capitalist encirclement exists. Can the victory of socialism in one country be regarded as final if this country is encircled by capitalism, and if it is not fully guaranteed against the danger of intervention and restoration? Certainly it cannot.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 161

MANY TIMES STALIN SEEMED TO NOT KNOW WHAT SUBVERSION WAS HAPPENING

Moreover, many of his [Stalin] speeches gave the impression that he was not well-informed about the repression. For example, at the February-March plenum of the Central Committee in 1937 he demanded that there be no arrests of Trotskyists and Zinovievists who had broken all ties with Trotsky and ended oppositional activity. At that very time thousands of such people were being arrested. Stalin also rebuked those who considered it a trifle to expel tens of thousands of the party. At that very time not tens but hundreds of thousands were being expelled and arrested.

Shortly before the arrest of the civil war hero Serdich, Stalin toasted him at a reception, suggesting that they drink to “Bruderschaft.” Just a few days before Blyukher’s destruction, Stalin spoke of him warmly at a meeting. When an Armenian delegation came to him, Stalin asked about the poet Charents and said that he should not be touched, but a few months later Charents was arrested and killed. The wife of Serebrovsky, a deputy people’s commissar of Ordjonikidze’s, tells of an unexpected phone call from Stalin one evening in 1937. “I hear you are going about on foot,” Stalin said. “That’s no good. People might think what they shouldn’t. I’ll send you a car if yours is being repaired.” And the next morning a car from the Kremlin arrived for Mrs. Serebrovsky’s use. But two days later her husband was arrested, taken right from the hospital.

Alikhanova tells about the case of Broido, one of Stalin’s former aides in the Commissariat of Nationalities. When NKVD men came to his door late at night, rather than let them in he rushed to the internal Kremlin telephone and called Stalin. “Koba, they’ve come for me,” said Broido. “Foolishness,” Stalin replied. “Who could bring charges against you? Go calmly to the NKVD and help them establish the truth.” Still, Broido was lucky. After only two years in prison he was freed in 1940.

The famous historian and publicist Steklov, disturbed by all the arrests, phoned Stalin and asked for an appointment. “Of course, come on over,” Stalin said, and reassured him when they met: “What’s the matter with you? The party knows and trusts you; you have nothing to worry about.” Steklov returned to his friends and family, and that very evening the NKVD came for him. Naturally the first thought of his friends and family was to appeal to Stalin, who seemed unaware of what was going on….

In 1938 Akulov, onetime procurator of the Soviet Union and later secretary of the Central Executive Committee, fell while skating and suffered an almost fatal concussion. On Stalin’s personal orders outstanding surgeons were brought from abroad to save his life. After a difficult recovery lasting many months, Akulov returned to work, whereupon he was arrested, and in 1939 he was shot.

In 1937 Milchakov, who was working in the administration of the gold mining industry, was suddenly removed from his job and expelled from the party. But a few days later the party organizer of the administration searched him out and said anxiously, “Let’s go to the Kremlin; Stalin’s asking for you.” In the Kremlin office were Stalin and Kaganovich. “What have things come to,” said Stalin, “if they’re expelling people like Milchakov?” Then he said to Milchakov: “We’re appointing you deputy chief of Glavzoloto (the Chief Administration for Gold Mining). Go and carry out your duties.” Two or three weeks later Milchakov became the head of

Glavzoloto, after the arrest of Serebrovsky. After another two months, however, Milchakov was arrested and did not see Moscow again for 16 years.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 526-527

Of course Stalin did not and could not know about every instance of lawlessness.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 533

PEOPLE DECEPTIVELY ACT LIKE THEY ACCEPT THE PARTY LINE WHILE UNDERMINING IT

…many of the people I knew who made public speeches in defense of Stalin's interpretation of the Dictatorship of Proletariat were already engaged in underground anti-Stalin work.
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 114

WHILE IN THE PARTY TOKAEV ADMITS HE BEGAN UNDERGROUND ILLEGAL ACTIVITY IN 1932

This was the conclusion [underground work was forced on us] at which I and a small group of comrades arrived in the autumn of 1932. This was the beginning of my formal adherence to an inner party underground opposition faction. We now ceased to be part of the Stalinist machinery except so far as our formal adherence to the Party could be regarded as such, but this in any case was an essential cover for us.
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 206

TOKAEV DESCRIBES THE NEEDED VERBAL DECEPTIONS OF A GOOD SUBVERSIVE

Other necessary qualities [to combat Stalinism besides knowing its philosopy] are those of the partisan fighter in the field of politics. It is not enough to be pugnacious, it is not enough to be able and prepared to carry out orders; it is essential to be capable of initiating and organizing action oneself. This does not mean the ability to stage a full-scale revolution, but it does mean the ability to wage small but all-important battles in everyday life: sow the seeds of thought in others' minds, inspire the belief that it is possible for men to be men and not homunculi; seize on any of the countless openings given by permitted discussions of the Party line, engage in an argument without ever exposing oneself too far, and come out of it the victor, never discredited. It means never to forget that in this sort of activity what matters is not words or even acts, but the right words, the right act, the timely word, the timely act. The capacity to appraise a situation correctly is of the utmost importance.
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 209

OPPONENTS OF STALIN ARE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY

The very existence of such moderate and reasonable men as Rusanov in such high-up positions shows the absurdity of the myth that the higher Soviet officialdom is a monolithic body of fanatical Stalinists.
There are many thousands of people who are constantly opposing the Stalinist line; there are hundreds who are constantly plotting against the regime; there are even groups who plan terrorist acts against leaders in the Kremlin; and in the last World War the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Republic, almost to a man, raised the standard of the struggle for its own independence.
Nor is it true, as some “experts” say, that every Soviet citizen has a spy at his elbow. If it were, it would mean that the whole country is made up of spies, and a more foolish and unfounded slander could not be imagined.
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 226

SECRET POLICE HEAVILY INFILTRATED BY SUBVERSIVES WHO PROTECT OTHER SUBVERSIVES

My hope that the storm had passed me over was shaken before the end of January 1935, when I was again summoned to the NKVD, “by way of a prophylactic measure,” as the examining officer assured me. The Zhukovsky Academy command were not to know anything about it, he said; “tomorrow morning you will be back at your lectures”….
This NKVD inquisitor was of about the same age as myself but at the time I never suspected what I learned later, that he too was an underground oppositionist, one of the boldest inside the NKVD system. He knew all about me, about the underground group to which I belonged and the military underground meeting which I had attended, and why I had gray hair, but in those days he never gave me the slightest hint. It was not till later, when he had been shot, that I came upon his name in a special resolution of our underground group, mentioning his services to our cause, not Stalin’s, and understood at last why he had summoned me, as he had summoned many others: he was busy saving men, not destroying them. A number of outstanding personalities of the underground owed their lives to him, among them some of the anti-Stalinists who are working at this moment in the Soviet Union. His investigations were made under orders from NKVD headquarters, but he knew what questions to ask and how to ask them in such a way as to satisfy his superiors and yet to protect the men he examined.
Keeping in mind the memory of this heroic comrade, I am filled with horror, when, nowadays, I hear that “all the NKVD” ought to be exterminated as Stalinist terrorists.
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 249

…As I passed the Dynamo Stadium I suddenly heard a voice behind me: “Don’t look around, keep on going, but listen…” It was Belinsky [one of my closest friends]. He told me that my group already knew and approved what I had done and were doing all they could to save me. I must know that a hard struggle had begun. Men, even in the NKVD, who were on our side, would take whatever steps they could to sidetract my case. But it would not be easy. Key positions must not be exposed. Still–there was a chance. I was not alone.
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 260

On May 13, 1937, Artuzov, a second-rank commissar of state security and the head of the central division of the NKVD USSR, was arrested on the basis of personal instructions from Yezhov. In the records of the interrogation that were made by investigator Alentsov, Artuzov confessed that in 1913 he was recruited into “the Tsarist intelligence service.” In 1914, he became a French intelligence agent, in 1925, a German agent, and 1933, a Polish agent. Moreover, he admitted belonging to an anti-Soviet organization of Rightists that was active within the NKVD and was headed by Yagoda.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 30

On occasion the wrong kind of person penetrated the NKVD, which gives an indication of its poor investigative abilities. One NKVD officer was the son of an executed kulak, another the son of a tsarist officer arrested in the Civil War. Another man, an imperial officer who went on to fight on the White side against the Reds, reported that a friend of his with the same background entered the police in the 1920s and saved many former White officers. Eventually rising to become deputy director of the NKVD in the Ukraine, the man was exposed and shot in 1937. Here a real enemy of the Soviet state had wormed his way into a powerful position.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 78

Once more, [at the Bukharin trial] a vast network of assassins was discovered. At least 8 groups were working on the destruction of Stalin, Molotov, Kaganovich, Voroshilov, and Yezhov. And, this time, they were shown not simply to be under the protection of high officials in the Party and the Army, but actually to have been nourished and sponsored by the NKVD itself. Seldom can terrorists have had such advantages as those supposedly enjoyed by the plotters. Apart from half a dozen members of the Government, including the Head of the Secret Police itself, they actually had on their side the NKVD officers Pauker and Volovich, responsible for guarding their prospective victims.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 397

One concern was precisely what Kotelnikov alleged to have taken place-that “enemies” had secured positions that allowed them to issue party cards to other “enemies.”
Chase, William J., Enemies Within the Gates?, translated by Vadim A. Staklo, New Haven: Yale University Press, c2001, p. 240.

SECRET POLICE WERE NOT THAT SECRET

The greatest misconception about the GPU is to consider it a secret police. Undoubtedly, it has secret agents, correspondents, and informants. A state threatened for so many years by the secret plotting of counter-revolution, and today riddled with spies, has need of a defensive organization capable of functioning in secret. But in its general function of guarding the Socialist state, the GPU is a public body. Its members wear distinctive GPU uniforms and the GPU is as accessible to the Soviet citizen as is the British police to the Briton. In performing its duties, which include more beneficent functions of police work such as the care of waifs, the GPU man may use all the tricks known to the European police of

plain clothes disguise and general dissembling. No one considers this technique of investigation any more reprehensible in the USSR than a similar technique is considered, say, in France. Those who in the USSR fear the GPU are those who in other countries fear the police–namely, criminals and would be criminals.
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 53

SEMEONOV TELLS OF HIS PAST TROTSKYISM AND WHY HE NOW REJECTS IT

Walking back to our cell, my neighbor, Semeonov, said, “Cheer up! It’s not so bad. I’ve been through it before.”
… I’ve had three years in Siberia under the Tsar,” he said, “with a slot in the wall, not a window. I’m an old Bolshevik,” he added proudly.
“What are you here for?” I asked.
He shrugged his shoulders.
“I am being questioned for association with the Trotsky Parallel Center.”
“Is that a crime?”
“Yes. THE TROTSKYISTS TODAY ARE AN ASSOCIATION OF ASSASSINS. They would lead the working class to an abyss of futility and disruption. I am an accused Trotskyist but, my friend, believe me, I reject it with my soul. It’s true I knew Trotsky. I have sat at the same conference table with him and Stalin. I was a revolutionary from my youth. I lost my health in a Tsarist prison. I fought against the Whites and was wounded in Elizabethgrad. I have offered my life to the working-class and today they accuse me of Trotskyism. I knew Trotsky in 1926. I met him and supported him in his opposition. I knew Zinoviev and Kamenev too, and joined them against the majority of the party. But I was a loyal Party member– an honored party member. I later accepted the majority decision and, when events justified it, I abandoned the minority standpoint. What did Trotsky do? He conducted an opposition to the extent of actively resisting majority decisions. He went into exile. From there he tried to keep in touch with me and those others who had been grouped around him. I rejected him and I rejected his policy. In 1926 I was expelled from the party. It didn’t affect me. I worked doubly hard for the cause to which I dedicated my life. I got a job in Narkomles–the Paper Trust. In three years I rose from director of distribution to direction in the Trust itself. Stalin complimented me. He thanked me at our Congress for my contribution to the success of the industry. What did it help me?
“By 1932, Trotsky, who had for six years waited for the collapse of the Soviet Union through peasant resistance to collectivization or external attack, was tired of waiting. He had given in his early days good service to the Soviet Union and was a glorious figure for his past services to the revolution. But now, with a new generation growing up, ignorant of his old service and knowing only of his hate of the successes of the USSR, Trotsky began to organize acts of sabotage.
“Towards the end of 1932, an engineer who had been buying machinery in France handed me a letter. It was from Trotsky. He wrote simply: ‘Are you still a friend of the Revolution?’ I destroyed the letter and ignored what it said. I had rejected Trotsky utterly since his policy of ideological opposition to the Party had changed to one of supporting an Imperialist war against the USSR in order to bring about what he called ‘the true revolution.’…
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 98

“But Trotsky, in his remote isolation, was a realist only in his capacity to destroy. He would not leave me alone. He sent me a second letter through a Lithuanian who pretended to be a tourist. The GPU intercepted the letter. I was dismissed from my job and tried in open court.”
“On what grounds?” I interposed.
“Communication with an enemy of the state.”
“What did it say in the letter?”
“Trotsky referred to a meeting that I had with him in 1925. It’s true I stood with him then on common ground, but that was a long time ago. It’s not the part of a Bolshevik to swear eternal fidelity to a policy…. He was living on his own past merits.
“I defended myself before the court. I rejected the charge that I had criminal contacts with Trotsky. I admitted our past friendship and declared that it had ended years before. I was asked:
“Why did you not denounce the bearer of the letter to the political police?”
“My true reason for not doing so was my fear of compromising myself even through suspicion. That was no answer for the GPU, I was sentenced to three years’ exile, under restraint….
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 100

“I was sent to a fortress in Uzbekistan where once the Tsar used to imprison those whom he wanted to teach. Here they gave me complete liberty within the fortress precincts. I wasn’t locked in my cell. I was given paper and ink and while I was there I finished a treatise on ‘Re-afforestation.’”
“Were you allowed letters?”
“As many as I liked or cared to send. They were all censored. But it didn’t matter. I almost enjoyed the monastic life that I lived. There were only eighteen other prisoners in the fortress. We were allowed to play volley-ball for two hours a day and that is how I have maintained my physique….”
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 101

“Besides,” Semeonov added, “I don’t believe for a moment that either Trotsky or Zinoviev or Kamenev took deliberate action against the USSR until the Stalin policy had been proved right and theirs wrong.
“You’ve got to admit that at a particular period in the Revolution Trotsky and the others did good work. I do not justify their behavior to-day. Should that prevent me from justifying their work of yesterday? I am not ashamed to have been associated with the Trotsky of the Red Train. Trotsky today, working for internal disruption, is another man….”
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 98. 100, 101, 103

AKULOV TELLS CRITICAL STALINIST FELLOW PRISONERS WHY HE IS A TROT

There were several in my [Lebedev, a Stalin supporter] cell imprisoned for Trotskyist activity…. There was at least one who avowed himself a supporter of Trotsky, who declared implacable enmity towards Stalin and who professed himself ready to suffer for his true revolutionary fate. He was Akulov, a schoolteacher from the Donbas who had fought against the Whites, been wounded three times, and who had reached a high position in the Communist Party at the time of the expulsion of Trotsky from the party. Unlike those others

who had rejected Trotsky, Akulov continued openly to resist the Stalin line. He was expelled from the party and proceeded to organize an energetic opposition center. He succeeded in grouping around him a number of former Red Army men, old Bolsheviks who had been purged from the party, and some engineers. Later, his group was joined by former White partisans who since the revolution had entered various Soviet enterprises. The group passed from vocal criticism of Stalin, the Communist Party, and the Soviet government to organized sabotage in mines, helped largely by the engineers, wrecking which the White partisans willingly undertook, and experimental dislocation of railway traffic in which the former army men were adept. The old Bolsheviks maintained a campaign of rumors such as that the Ukrainian harvest had failed, and by creating constant apprehension among the workers almost succeeded in wrecking the five-year plan. Akulov proudly admitted that he had organized his work. From the rest of the prisoners he received bitter criticism. He defended himself fluently with skillful dialectic, but the prisoners, mostly sincere Stalinists, crowd over his bed whistling, shooting questions at him, or booing his least popular opinions….

(Akulov explains the Trot position)
“What shall we have tonight?” asked the Starost [supervising prisoner].
“Something to put us to sleep,” somebody suggested.
“Let Davidovich lecture on the Turbine Engine.”
“No,” said Krylenko, bounding upon his bed. “Let’s hear what Akulov has to say about his venerated Lord and Master in Mexico–Ex-Comrade Trotsky,”…
“Yes, yes,” somebody else shouted, “Akulov on ‘why Trotsky’s right when he’s wrong.’ or ‘why Trotsky’s left when he’s wrong and wrong when he’s right.’”
“Order,” shouted the Starost, solemnly standing up. He stretched his arm and there was a hush. “I call on Akulov to address us on ‘when left his right!’”
[Akulov then says,] “…We oppose Stalin. Yes, we oppose him with our bodies, our minds, and our souls, as a betrayer of the Revolution, a traitor to the working class of the world…. Is it not obvious that our own political revolution of 1917 should have been the signal for a series of political revolutions throughout the main countries in the world, introducing the economic revolutions which could have provided the basis for a world Socialist economy?”
“What if nobody took any notice of the signal except in Germany and Hungary where the Revolution failed?” Davidovitch asked. “Should we therefore have struggled on with a political revolution without attempting an economic revolution–although our country covers a sixth of the world and is one of the richest economically?”
“No,” Akulov went on, “we should not. We should have strengthened our political revolution by helping the proletarian revolution. Had we done that we need not have suffered the years of privations to build a gigantic heavy industry. We could have done it at leisure, secured by the workers’ states around us. We could have raised our standard of living immediately had Stalin not aimed at his one-street Socialism. We would not have had Socialism, but the standard of living could have been raised by the purchase of consumers’ goods and not inedible machinery.
[Akulov continues] “Why do you imagine that Lenin permitted NEP with all its capitalist abuses? As a step towards the five-year plan which your good Comrade Stalin claims? I think not. As a step towards socialism? Yes. I will tell you how I explain the paradox. Lenin wanted the New Economic Policy so that the relaxation of the economic struggle could lead to an intensification of the political struggle abroad. He knew that you can’t get Socialism in one country unless you have a proletarian revolution in the main industrial countries….

“To what extent has Stalin followed this line of Lenin? He has receded from Lenin’s grand policy of World Revolution to the National Socialism of the Russian fatherland. ‘Please, dear Workers all over the world, unite with your good bourgeois masters under the spurious slogans of Liberty, Democracy, and Peace at any price, and defend the workers’ (Russian) fatherland against the Fascist wolf.’ That is the contemptible advice that one who has the impudence to assume the mantle of Lenin dares to offer the world proletariat waiting for a policy, for guidance and help in overthrowing their capitalist oppressors.
“Whose fault is it that the Fascist wolves are snarling at the door of the country that gave birth to the workers’ revolution of 1917? Could not Stalin with a stroke have helped the German Communists to power in 1932? Instead of that, he let the Nazis in and left the Comintern to rescue Dimitrov. Internationalism! The word has become a term of reproach in the Soviet Union, almost as dangerous as Trotskyism.”
Akulov paused and smiled wryly. “It’s as dangerous to be an internationalist in the Soviet Union as it is to be one in Germany. No! It’s less dangerous. In Germany if you’re an internationalist they call you by the honorable name of Marxist. In the Soviet Union they call you a cancer, a reptile, scum, and filth. Where are the days of ‘Workers of the World, Unite’? Gone for ever? I think not. Gone only so long as the Stalinists’ bureaucracy survives. Historical necessity will give that slogan its original strength. The day of the true revolution will be the hour of International Proletarian Unity….
“Let Stalin keep his cheap aphorism of ‘To each according to his capacity.’ What does that capacity consist of? Capacity to manipulate the machinery of bureaucracy for one’s own ends! Compare the earnings of the humblest toiling workers with the earnings of an engineer. Do you call that Socialism? Is not the humble worker as entitled to the satisfaction of his needs as the opulent specialist? There are as glaring differences of wealth and privilege in the Soviet Union today as there ever were on the czar.
“Stalin’s policy of gigantism has brought us nothing. We now have Magnitogorsk, Kuznetsk, Stalinsk, and all rest of it. The Americans have the Detroit motor works and the Niagara Falls. Has that made them Socialists? I grant that we have made industrial progress. That is the result of an energetic planned economy which I favor and do not dispute, but is that socialism? I think not.
“Again, because we have made great industrial progress in comparative figures, we are not therefore an advanced industrial country. On the contrary we are industrially still among the backward countries of the world. The mighty capitalist industrial countries could crack us like a dry nut unless…
“Unless what?” I asked.
“Unless the revolutionary spirit is so strong among the proletarians of those countries that they prevent it.
“But as things are what reason have they to defend a bureaucracy which in the name of Socialism preserves the inequalities and abuses of capitalism? The workers of the world have been disillusioned by the cynical disregard of principle shown by the Government of the USSR. Consider only these things–the reintroduction of the off-duty salute into the army, the restoration of the old military titles, the reconstitution of the Cossack regiments, the law for the abolition of free abortion, the encouragement of jazz music. Retrogressive steps all of them! Swaggering officers, swaggering engineers, swaggering bureaucrats! That’s your new Soviet fatherland. Each step that it takes towards its comfortable bourgeois goal, it calls a step towards Socialism.
“The Marxists–the true Marxists–have watched the fruits of the Revolution fall into dust in the hands of the Stalinists. I am proud that I have worked against the Stalin bureaucracy, I am

proud that I have engaged in sabotage, I am proud that I have conspired to overthrow the usurpers of the Revolution. When Stalin and his functionaries are ashes, our true Socialist work will go forward, our inspiration Marx and Lenin, our leader Trotsky….
Sweating with the strain of his rhetoric, Akulov lay on the bed and poured out for himself a glass of water. The murmur of disagreement which had accompanied the whole of his speech grew into a roar before it was ended….
"Friends," the Starost said, "I'm neutral…. Does anybody want to answer Akulov?"
There were about 12 volunteers, including myself [Lebedev].
"Allow me to answer," a man called Lebedev asked quietly. "Comrades," he said, turning to us all, "I can claim to be a Marxist. For years I studied the works of Marx. I've read all that Lenin has written and share his views. I fought in the streets of Leningrad during the Revolution. I come of revolutionary stock–my father died in a Tsarist prison in Eastern Siberia. I can say that my whole life has been given to the Revolution. I am a worker–a metal-worker. My father was also a worker in the Putilov factory.
"Those are my credentials. That is what permits me to speak with equal sincerity and infinitely more truth than that man."
Pointing an accusing finger at Akulov he went on:…
"Forgive me, comrades, if I speak with heat. I stand here and say that Akulov lies in the motives which he imputes to the Stalinists, that he lies in his statement of Lenin's intentions, that he lies in his charge that we are indifferent to the international working-class, and that he lies in his statement of the present condition of the USSR. I say further that his boast of wrecking is that of one who objectively is an enemy of the Revolution, even if charitably we grant that subjectively he is not.
"Let us take his charges as he produced them and consider his own proposals. 'The political revolution,' he said, 'should have been international before any attempt at economic revolution.' He calls that realism.
"Lenin waited and worked for the international revolution. Nobody can deny that the Soviet Union would have been strengthened by having workers' states surrounding it instead of capitalist states. But that didn't happen. The workers outside Russia were either unwilling or unable to make the revolution. The years passed. Capitalism by bloody repression held the working-class crushed in steel. Simultaneously it grew bolder in its attempt at a new intervention in the Soviet Union.
"Our own revolution was threatened by counter-revolutionaries. We held them in check. Lenin with his New Economic Policy brought the boils of counter-revolution to the surface in order better to lance them. The NEP was not a respite in order better to lance them. The NEP was not a respite to work for a world political revolution, however desirable that might be. It was a respite to plan the five-year plan and collectivization of the farms, the first steps towards our present Socialist economy….
"Akulov, like all Trotskyists, harps on the backwardness of our country. This is how he reasons: 'It's no use trying to build Socialism in one country unless that country, in addition to self-sufficient raw materials, is highly industrialized.' 'Very well,' we reply, 'we'll highly industrialize the USSR which has as much raw materials as several other capitalist countries put together.' 'Oh, no!' Akulov answers, 'You can't industrialize us. We're backward!'
"Akulov is backward. He is living mentally at the beginning of the last decade when our country inherited not merely the backward conditions of Czarism, but a ruined industry and a wasted countryside.
"We Socialists have changed all that. With one hand we held the capitalist countries at bay. With the other we wielded the tools which have raised our industry to a foremost position in

the world. These are facts. Akulov can't deny them. And can he deny that he and those like him have done everything to ruin our efforts? Can he deny that we have built an economic condition which offers to every worker a share according to his capacity to produce? By what stretch of the imagination can he call that capitalism? Is that not a progressive step towards the Communist society when each will give according to his capacity and receive according to his needs?…

"Akulov made cheap taunts about functionaries. Our Socialist society must have men to fill the function of managers, directors, and controllers. They are a condition of organization. Perhaps Akulov would prefer a blissful anarchy–without Socialism, certainly, but he'd have his political revolution.

"When he says that there are inequalities of wages and privileges comparable with those under Tsarism he lies. You all know it. No man has a sum of privileges in excess of any other. And wages vary, but the worst-paid worker is not much less well-off than the best paid. Remember, this is a transitional stage. We are on the way to our Communist goal [Right on brother–Klo]. Trotsky offers instead years of fruitless waiting for political revolutions whose opportunity may well not be seizable. He offers the workers of the world an abstraction.

"We, those who follow the Stalin line, offer the workers of the world a Socialist reality–our workers' fatherland growing as a glorious example before their eyes.

"Akulov lies again when he says that internationalism is spurned today. When we speak of the workers' fatherland we mean the fatherland of the workers of the world, Russia, home of the first proletarian revolution. Is it not a fact that the workers of the world turn their faces towards us as their revolutionary guides? When the working-class of the USSR forgets its brothers throughout the world, it will be a bitter day for the USSR. Happily, that day will never come….

"Let Akulov prattle of jazz and salutes and abortion laws. Those things neither make nor mar Socialism. A salute to a Tsarist officer by a peasant boy is a world different from a worker-soldier's salute to his worker-officer. Why should I go on? Do we not know how much personal spite and venom is mingled in the idealistic phrases of Trotsky and his followers? Do we not know that it is they, the dispossessed, who are the place-seekers, the bureaucrats and functionaries who are as embittered as any dispossessed Tsarist capitalist?

"They conspire with the enemies of the Soviet Union. They boast of their treachery to the Soviet Union and brag that they do it in the name of the working-class."

Again Lebedev pointed at Akulov.

"The working-class will remember you and your like, Akulov. It will not be garrotted by you and your megalomaniac leader. We're going ahead without you and despite you. We're marching out under the banner of Marx, Lenin, and Stalin, and woe to the traitors!"

There was a rattle of cheering when he ended. Akulov pretended to be asleep.

"I hope, Lebedev," Krilenko said as an epilogue, "that when you march out under Stalin's banner you'll be able to smuggle me under too!"

Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 136-148

HARDSHIPS OF THE FIRST 5 YEAR PLAN PROVIDED GRIST FOR THE OPPOSITIONISTS

The Opposition thrived during the year of the First Five-Year Plan, which, though a period of great triumphs, was also one of great hardships. The plan was magnificent in intention and miraculous in execution. I have worked among peasants who have been translated from

wooden plows to modern textile machinery and know the difficulty of overcoming their ingrained hebetude and stupefaction. Is it any wonder that the conversion of peasants into industrial workers, of individualists into collective farmers, was a major operation accompanied by many pains? During the First Five-Year Plan there was tremendous enthusiasm among the politically conscious masses and among the youth. But there was also much discontent among those elements who found adjustment to the new conditions difficult. Trotskyists, ex-NEP men (Speculators) and Kulaks (rich peasants) found themselves bed-fellows in their hostility to the Stalin policy.
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 213

SECRET POLICE WORKED HARD TO ROOT OUT AND UNMASK SUBVERSIVES

The great emphasis of 1937-38 was on hidden opponents, and the key word was "unmasking." The central authorities pursued those they perceived as real, concealed enemies.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 79

"Early in 1936 about 40 NKVD men were summoned for a special conference by the chief of the Secret Political Department, Molchanov," was how Orlov vividly recalled the blood-letting had been initiated. The assembled high-ranking officers were astonished to be told that "a vast conspiracy had been uncovered, headed by Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev and other leaders of the opposition". The conspiracy, according to Molchanov, had been growing over many years, nefariously establishing "terrorist groups in almost all the big cities and had set itself the aim of assassinating Stalin and the members of the Politburo and of seizing power". Priority was to be given to mounting a full-scale investigation, with Stalin personally supervising the task, assisted by Yezhov, The Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party.
Costello, John and Oleg Tsarev. Deadly illusions. New York: Crown, c1993, p. 249

SECRET POLICE ARRESTED PEOPLE NEARLY ALWAYS FOR GOOD REASONS

Still, numerous reports indicate that even at the peak of the Terror, evidence often made the difference in a case. The NKVD detained people because of some connection with misdeeds, accidents, someone else already arrested, or a denunciation. If in the worst period these connections were often flimsy, they still existed in some fashion. Without that kind of suspicious link, or when clearly protected by documentary evidence, people were either not touched or were exonerated in investigations.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 90

OPPOSITION INTENSIFIES AS SOCIALISM GETS STRONGER

The more Socialist industry and agriculture develop, the more desperate, however, becomes the resistance of the remnants of former exploiting classes. When the Worker's State was

tolerating their existence as rich peasants and traders, they hoped for the gradual undermining of the Socialist elements in economy by means of the development of private trade and agriculture. As these were eliminated, their hatred intensified to an extreme degree. The development of Socialism means that those elements now find employment in some of the branches of Soviet industry and trade. They find employment at a time when whole branches of industry that never previously existed are being established in the country, when millions of backward and individualistic peasants are being absorbed into industry and are bringing many of their old peasant habits with them. Even without the activity of class enemies in Soviet industry, this would be a period of considerable strain and difficulty. If one can remember the muddles which occurred in England in 1914-15 in the shift from peace to war production, despite all the great technical ability at the disposal of the British bourgeoisie, one can understand that a certain amount of honest mistakes and muddle could occur in Soviet industry in the course of the great change through which it is passing. There is the opportunity of the class enemies. They can take advantage of the muddle and disorganization that exist, and work deliberately to intensify it; they can deliberately sabotage and try to represent the result as a product of honest muddle; they can take advantage of the difficulties of the ex-peasant in fitting himself into the new industrial life.
Formerly those elements–as rich peasants and traders–fought Socialist industry from without. Now they seek to undermine it from within, and because they are now part and parcel of the personnel of industry, it is not always easy to detect them. The utmost vigilance is necessary on the part of the factory committees, of the unions, and of all the organs of the Worker's State, in order to meet and defeat the sabotage.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 143

AS THE TROTS ARE UNEARTHED IN 1936 THERE IS A PUSH TO SPEED UP THE COUP

But at the end of 1936 it was becoming clear that the groups of Trotskyists and Rights were becoming discovered to such an extent that the whole organization was in danger of being wiped out. And hence there was the development of the conception that a coup d'etat ought to be launched, independently of war. The evidence given by Rosengoltz makes clear what the plotters intended:…
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 224

Rosengoltz invited me to his villa in Gorinka where we had lunch and a long talk.
He was in good spirits although two of his intimate friends were arrested in January 1936….
He suggested a game of tennis on his private court. He has a most wonderful court. I declined because of my age…. He spoke for sometime about Stalin…. His enthusiasm surprised me…. He said he greatly regretted having belonged to the Opposition and that he would have liked the opportunity of a heart to heart talk with Stalin but was not allowed to see him. Since the assassination of Kirov no prominent member of the Opposition has been admitted to Stalin….
We talked for a while about the prospects at home. He said he had had a long talk with Shkiryatov, who had made some threatening hints. Shkiryatov had told him that the Opposition didn't want to disarm and that extreme measures would have to be taken against its members. War was coming, he said, and a small anti-Party group could not be allowed to

organize secret circles with defeatist slogans…. I asked what the slogans were…. Rosengoltz hesitated and then replied that he now had no contact whatever with the circles but that the Smilga people had had a hand in it…. When I pressed him to be more explicit he volunteered the explanation that there was a project to bring about “clemancism” in the Party–that is, in the event of war breaking out and our armies being defeated, and the Secretary-General wanting to bring off a new Brest-Litovsk, to carry out a mutiny of the troops during the war and change the leadership, after “shooting several leaders and Marshals,” as the Greeks had done after their defeat in Asia Minor…. I told him at once that objectively speaking such a plan amounted to the most blatant treachery and comfort to the enemy…. He blushed and agreed with me but said he had been led astray on the authority of Trotsky, who advised such tactics in his bulletins from abroad…. I asked him several questions about his friend Pyatakov and other members of the Opposition. He said he was no longer meeting them, to avoid rumors and denunciations about a resumption of the activity of secret opposition circles….
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 228

TROTSKY AND BUKHARIN ARE AFRAID THE MILITARY WILL TAKE OVER IN A COUP

Both Trotsky & Bukharin were afraid that in the event of a successful coup, the Generals would rule the roost and the civilian political groups would be left out in the cold.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 226

TROTSKY REFUSED TO STOP SUBVERSIVE WORK DURING EXILE

Trotsky, with the few thousand other exiles, managed to maintain political contact which kept the older members of the Party in a constant state of simmering excitement. Ordered to refrain from his activities under threat of imprisonment, he refused.
Barmine, Alexandre. Memoirs of a Soviet Diplomat. London: L. Dickson limited,1938, p. 229

On 16 December 1928 a high official of the GPU arrived from Moscow and presented him [Trotsky] with an “ultimatum”: he must cease at once his “counter-revolutionary activity” or else he would be “completely isolated from political life” and “forced to change his place of residence.” On the same day Trotsky replied with a defiant letter [declining all overtures] to the leaders of the party and of the International:…
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 468

SUBVERSIVES GOT HOLD OF THE LIBRARY CENSORSHIP

And what happened was very bad. At a meeting of those who conducted the purges, it came to light that more than 60 percent of all books holdings have been withdrawn. There are libraries in which the portion of books withdrawn reached 80 or 90 percent. Correspondence from very different corners of the USSR indicates that the classics of philosophy, science, belles-lettres, and even revolutionary Marxism have been removed: Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Tolstoy, Turgenev, Goncharov, Dickens, Hugo, resolutions of party congresses,

reports of congresses of soviets,… The names of these “withdrawn” authors alone indicate criminal activity in the way to purge was conducted.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 78

[Sept. 15, 1932. Yaroslavski to Politburo on library purge]
Removed was all antireligious literature unmasking religion on the basis of scientific data (in spite of Lenin’s directions to use such literature widely), all trade union literature published before the Fifth Plenum of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Union’s Eighth Convocation [December 1928], literature about unemployment round-the-clock shift work and about the transition to the seven-hour work day, almost all popular literature regarding cooperatives, regarding social insurance, labor protection, and the building of kolkhozes and state farm’s published before 1930-31, all idealistic philosophers– except for Kant and Hegel–and the works of Spencer, Simmel, Bukharin, and others on historical materialism and sociology.
Several local boards of education, for example, went so far as to issue instructions to remove books such as Bebel’s, Lassalle’s, Plekhanov’s Our Differences, the works of Marx and Engels, Lenin’s The Development of Capitalism in Russia, and Stalin’s Articles on the National Question.
In some libraries, in Leningrad in particular, works of Marx and Engels edited by Riazanov are being withdrawn and, because in many libraries there are no other additions of Marx, this means that they are withdrawing almost all works by Marx and Engels.
Here is more factual evidence to show the extent of the purging zeal. Removed from the library at Siniavinsk Peatbogs in Leningrad Oblast were Tolstoy, Turgenev, Goncharov,… Kalinin, the “Communist Manifesto,” Chernyshevsky, books by Lenin, and so forth. From the Central Library of the Communications Union in Leningrad books by Rolland were removed, and this at a time when we are publishing Rolland’s letters and his appeal “War on War.” Removed from the library of the Glass Plant Named for October 25th in the Western Oblast were books by Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Krupskaya, Yaroslavski, Krylenko, Bubnov, Bedny, Turgenev,… and others.
As a consequence of all these books being removed and the utterly wild, scandalous “purge” of libraries, the staff of the All Union Central Council of Trade Unions published in the September 4, 1932 issue, No. 206, of the newspaper Trud a resolution suspending this kind of “purge” and instructing the Public Culture Department to appoint a special commission to disclose those who were responsible for erroneously removing books from trade union libraries and for transferring books from trade union book holdings to local boards of public education and selling them.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 82-83

[Jan. 2, 1936 memorandum from Tal, Deputy Chairman of the Central Committee of the All Union Communist Party and Director of the Central Control Commission of the party to Orgburo “Concerning the Work of Glavlit”]

The political and economic section carries out final censoring for 32 publishing houses, ranging from the State Economics Publishing House to the State Medical Publishing House that publishes the Medical Encyclopedia, publications of the Central Committee of Esperantists, and so forth….

At the “Academy” publishing house, Glavlit’s authorized agent is Rubanovsky, who has received several party reprimands for Trotskyist errors and sympathy with the opposition’s views. (He worked in the publishing house while Kamenev was there and continues to work there even now.) Glavlit’s authorized agent at the Children’s Literature Publishing House Gorodetskaia, has received a severe reprimand and warning for permitting disclosure of a military secret.
Many political editors assigned to the leading newspapers are not sufficiently discerning in a political sense. They have a poor understanding of what they are supposed to do and often have a careless attitude toward their work. Because of this, a lack of uniform standards is quite often observed in the instructions given by political editors of various newspapers (one political editor passes what another prohibits); there is a huge number of anecdotal instances of very innocent things being prohibited, while strictly confidential information continues to find its way into newspapers.
If the state censorship at the center of the country is clearly unsatisfactory, then in the provinces, and especially in the raion’s, it is utterly catastrophic. With the exception of Leningrad, Sverdlovsk, Smolensk, Gorky, and Rostov, Glavlit has no real control over what is published. Almost everywhere in the raions control over the newspapers is entrusted as a tag-on job to the chairman of the raion, the military commissariat, or the raion party committee staff.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 148-150

One of the key aspects on the “ideological front” was literature. In the first year of the First Five-Year Plan, its situation reflected, with a certain belatedness, the complex twists and turns of the intra-Party struggle. Representatives of leftist views, supporters of Trotsky, were still present on the staffs of literary journals and in literary associations, and adherents of the “right” still held important posts.
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 269

HEAVY INFILTRATION OF HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS BY TROTS AND SUBVERSIVES

[1935 party review of higher educational institutions in Azov-Black Sea Krai]
During December 1934 and January 1935 in higher educational institutions and technical colleges there were a number of antiparty and counter-revolutionary sallies and speeches, most of which were not repulsed properly or in a timely fashion by party and Komsomol organizations. The faculties of higher educational institutions are severely infested with Trotskyists and the student body with class-alien and hostile elements who have easily infiltrated these institutions thanks to poorly organized admittance procedures.
More than a few alien and hostile elements have wormed their way into a number of these institutions’ Komsomol organizations (and the portion of Komsomol members in most of the institutions is significant: 30 to 40 percent). This explains why there have been quite a few instances of counter-revolutionary statements and speeches by Komsomol members….
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 134

STUDENTS OPENLY EXPRESSED ANTI-SOVIET, ANTI-STALIN ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS

The Akimov incident illustrates how weak is the political vigilance of party members at the Novocherkassk Industrial Institute. Akimov (not a party member), a recent graduate of the Institute's Aviation Department given an appointment in plant No. 22, time and again expressed counter-revolutionary views when he was among party members, especially of late:
"Soviet authority can exist without communists. It's much better for engineers to work for capitalists than in our industries…. Kirov's murder wasn't connected with Trotskyists; that's all nonsense. Zinoviev is a good man. Each acted on behalf of the masses."
Akimov was expelled from the Institute in 1934 for rowdiness, but several Communists vouched for him and he was readmitted and allowed to graduate. These Communists (Serdiukov, Gurenko, and Kabanov) have since been severely reprimanded by the party.
In Krasnodar, at the Kuban Pedagogical Technical College, student Diakov, ex-Komsomol member, systematically carried on counter-revolutionary conversations. This was known to a number of Komsomol members and Communists, but they did little to rebuff Diakov. As Diakov left the hall where a memorial service occasioned by Kirov's murder was in progress, he said to a group of students: "One's been done in, soon they'll all be done in. They'll all be killed off."
Who is Diakov? It turns out he was expelled twice from a kolkhoz, once for acting under false pretenses, the second time for fouling up work records that caused a work brigade to fall apart. Yet this didn't prevent him from being admitted as a student.
A student of the workers' and peasants' preparatory department [rabfak] at the Kuban Pedagogical Institute named Kriukova, who had been a member of the Komsomol since 1931, gave a note during class to the student next to her which read, "I salute Nikolayev for the murder of Kirov."
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 136

[March 1935 memorandum from Stetsky on counter-revolutionary attitudes among students in Rybinsk]
As a result of acquainting myself with the situation there, the following became clear: At the Aviation Institute among the students (about 750 in all) it was revealed that two, Nekrasov and Voronov, carry on counter-revolutionary conversations with their classmates….
Nekrasov is a member of the Komsomol. He was reared in kulak surroundings: his mother is from a kulak family, one uncle is a dispossessed kulak. A year or two ago Nekrasov also expressed counter-revolutionary views to Komsomol members he was living with. About the building of the White Sea-Baltic Canal, he said, for example, "They built the Canal on human bones." This is the language of the enemy. In connection with the murder of Comrade Kirov he began to make vile comments about how "it wasn't worth risking anyone's life to kill Kirov. The main leaders, not the accessories, need to be killed." As a result of statements like this he was exposed by students who were party and Komsomol members as early as December 1934.
The second, Voronov, is the son of a specialist, his year of birth 1912, a member of the Komsomol, originally from the Azov-Black Sea Krai. In Voronov too counter-revolutionary sentiments manifested themselves a long time ago. He was expelled from an institute in

Novocherkassk. He refused to take part in a day of voluntary labor (subbotnik) and was a blatant individualist who refused to participate in community work. Voronov after December 1 made comments about the murder of Comrade Kirov that were out-and-out counter-revolutionary. He said: “In my opinion [it] was poorly organized. They bungled the whole business. But this won’t be the end of the matter.” Students who were Komsomol members argued with Voronov, but they did not unmask him completely, and only after December 1 when he revealed himself more clearly did they tell the NKVD about him.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 138

HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ARE INFECTED WITH SUBVERSIVE TEACHERS

[March 1935 memorandum from Stetsky on the social and economic sciences faculty]
Recently, numerous facts have demonstrated that social and economic sciences faculties are infested with former members of the opposition, double dealers, people who once belonged to other parties, and so forth. This points to a lack of proper leadership and to the slipshod way in which faculty members are appointed….
As a rule issues related to the appointment of faculty have not been of great concern to central administrative bodies until recently. These bodies do not have an accurate picture of who is teaching the social and economic sciences.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 139

[March 1935 memorandum “Concerning the Moral and Political State of Pedagogical Institutes” from Yezhov and Shkiriatov]
Our inspection revealed that three Moscow higher educational institutions administered by Narkompros (The History and Philosophy Institute, the Moscow Oblast Institute, and the Bubnov Institute) are infested with alien and anti-Soviet elements and that their activity has increased greatly since the murder of Comrade Kirov. Dozens of students in the classes and in the dormitories of these institutes have carried on counter-revolutionary conversations ranging from an open defense of bourgeois theories to direct threats against Comrade STALIN. At the History and Philosophy Institute 50 percent of the students in the literature department did not participate in Comrade Kirov’s funeral. In this department an anti-Soviet group consisting of 12 persons was formed at the end of October 1934 by a first-year student and Trotskyist named Tager and a non-party member named Rudiakova…. In the Bubnov Pedagogical Institute after the murder of Comrade Kirov some 20 students with an anti-Soviet orientation were exposed. The reasons that such a political situation exists at the Institutes are (1) infestation of the institutes due to admissions practices, (2) the presence of antiparty and anti-Soviet elements among members of the institutes’ faculty, and (3) the absence of Bolshevik vigilance on the part of the Institutes’ party organizations and weak mass-party work.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 144

[III. Alien and anti-Soviet elements on the institutes’ faculty]

The History and Philosophy Institute was headed by former “Bundist” and Trotskyist Prigozhin, who had been an influential participant in an illegal counter-revolutionary Trotskyist organization until 1927. A double-dealer, he repudiated Trotskyism in the books he wrote, yet later, in his lectures, defended his Trotskyist views. When he came to the institute, he concealed from the institute’s party organization his former struggle against the party and thereby succeeded in becoming a member of the raion council. As the Institutes director he continued to pursue his Trotskyist line, transforming the institute into a mecca for Trotskyist faculty (25 in number) and of bourgeois specialists (11). These included Sten, a representative of the right-left bloc; Torbin, a Trotskyist expelled from the party who introduced Trotskyism into his teaching; Burtsev, assistant professor of political economy and formerly a very active Trotskyist; Ryndich, instructor of the history of the peoples of the USSR, and Goldenberg, instructor of Leninism, both ex-Trotskyists; Novikov, professor of dialectic materialism, an ex-Menshevik who sneaked idealist views into his teaching; Grishin, professor of Leninism, an ex-Bundist, who on Jan. 7 of this year at the Higher School of Communist Police passed counter-revolutionary Trotskyist directives with regard to a Zinovievist counter-revolutionary group; Feigelson, expelled from the Party in 1927 for belonging to a Zinovievist group; Gingor, ex-Trotskyist, exiled in 1929; Dakhshleger, a prominent ex-Menshevik recently fired for fascist, anti-Soviet attacks; Professor Kanchalovsky, who in his classes drew an analogy between slavery in ancient Greece and the economy of the Soviet Union; Bakhrushin and Got’e, professors of ancient history from former merchant families at one time exiled from Moscow; Liubomirov ex-SR; Gratsiansky, at one time purged from the All Union Council of the National Economy Staff; Asmus and Dynnik, ex-Menshevik sympathizers and idealists, Rubin, who was connected with the anti-Soviet group in the Literature Department; Gorev, who from 1907 to 1920 had been an active member of the Menshevik Liquidator faction, Yegorov, recently fired for teaching contraband Trotskyist views; Iskrinsky, the son of a priest who graduated from the Moscow Theological Academy; and so forth. All these faculty members worked unmonitored by the office of academic affairs and their departments and could day after day freely exert their corrupting influence on the backward part of the heterogeneous student body, stirring up anti-Soviet sentiments.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 145

He [Prigozhin] approved programs which, instead of the vulgar sociology of past years, were full of fresh new bourgeois empiricism and positivism. Interpreting an All Union Communist Party resolution about the teaching of the historical sciences to be a repudiation of Marxist-Leninist methodology. Prigozhin legalized the counter-revolutionary bourgeois teaching of history, particularly in the literature department, where the teaching of ancient and medieval history and history of ancient medieval literature and art is the monopoly of old nonparty professors, who in fact pursue bourgeois political directives, skillfully disguising them with “witticisms” and an “objective” exposition of the subject matter.
Prigozhin’s policies thus meant that a department in a Soviet ideological higher educational institution was handed over to a large group of enemies of our party and of Soviet power.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 146

FOREIGN AGENTS WORK TO OVERTHROW THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT

He [Orlov] had been an early member of the Cheka, and underground Soviet “illegal” in the 1930s in many European capitals and he was the NKVD rezident in Republican Spain when he left his post in Barcelona in the summer of 1938….
Costello, John and Oleg Tsarev. Deadly illusions. New York: Crown, c1993, p. xi

Orlov’s contribution was so far-reaching that a former senior CIA officer describes him as “the single most versatile, powerful, and productive officer in the 73 year history of the Soviet intelligence services.”
Costello, John and Oleg Tsarev. Deadly illusions. New York: Crown, c1993, p. 389

Exploiting the political turmoil of the civil war with a natural talent for deception and disguise, Reilly was soon running extensive underground operations in Russia for Lockhart and MI6. Using forged documentation, he managed to get himself appointed a commissar for the transportation of automobile spare parts during the evacuation of Petrograd, commuting to his apartment in Moscow on the special train reserved for Bolshevik officials. Dispensing several million rubles to the clergy through Patriarch Tikhon, Reilly’s plotting culminated in his bribing of the commander of a Lettish division of riflemen, Berzin, who had been introduced by Reilly to Lockhart as a potential leader of a military putsch to overthrow the Petrograd Revolutionary Government.
Costello, John and Oleg Tsarev. Deadly illusions. New York: Crown, c1993, p. 22-23

(Sinclair’s comments only)
That Germany and Poland, Romania and Japan have been filling the Soviet Union with spies and provocateurs is something which no sensible person will doubt for a moment. If such persons were sent into this country [the United States], and committed wholesale wrecking of machinery and destruction of human life, we should shoot them; and no doubt other nations which were getting ready to make war on us would denounce it as a terrible and barbarous action.
Sinclair and Lyons. Terror in Russia?: Two Views. New York : Rand School Press, 1938, p. 13

(Sinclair’s comments only)
You speak to the “obscene show trials.” I have searched your letter for any hint of the possibility that some men may actually have been guilty of waging war against the present Stalin regime inside Russia. I searched also in vain for any hint as to what Hitler and Araki [Japanese leader], to say nothing of the militarists of Great Britain, Poland, Romania, etc., may have been doing, or trying to do, inside the Soviet Union.
To me it seems the most elementary of political and military inevitabilities that secret war should be going on against the Soviet Union, and that reactionary intriguers provided with unlimited funds should be making whatever use they can of revolutionary extremism inside that country.
Arguments have a way of centering about personalities, and the question has become whether Trotsky accepted help from Hitler. I do not know anything about that, and I am not especially interested in it, because Trotsky does not loom that much in my mind. But I know that when unlimited funds are available, and when subtle and highly trained agents are working inside a political movement to use it, they can find plenty of ways of passing out money while keeping secret the sources from which the money has come.

Sinclair and Lyons. Terror in Russia?: Two Views. New York : Rand School Press, 1938, p. 26

I remember another attempt to penetrate the Comintern in about 1927, when Otto introducted me to a Hungarian communist named Thomsen: he made a good impression, spoke fluent German, and seemed a highly promising addition to Otto's staff. But, less than a week later, he was arrested, as his photograph and details were found recorded in a list of anti-Communist agents drawn up by the German Party. Naturally he was executed.
Kuusinen, Aino. The Rings of Destiny. New York: Morrow, 1974, p. 75

…there is nothing unusual, strange, fantastic, in the revelations of the Rajk and Kostov trials. The use of agents to penetrate the working-class movement and disrupt it from within is as old as capitalism itself. The methods of espionage and provocation exposed at the trials, far from being "un-British" or "un-American," were methods that were first developed on a wide scale by British capitalism and have been developed to their fullest extent by the stoolpigeon state of America.
Between the First and Second World Wars, it became the regular habit of the Intelligence Services of the great capitalist powers to infiltrate spies, not only into the working-class and progressive movements of their own countries, but also into those of the smaller capitalist states. The secret services of the weaker capitalist states, including the states of Eastern Europe, were trained by, and often came under the indirect supervision of, the Intelligence of the great powers. Now M.I.5, now the Gestapo, now American intelligence, and now the French Deuxieme Bureau, would issue its orders and receive its reports. Some of the stoolpigeons and even police chiefs of the smaller powers would often take orders (and money) from several great powers at the same time. In any case, whilst all the great powers were busy spying on each other, they all had an equal interest in perfecting the machinery to disrupt and spy on the working-class and progressive movements of all countries.
And if they were ready to play their part in spying on and disrupting the working-class and progressive movement of the world when it was fighting in opposition to capitalism and reaction, how much more did the Intelligence services of the great powers endeavor to penetrate and disrupt the working-class movement in the country where the workers ruled–the USSR! From October 1917 to spy on the Soviet Union became the central task of every capitalist Intelligence service throughout the world–to penetrate into the CPSU its highest aim. Hundreds of White Russians were employed by political and military Intelligence in Britain, France, Germany, America. Anti-Soviet hatred became the motor force of capitalist Intelligence.
It was from this that flowed the immense interest of all the capitalist Intelligence services in the Trotskyist and other factional currents in the world Communist movement in the 1920s and 1930s. Wherever groups could be discovered in Communist Parties that were secretly covering up their existence, that were deviating from Marxism-Leninism, that were nursing personal grudges and grievances and hiding them from the party, imperialist Intelligence became interested.
Klugmann, James. From Trotsky to Tito. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1951, p. 73

Thus the imperialists' Intelligence services went all out to recruit the Trotskyites and other secret groupings like Bukharinites and Zinovievites into their ranks, swelled these factions with their own specially trained agents, and above all in the '30s Trotskyism became a type of police Marxism, a platform for agents in the labor movement. In Germany and Poland, as

well as in the West, police agents specializing in the labor movement were given special courses in Trotskyism.
The contradictions of capitalism, deepening between the wars, did not allow the dreams of the imperialists, the dreams of a world-wide united capitalist crusade against the Soviet Union, to come to fruition. The Second World War was not the war they had dreamed of. The Intelligence services of Germany, Britain, France, and America found themselves technically at war with each other. But Western Intelligence, trained on anti-Sovietism, could not lightly give up its aims. Though British and American Intelligence personnel were technically at war with the Gestapo, with the Abwehr, for the most part the real enemy remained the Soviet Union and the Communist Parties, the working-class and progressive movements of all countries.
Annabelle Bucar, who worked for a time for the OSS, wrote in The Truth about American Diplomats:
“Working in the OSS, I very soon discovered that the main Intelligence activities of the organization were directed not only against Germany but also against the Soviet Union…. The anti-Soviet direction of the activities of the American Intelligence organizations is confirmed by the fact that during the war which the United States fought in alliance with the Soviet Union against fascist Germany, the Russian subdivision was the largest in the OSS.”
Klugmann, James. From Trotsky to Tito. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1951, p. 75-76

Ever since the October Revolution of 1917, the great imperialist powers have worked more and more ruthlessly to develop a system of spies and provocateurs, not only in their own countries, not only in their own countries, not only in their colonial or dependent territories, not only in other weaker capitalist states, but especially to penetrate the USSR, the country where the working people led by the working-class first assumed power.
The great imperialist states worked between the wars to develop a system of spies and agents as a fifth column against the first socialist state. In the Soviet Union the great conspiracy of the imperialists which began with Kolchak and Denikin continued with Trotsky & Bukharin.
Klugmann, James. From Trotsky to Tito. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1951, p. 78

But here is the Socialist Courier, published in Paris on March 25, 1937: ” There is no question that the Germans have managed to have their agents in the USSR penetrate the most responsible positions.”
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 446

SOME KOMSOMOL MEMBERS FREELY AND OPENLY EXPRESS ANTI-SOVIET VIEWS

In the Komsomol, for example, there was surprisingly frank resistance to Stalinism as late as 1935. The Secret Archive from Smolensk province reveals the extent of this feeling. In a Komsomol discussion on the Kirov assassination, one member is quoted as saying, “When Kirov was killed they allowed free trade in bread; when Stalin is killed, all the kolkhozes will be divided up.”… Another teacher accused Stalin of having transformed the party into a gendarmerie over the people. A nine-year-old Pioneer was reported to have shouted, “Down with Soviet Power! When I grow up, I’m going to kill Stalin.” An eleven year old schoolboy was overheard saying, “Under Lenin we lived well, but under Stalin we live badly.” And a 16

year old student was said to have declared, “They killed Kirov ; now let them kill Stalin.” There were even occasional expressions of sympathy for the opposition.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 51

As we have seen, openly seditious remarks were noted in their (the youngest generation of Communists) ranks by the NKVD. More threatening still, the Kirov murder inspired various groups to talk of, and even to plan, in an amateurish fashion which was no match for the police of the new regime, the killing of Stalin.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 78

SOME PEOPLE HAD TO BE CONVINCED TO WITHDRAW THEIR CAPITAL CONFESSIONS

Sylakov and his fellow accused were re-interrogated with the view to getting them to withdraw their confessions. Some of them, fearing a trick, refused, and had…to force them to withdraw false confessions involving them in crimes carrying the death penalty! Sylakov himself was finally sentenced to three years imprisonment for denunciation only.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 254

TROTSKY WILLING TO SACRIFICE HIS PROJECTS TO GAIN YOUNG PEOPLE OPPOSING STALIN

Both Davidovitch [Trotsky] and Abramovich [Yoffe] gave the impression of men so obsessed with their party feud with Koba that they would swallow anything, even be willing to sacrifice important projects they themselves had advocated simply in order to win the political support of the younger Communists….
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 25

MIKOYAN SUPPORTS ARRESTS OF HIS STAFF WORKING WITH THE OPPOSITION

Arrests are being carried out among members of the Commissariat for Foreign Trade. Mikoyan doesn’t stand up for his staff. His logic is simple: any supporter of the Opposition is a “son of a bitch.”
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 144

SEDOV SAYS SMIRNOV WORKED WITH GROUPS TO FORM AN ANTI-STALIN BLOC

While working on the portion of Trotsky’s archive which opened in 1980, the American historian J. Arch Getty and the French historian Broue, independently of each other, discovered documents which indicate that Trotsky and Sedov entered into contact with participants in an anti-Stalinist bloc which was being formed. Thus, in a report to the International Secretariat of the Left Opposition written in 1934, Sedov stated that members of Smirnov’s group, who had broken in 1929 with the Left Opposition, three years later had

once again rejoined it and conducted negotiations with members of other former opposition groups about creating and anti-Stalinist bloc.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 62

STALIN SAYS CONSPIRATORS DON'T LEAVE DOCUMENTS AND WRITTEN STATEMENTS

The writer [Feuchtwanger] recalled that he told Stalin "about the poor impression which was made abroad, even on people favorably disposed to the USSR, by the overly simple devices in the Zinoviev trial. Stalin laughed a bit at those who, before agreeing to believe in a conspiracy, demand to see a large number of written documents; experienced conspirators, he noted, rarely are accustomed to keeping their documents in an open place." Stalin aroused particular trust in Feuchtwanger by the fact that he spoke "with sorrow and consternation" about his friendly attitude toward Radek, who nevertheless had betrayed him.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 129

ELIMINATION OF SPIES AND TRAITORS HELPED THE NATION RATHER THAN DEMORALIZED IT

[Report to the 18th Congress on March 10, 1939]
Certain foreign pressmen have been talking drivel to the effect that the purging of Soviet organizations of spies, assassins and wreckers like Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Yakir, Tukhachevsky, Rosengoltz, Bukharin and other fiends has "shaken" the Soviet system and caused its "demoralisation." All this cheap drivel deserves is laughter and scorn. How can the purging of Soviet organizations of noxious and hostile elements shake and demoralize the Soviet system? This Trotsky-Bukharin bunch of spies, assassins, and wreckers, who kowtowed to the foreign world, who were possessed by a slavish instinct to growel before every foreign bigwig and were ready to serve him as spies–this handful of people who did not understand that the humblest Soviet citizen, being free from the fetters of capital, stands head and shoulders above any high-placed foreign bigwig whose neck wears the yoke of capitalist slavery–who needs this miserable band of venal slaves, of what value can they be to the people, and whom can they "demoralize"? In 1937 Tukhachevsky, Yakir, Uborevitch and other fiends were sentenced to be shot. After that, the elections to the supreme Soviet of the USSR were held. In these selections, 98.6 percent of the total vote was cast for the Soviet power. At the beginning of 1938 Rosengoltz, Rykov, Bukharin and other fiends were sentenced to be shot. After that, the elections to the Supreme Soviets of the Union Republics were held. In these elections 99.4 percent of the total vote was cast for the Soviet power. Where are the symptoms of "demoralisation," we would like to know, and why was this "demoralisation" not reflected in the results of the elections?
Franklin, Bruce, Ed. The Essential Stalin; Major Theoretical Writings. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p. 368

FROM REVOLUTION ONWARD THE SU WAS ALWAYS AT WAR AND HAD TO RESTRICT FREEDOM

(Sinclair's comments only)

From my point of view, the Russians have been at war during the past 20 years. It has been not merely a war of blockade, of intrigue and sabotage and spying and wholesale lying, it has also been a preparation against military attack, a mere lull between battles. I have known for 20 years that the Russians were going to be attacked again whenever reaction felt that it had the power. I have told them that on every occasion, and have never blamed them for defending themselves and preparing for further defense. Their political liberties in the meantime have been and could be only such as are possible for a people at war; and if you remember the years 1917 to 1920 in our own country, you know that they are not the ideal civil liberties such as we all hope to enjoy in the co-operative commonwealth of the future. And now have come Mussolini, and then Hitler, and then the Mikado. I used to be asked, during our EPIC campaign, to define Fascism, and my answer was, “Fascism is capitalism plus murder.” A year or more ago, addressing the Western Writers Congress, I made the statement that “Al Capone is a scholar, a statesman, and a gentleman compared with the men who are running Italy and Germany today.” The events which have come to our unhappy world since that time cause me to add Franco and the Japanese gangsters to that list.
Sinclair and Lyons. Terror in Russia?: Two Views. New York : Rand School Press, 1938, p. 22

[A GPU official, Denisov, said to Ciliga] “Our responsibility is too great for us to afford the luxury of the broad democracy of which you dream. Abroad your criticism of the Soviet regime would not benefit the proletariat but only the bourgeois and fascist counter-revolution. If the Revolution of 1918 had spread to Germany and the rest of Europe then, of course, with the support of the more highly developed West, our regime would be better, more ideal, life would have been easier, criticism more free, democracy less restricted. But we have remained alone in the most difficult circumstances.”
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 489

[Denisov, a GPU official, also said] “You are a strange person, Ciliga. Why is it that you don’t want to understand hard reality, the painful truth: one can’t build socialism with kid gloves.”
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 495

EVEN FOREIGNERS AGREE WITH THE SU SUPPRESSING A POSSIBLE RETURN TO CAPITALISM

(Sinclair’s comments only)
I have had much to say in books and magazines and newspaper statements widely published in the Soviet Union. I have told them that no physical and moral enslavement they can suffer under their own collectivist system is to be compared to the physical and moral enslavement they will suffer if the predatory capitalist powers are able to overcome them in war, or to seduce them by propaganda and intrigue. I have told them to preserve their unity, and to consider themselves in a state of siege, and to prepare to resist the onslaughts of the capitalist world–which they are diligently doing, as you know.
Just how capitalist attack will come, and what nations will take part in it, I do not attempt to guess. Hitler has all ready stated his intention to seize the Ukraine with its treasures. Japan has made perfectly plain its intention to cut off Siberia at Lake Baikal. We now see that Hitler is going to have the help of Austria, and will probably make a deal with Poland and divide the

Baltic states with that country, so as to have the help of all these. It seems likely that he will swallow and digest Czechoslovakia and Hungary, and maybe Rumania, before he feels “the day” has come.
Sinclair and Lyons. Terror in Russia?: Two Views. New York : Rand School Press, 1938, p. 55

(Sinclair’s comments only)
The capitalist-Fascist war against the Soviet Union seems to me as certain as anything in human affairs can be. And this, which to me is the one “terrific immediacy,” is to you merely a “rationalization.” I can only repeat that in my view the Soviet Union is today a city under siege, and its people enjoy only such liberties as are possible under those circumstances. Whether such limitation of liberty is right or wrong is a subject which ethical theorists may debate, but the universal experience of mankind is that the people in besieged cities are simply not permitted to intrigue, or even to agitate, against the regime which is defending the city. When they confess to having performed actions of conspiracy and sabotage, they are treated as spies and traitors. As you know, we hanged Major Andre, and you can hardly doubt that we should have hanged Benedict Arnold if we had been able to catch him.
Sinclair and Lyons. Terror in Russia?: Two Views. New York : Rand School Press, 1938, p. 57

TROTSKY CRITICIZES PYATAKOV

The military oppositionists included, for example, Pyatakov, the present director of the State Bank. He usually joined every opposition, only to wind up as a government official. Three or four years ago, when Pyatakov belonged to the same group as I did, I prophesied in jest that in the event of a Bonapartist coup d’etat, Pyatakov would go to the office the next day with his brief-case. Now I can add more earnestly that if this fails to come about, it will only be through lack of a Bonapartist coup d’etat and not through any fault of Pyatakov’s. In the Ukraine, he enjoyed considerable influence, not by accident but because he is a fairly well-educated Marxist, especially in the realm of economics, and is undoubtedly a good administrator, with a reserve of will. In the early years, Pyatakov showed revolutionary energy, but it later changed to a bureaucratic conservatism. In fighting his semi-anarchist views, I resorted to giving him an important post from the very outset, so that he would have to change from words to deeds. This method is not new, but often is very efficacious. His administrative sense soon prompted him to apply the very methods against which he had been waging his war of words.
Trotsky, Leon. My Life. Gloucester, Massachusetts: P. Smith, 1970, p. 439

RUSSIAN EMIGRES DID EVERYTHING TO OVERTHROW THE SOVIET GOVT

The Russian emigre organizations did, after all, engage in political warfare against the USSR and disseminated all kinds of disinformation.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 86

HARD FOR SPIES TO SPY ON A CENTRALLY PLANNED SYSTEM LIKE IN THE SU

[From Kurt Tippelskirch. History of World War II. Foreign Literature Publishing House, Moscow, 1956]
“Espionage, which in other countries was conducted under the guise of harmless private business activity, was, in fact, useless in the Soviet Union’s conditions of the centrally planned economic management….”
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 302

SEDOV BEGAN REVOLUTIONARY WORK AT A VERY YOUNG AGE

Thus, at 17 [in 1922] he [Trotsky’s son Sedov] began the life of a fully conscious revolutionist. He quickly grasped the art of conspiratorial work, illegal meetings, and the secret issuing and distribution of Opposition documents. The Komsomol rapidly developed its own cadres of Opposition leaders.
Trotsky, Leon. Leon Sedoff. New York City: Young People’s Socialist League, (Fourth Internationalists), 1938, p. 8

During the first years of emigration he [Sedov] engaged in a vast correspondence with Oppositionists in the USSR. But by 1932 the GPU destroyed virtually all our connections. It became necessary to seek fresh information through devious channels. Leon Sedov was always on the lookout, avidly searching for connecting threads with Russia, hunting up returning tourists, soviet students assigned abroad, or sympathetic functionaries in the foreign representations.
Trotsky, Leon. Leon Sedoff. New York City: Young People’s Socialist League, (Fourth Internationalists), 1938, p. 15

DISRUPTION OF PARTY ACTIVITIES TOOK MANY FORMS

During a large Central Committee meeting, over the heads of the presidium from the ceiling, there flew a piece of cement from the rafters–landing right on the presidium table. The security did not dare cause a commotion, but in the evening, they went to investigate where this could have come from. Sure enough, someone put it there and with the movement in the meeting hall, opening and closing of doors, this piece of cement was meant to land and cause a furor.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 28

IMPERIALISTS NEVER STOPPED TRYING TO OVERTHROW THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT

The plots and conspiracies of imperialism against countries of socialism or People’s Democracy are not simple and do not follow a single line. The imperialists work through all possible channels– dispossessed landlords or big industrialists, former leaders of the Army, police or secret police, through kulaks, nationalists, degenerate elements, drug addicts, former common criminals, through renegade Communists or right-wing labor leaders, through agents and provocateurs inserted into revolutionary organizations. They try to keep

all possible contacts, all possible counter-revolutionary elements on their string at the same time….
This was shown clearly enough in the successive imperialist attempts to overthrow the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union, and to restore a Russian capitalism subservient to the West. First they tried through the open war of intervention to base themselves on the Tsarist White Guards, on the Russian landlords and capitalists, the old officers and police. When this failed, for a long period they tried to base their counter-revolutionary conspiracies on the kulaks, and when the kulaks were finally eliminated as a class, it was the secret agents of imperialism inside the Communist Party, the Trotskyite and other parallel "opposition" groups hitherto a reserve, who became in the middle thirties their main hope, their main weapon, for the overthrow of socialism and the reversal of history.
Klugmann, James. From Trotsky to Tito. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1951, p. 45-46

[As Stalin stated to a meeting of Activists of the Moscow Committee of the CPSU on April 13, 1928]: It would be stupid to imagine that international capital will leave us in peace. No, comrades, this is not so. Classes exist, international capital exists and it cannot calmly view the development of the country building Socialism. (Stalin Collected Works, VOL. 11, pp. 54-55)
Klugmann, James. From Trotsky to Tito. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1951, p. 55

…if the whole history of the Soviet Union, encircled and isolated in its age-old poverty and backwardness, had not been an almost uninterrupted sequence of calamities, emergencies, and crises threatening the nation's very existence. Almost every emergency and crisis posed all major issues of national policy on the knife's edge, set the Bolshevik factions and groupings at loggerheads,….
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 464

FASCISTS SUPPRESS ALL LEFTIST WRITINGS EXCEPT THOSE OF TROTSKY

In Mussolini's Italy of the 1930s, when it meant long terms of imprisonment, and perhaps torture or even death, to be in any way connected with the Communist Party, and when not only all the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin, but the works of all Italian and foreign democrats and progressives were strictly banned from Italian libraries and bookshops, the works of Trotsky, on the "new kind of communism" were "freely" and widely translated and distributed. I remember vividly how in 1938, passing through Italy on the way to meet the anti-fascist and Communist students of Belgrade University, and spending a few hours in Mussolini's Milan, the word "communism" caught my eye on a number of books prominently displayed in a bookshop window. They were newly translated works of Trotsky.
In Hitler's Germany, when to be a Communist or Socialist or militant trade unionist or liberal or democrat meant arrest, the concentration camp, and often death and torture, when there was instituted one of the most thoroughgoing "purges" of literature and burning of books that the world has ever known, when Schiller's Don Carlos, the poems of Heine, and the novels of Thomas Mann were banned or burned as "subversive," the writings of Trotsky were widely translated and distributed.

Trotsky's writings and those of his followers were freely published in the middle and late 30s by the Hearst Press in America. His works on his "new kind of communism" were published by the Franco Press at Salamanca and Burgos. The secret police of the Polish dictatorship were specially educated in Trotskyism in order to facilitate their work of espionage and disruption inside the Polish working-class movement.
Klugmann, James. From Trotsky to Tito. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1951, p. 81-82

A LOT OF POST WWII SUBVERSIVE AND TRAITOROUS ACTIONS BY HIGH OFFICIALS

[Report by the Secretary of the Central Committee, Kuznetsov, regarding the Terms of Reference for Elections of the "Honor Courts"–Sept. 29, 1947]

Our Central Committee has uncovered the slavish attitude and cooperation with and detrimental dealings with foreign powers by the former director of the HydroMeteorological Complex–Fedorov. Let me just say the following: that all of our materials which we utilize in the sphere of HydroMeteorological work, in this sphere also top-secret inventions and research documents, found themselves in the hands of the British and Americans; besides this, English and American agents were permitted to work and direct their activities without hindrance, as if they were in their own home. Only the following facts show the extent of the activity of these agents: I'm just giving a sketchy analysis of what transpired between this Director and the American Military Attache and the Naval Attache–the director and these attaches met 88 times, the Director of the hydroelectrical and meteorological enterprises from the USA met with the Director–55 times; employees of the British and American embassies met with the Director 41 times.
This came to such a point that the Director of our Ministry had built a special secure office, where these foreign spies behaved as if this Ministry and enterprise belonged to them and besides this, they found out all of our secrets. On top of this, the American and British spies were given documents which were marked by the military as "TOP SECRET," only for the "Research Staff." Systematically, there followed letters, schematic detailed drawings, analyses of projects, plus the secret directives and plans of the Central Committee regarding future self-defense projects. By the decision of the Central Committee and Soviet of Ministers, Fedorov was dismissed from his post and his rank as General was taken away from him and he will be tried by the " Honor Court."
In the Ministry of Agriculture, the Director of the All Union Institute of plant-growing research, Shlykov sent to a foreign agricultural expert–at that time in Moscow–a couple of years old research samples of alfalfa. In his letter to this American, he promised to send…him the researched seeds of great value to the Soviet State. In this, he was not successful; he was caught beforehand.
In the Ministry of Transport (railways), Professor Popov, trying to make an impression in foreign countries, published in an American journal an article on the "Theory of Orthopedic Focus." The article has a very important analysis for our country in doing designs for transportation railway cars on our railways system. In this article, all the research that our state paid for was given free of charge to the Americans.
I will not go into details about what we found in the Ministry of Oil and Gas, in the Forest Ministry, in the Academy of Sciences, in many Ministries and establishments of the research and technical spheres.

I will also not dwell on the details of this “slavish bending of the knee” in front of foreign powers by some sections of our intelligentsia. They were outlined in detail in the Secret Letter that you received from the Central Committee of the party.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 80-82

Let us take another example. Not too long ago, the Ministry of State Control uncovered actions by the Northern Research Institute which is responsible for studying the northern regions around the North Pole. Secret research materials were sold to the Americans. Americans received over 2000 books, brochures, data and research materials with concrete results of our research in the last 25 years of our labor and expense. And you know now how the Americans are studying and showing keen interest in the northern regions of our country, just across the North Pole. All that we accumulated by our scientists about the North in the last 25 years–all this research material was given to Americans.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 86

We do have such people in our Central Committee, we must keep in mind the fact that foreign secret services are always trying to get to the heart of our party–to get their agents both internal and external–into the Central Committee. If the foreign secret services cannot get into their net a worker of the Central Committee, then they try through their family or friends.
Here are some examples. In these examples, I will name families. I will not judge them here now, but they were in the employ of our Central Committee and are now expelled.
At the beginning of this year, a [young female] student studying foreign languages, Kharlamova, who was tied in with foreign secret agents,….got acquainted with an American spy, Tokarev, [who was] working in the Central Committee of the party. Later it became known that Tokarev drank with this spy and talked. He did not report this to the Central Committee. Why did the [female] foreign secret service [agent] get interested? Because he was a nice looking man, it would be a pleasure to get to know him? No. It was necessary through this worker to find out what was happening in the Central Committee.
Another example. In the Central Committee apparatus, there worked a certain Kalinin, who, through his sister, was acquainted with a woman who was in the employ of the American secret service. This Kalinin met with this spy regularly, even sharing the same living quarters. Can we allow an employee, a Communist in the service of the Central Committee to work in the Central Committee any longer? He was removed,…
In our Central Committee, there worked a certain Chervintsev. He had contact, not with a low ranking British spy, but with the top Secretary of the British Embassy, while hiding this fact from the Central Committee.
Not too long ago, arrested after being uncovered as an agent of American secret services, director of foreign language publishing house, before that he had held the rank of Director of Ministry of Propaganda–Suchkov. His anti-Soviet feelings were somehow overlooked and he then boldly got in touch with an American spy agency and was taken on as a spy. Traveling to America and back while working in the USSR Embassy in Washington, he was giving secrets to the Americans over many years.
I would like to have an answer from Comrade Alexandrov and Comrade Shcherbakov. How was a person of this caliber raised and promoted into the Central Committee in a very responsible position?

Because he knew some foreign languages, is that the only criteria to have him employed in the Central Committee? He was hired as a specialist. Comrade Alexandrov often uses this word “specialist” when we ask him at the Politburo of the Central Committee. He defends his work by arguing that in “My department, there are 250 specialists.”
I ask, since when do we hire communists for the Central Committee apparatus who call themselves “specialists” and not Communists-Bolsheviks?
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 91-93

Voroshilov admitted also that: “I, as a People’s Commissar…must admit that I not only did not see or realize what these elements were preparing for our country, but even when our state security organs showed me irrefutable proof of people such as Gorbachev, Feldman, and others… [Gorbachev was a family relative of the late 1980s leader of the Soviet Union] I did not want to believe that these people, working with us could be capable of performing such terrible criminality. I am to blame in this very much…. I repeat again, that no one signaled to me or to the Central Committee about what these elements were preparing, that inside our Command, we have this counter-revolutionary conspiracy!”
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 102

STALIN EXPLAINS HOW SPYING GOT GOING AND HOW IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN PREVENTED

[In a June 1937 speech Stalin said], We can ask ourselves the question: How is it possible that these people yesterday were communists, and now have become deadly weapons against us? Why? Because they were compromised. Today, the Germans demand from them–give more information. If you will not give, we already have your passport and your papers, that you are now our employee, we shall publish them. Under the terror of being exposed, they give and gather information. Tomorrow, the German master’s demand: No, this is not enough, obtain more information and you will receive money, give us your papers and passport. After that, they demand–start spreading lies, start disrupting the work of the Central Committee. At the beginning, start arguments, diversions. If you will show that you are on our side, things will improve. If you do not comply, we shall expose you, tomorrow we shall give all this information to Soviet agents and your heads will roll. These people start diversions. After that, the Germans say– No, somehow you must start something in the Kremlin itself or in the Moscow Army Garrison and try to get [all] the top army-command posts you can. These newly recruited spies start to do whatever they can to fulfill the German commands so that they would not be exposed. Further, this also becomes too small and too little for the Germans. They demand something more concrete, more noteworthy. They comply by assassinating Kirov. Well, you will get paid, you did an excellent job. They are urged to go further, can’t you make certain that the whole government will be overthrown?
The spies then start organizing through Enukidze, through Gorbachev, Egorov, who was then the Commander of the Army School for Officers, which was situated in the Kremlin. They are told to organize a group who will then proceed to arrest the Government. News flashes back to the German High Command that there is such a group, we shall do everything, we shall arrest and go further. But according to the German Masters, this is not

enough, to arrest and to kill a few dozens of responsible leaders–what about the people, the Army? Well, these spies reply that they have such a post, such a command in their hands and we ourselves, they state, are in command now, here we have Tukhachevsky, here we have Uborevitch, and here is Yakir.

…This is a military-political espionage, make no mistake [about it]. I feel that these people are marionettes and dolls in the hands of Reich intelligence. The German fascists wanted there to be a plot and these people started this conspiracy. The Reich wants these people to give them systematically military secrets and these elements started to gather the secrets and passed them on to their masters. The Reich wanted to change the government of the USSR, these traitors undertook this job as well, but they did not succeed. The Reich intelligence wanted that in case of war, everything would be ready for their success, that the Red Army would automatically go over to the German side, that our army would not be ready to defend our Motherland. This was wanted by the Reich and this is what these elements tried to accomplish. This “Agentura” was composed of 10 spies and three experienced leaders–13 spies that are traitors to our country. This conspiracy was not only an internal matter for our country–it became also an external policy of Germany and the political aims of the Reichstag intelligence agency. These people tried to make out of the USSR another Spain, by finding among us traitors, then they compromised them to do their bidding. This is the situation that we are facing now.

Tukhachevsky in particular, who played the role of a noble man, was not involved in small details. We considered him as a capable military figure. I asked him personally: “How could you, in the course of three months, allow the decimation of a division of soldiers to only 7000? What is this? This is an ignoramous, not a military leader. What kind of division is this [composed] of only 7000 soldiers? This is only a division without artillery, or a division with artillery but without escorts. In reality, this is not a division–this is shameful. How can you have allowed this to happen?” I asked Tukhachevsky: “How can you, a person who calls himself an expert in army matters, how can you demand that we comply with your wishes and make all of our divisions to be composed of only 7000 soldiers? Not only that, that our divisions have only 40-60 howitzers and 20 cannons. There could be only one of two things: either you eliminate all the equipment to the devil and only have cannons or eliminate the cannons and have just the other equipment! What is it going to be?” He tells me: “Comrade Stalin, you are exaggerating.” This is not exaggeration at all–this is sabotage being carried out by the German High Command.

There, you have this core and what it represents? Did these elements ever vote with Trotsky? Rudzutak never voted for Trotsky, but became a sleuth. Enukidze also never voted with Trotsky, but also became a spy. Well, here is your argument: who voted for whom? What about the question of whether these enemies came from a landowner family? I do not know who is left of these people on trial, aside from Tukhachevsky. Class composition from where these elements come from has no significance. In every case, we must judge by the deeds, not family. For many years, these people had contact with German intelligence agencies and were performing espionage. Of course, most of them were vacillating and did not perform their work of espionage well. I believe that very few of them performed their spying from beginning to the logical end…. The German Reichswehr, as an enormous power, ensnared for itself dissatisfied elements, weak people, and weak people must do the bidding of their masters. A slave is always a slave if he so wishes. This is what is meant by falling into the trap of espionage. If you fall on this wheel, whether you want to or not, it will keep on turning on the road to the end. This is the basis. Not because of their politics, no one asked them about their politics. These are just people who do favors and get ensnared.

…They were in the service of German intelligence. The Germans commanded, gave orders, and these villains carried out the orders. These idiots thought that we are so blind, that we do not see anything. These villains wanted to arrest the Soviet government in the Kremlin. But it shows that we saw what was happening. They wanted to have in the Moscow Army Garrison their own people and to start an uprising in the army. They thought that no one will be able to detect their plans, that our country is helpless, that it is the Sahara, there are no people, but there is a working-class, farmers, an intelligentsia… a government and a party. It showed that we knew more than they thought possible….

Second question– Why was it possible for their masters to ensnare these people? We arrested around 300-400 people in the military. Among them are good people. How could they have been ensnared by Germany?

I cannot say that these people are capable, talented. How many times did these same people fight openly against Lenin, against the party of Lenin and after Lenin, and always, they were defeated. Now, they opened up a bigger campaign and they lost this battle also. You therefore cannot say that they were talented, starting in 1921 and ending up in 1937. Not very talented and not very genial people at all.

But, how was it possible for Germany to agitate and ensnare these people? This is a very serious question. I think that these German fascists were successful by this method! A person who is not satisfied, with whatever, not happy that he, a former highly placed Trotskyite or Zinovievite, and he is not being promoted as quickly as others, or not satisfied that he is not as capable as some of his peers, or he is not capable of performing the task that the party gave him, and consequently, he is being demoted according to his abilities, but he feels himself capable. It is sometimes very hard for a person to understand and accept his capabilities and his or her weaknesses. Some of these people felt that they are geniuses and when this genius is not recognized, he is dissatisfied and ready for any means to prove himself.

These people started from small, from an ideological grouping, then they proceeded further. They talked and argued like this: See my friends…the GPU [State Security] is now under our control, Yagoda is ours… the Kremlin is in our hands, so is Peterson with us, the Moscow military district is ours, Kork, Gorbachev are ours also. Everything is in our hands. Either we rise up now, or tomorrow, when we come to power, it might be too late. And many, who were weak, not rational people, [said], to hell with everything, this will be our chance. The plan is good, during that time we shall arrest the present government, we shall take over the Moscow Army Garrison and everything else will fall into place, and if I remain on the sidelines, I might be in the dust bin.

This attempt was not realistic. But these weak people thought along these lines: to hell with it, I cannot remain behind. Let me, as quickly as possible, involve myself in this adventure–otherwise, I might be left behind.

Of course, in this way, you can only agitate a small number of people. Of course, each character is different. Still, how was it possible to get these traitors involved in espionage? The enemy hypnotized them with glowing promises: tomorrow, everything will be in your hands, we are with you. The Kremlin is yours, you will work internally and we externally. This is the method of promises and rewards for the future.

Third question– why did we overlook such dangers for so long? There were sufficient signals. In February, there was the Plenum of the Central Committee. This question was on the agenda, but somehow we muddled and went through the session without taking any action… we did not raise the question of these elements working in the Red Army. Why was this not done? Maybe we are not very well organized people, or were we altogether blind?

There is a different encompassing reason. Of course, the Army is not divorced from the people, from the party. As you well know in the party, we saw successes in all spheres of our country–this somehow made our heads spin from the economic, political and other successes that our country was achieving, day in, day out… life was becoming easier, political life was not bad, international prestige is growing for our country in the world, the army from top to bottom is in technological and military sciences growing, everything is going ahead at a fast pace, our strength is colossal, weaknesses are being overcome–this caused our vigilance to be lax, people then began to think, what else do we need? What is still lacking? Can there be any possibility of a counter-revolution brewing amongst us? There were such thoughts in our minds. We did not know at the beginning that this “seed” was already planted by the German Reichswehr. These agents knew that they must fulfill the German plans or they would be exposed and lose their heads.

As I mentioned, these successes made us complacent. This was exactly the moment that these agents thought that they would succeed.

…In all sections, we smashed the bourgeoisie, only in the sphere of intelligence service did we proceed like little boys, like children, trusting that everyone in this important service for the country was a dedicated party person and patriot. This was our weakness. Our intelligence in the military sphere is weak, it is full of spies and elements that do harm to our country. Our internal intelligence service was headed by a spy, Gai, while in the internal security, we discovered a nest of these spies working for Germany and Japan, for Poland, but not for us. Intelligence–this is the only sphere of our work that in the first 20 years we suffered a great defeat.

Now, the question remains before us to put this matter back on its feet. This agency is our eyes and ears. We must understand that the USSR has become an attraction for spies. A great country, great railway system, navy is growing, agriculture is on an incline of production, collective and state farms are being more and more mechanized and effective, industrial potential is great. This is such an inviting bit of sweetcake for the imperialists, that they’ll do everything to get their hands on this delicacy. History always proved that enemies will always covet a country such as ours… in this respect, we became a bit too complacent. Germany is trying to grab our riches. Japan has always sending their spies into our country–it has its constant nest within our midst. They want to grab our Pacific region, the others want to grab Leningrad. We overlooked this, we did not want to understand. As we proceeded to enrich our country, our life, we became a sweet piece of fruit that our enemies dearly wanted.

In their quest, the enemies were able to get our traitors involved in their plans, because they will not be satisfied as long as our country is intact. We overlooked this question. That is why our security system is not adequate and is ill-prepared for this onslaught. We were beaten in this sphere as children by a bully.

But this is not all, that our internal security system is bad. Fine! We now know this. But this is not all. We talked today that there were signals about this question. Yes, there were, but very haphazard. But the signals were weak, not enough of them…. WE DEPEND ON THE PARTY COMRADES TO BE THE EYES AND EARS OF OUR COUNTRY. WE, AT THE CENTER, ARE NOT ALWAYS AWARE OF THESE PROBLEMS. PEOPLE HAVE A TENDENCY TO THINK THAT THE CENTER KNOWS EVERYTHING, SEES EVERYTHING. NO, THE CENTER IS NOT ALWAYS ABLE TO SEE AND HEAR AND KNOW EVERYTHING. THE CENTER SEES AND KNOWS ONLY A PART, THE REST SHOULD BE SEEN BY THE PEOPLE THAT ARE IN EVERY CORNER OF OUR COUNTRY.

WE SEND PEOPLE, BUT WE DO NOT KNOW THESE PEOPLE 100%–YOU MUST SEE WHO THEY ARE. THERE IS ONE SURE SIGN OF KNOWING WHOM WE SEND TO WORK IN YOUR DISTRICT… HOW THEY FULFIL THEIR WORK, THEIR ATTITUDES AND RESULTS. THEY CAN ONLY BE DONE BY PEOPLE IN THE LOCALITIES, NOT BY THE CENTER IN MOSCOW.

An example of what Comrade Gorbachev told us about one aspect of this sabotage [concerns] what was proposed innocently regarding the quality of our army rifles which in all respects are still manufactured according to designs approved by these elements in a position to make decisions–our army rifles are practically a sports rifle….

… the groove and bore of the rifle were changed; thus making the mainspring weak and not as effective as it should be. This is not a small matter, comrades. Our soldiers' lives depend on their rifles! I received a letter from a rank-and-file Red Army soldier complaining that this should be looked into. Some defend Vasilenko who is responsible for this section, others condemn him. In the long run, it was proved that it was he who is to blame for this. We did not know that this was done purposely on instruction from his German bosses. After investigation, who was this Vasilenko? We found out that he was actually a spy. He himself admitted this. From what year, Comrade Yezhov?

YEZHOV: From 1926.

STALIN: Of course, he calls himself a Trotskyite, where else could Trotskyites go other than to spying.

You comrades are not vigilant enough, you do not give us signals about some of the problems. You have people who are not altogether 100% reliable. At the Center, we haven't enough such people to fill all the needs of the whole country. Your task is to see who these people are, how they work on the job that they were assigned. Every member of the party, every non-party citizen of the USSR not only has the right, but an obligation to let us know about the problems. [Even] if only 5% of the people reported the problems, the sabotage, or anti-Soviet performance by the people we send out to their respective posts, this would be a step forward. The people should send these complaints to their local authorities and a copy to the Central Committee CPSU. Whoever said that these letters should only be written to the local authorities? That is not correct.

…They should write to everyone with complaints–if no results are obtained, they should write to the Central Committee as often as need be!

If this correct road would be followed, and this is Lenin's truth–you will not find any person in the Central Committee CPSU that would have a bad word to save regarding this method–if you would follow this road, we at the Center would have been able to solve many of the problems that are confronting us now.

This is in regard to receiving signals from below.

Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 115-127

[In a June 1937 speech Stalin said], We depend from time to time on having input from below–we do not always see the whole picture. We cannot know what is going on all over the country. This is impossible. We depend on people there, on the spot.

Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 176

STALIN EXPLAINS TO BLUKER HOW HE SHOULD TELL THE MILITARY ABOUT FINDING TRAITORS

[In a June 1937 speech STALIN said]: If I were in your [Blukher] place, the commander of OKDVA, I would approach this matter in this way: I would gather the top commanders and explain in detail about our discussions. Then I would gather the lower rank commanders and with you present, I would explain to them in less detail–but it should be done very correctly, that the Army personnel should know that we have among us certain elements that have begun to sell their country to the enemy, that these arrested commanders and highly placed personnel are just as much our enemies as are the German and Japanese fascists. We're going to cleanse our Army from these elements, do not panic, they will all be found out, sentenced. This is the way I would go about this difficult task.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 135

STALIN SAYS ENTANGLED SPIES MUST BE ENCOURAGED TO COME FORWARD AND CONFESS

[In a June 1937 speech Stalin said], Since army regulations do not allow criticism in the ranks, let us come up here with our plan of action, pick five comrades from the Military who will launch this criticism….
We must be certain that those we pick are reliable and not hidden agents of the arrested ones.
…This is not an idle question. I think that among our people, among commanders, among political cadres, there are also such comrades who are without knowing it involved in this conspiracy. He might have been told something, they wanted to agitate him to join, threatened him, compromised him. We must save these people, after they tell us the truth. Are there such people in the command?
VOICES: Of course. Absolutely!
STALIN: These traitors worked five years, they must have had some success. If among them someone realizes that this whole plot has become known, they would recant, tell all. These people should be saved.
… We should absolve the beguiled ones. We should forgive, we must give them our solemn promise!
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 137-138

STALIN SAYS CAPITALISTS SURROUND THE SU & ALWAYS READY TO ATTACK OR STRANGLE

[At the Feb. March 1937 Plenum Stalin stated]…Facts from the reports at this Plenum prove beyond doubt that the lack of vigilance exists and we are paying a price for this by seeing more and more sabotage being done by these enemies. How can we explain this lack of attention? How do we explain the fact that our comrades, schooled as they are in fighting our political enemies, have obviously ignored our pleas and suggestions?

Maybe our party comrades became worse than they were before, became less attentive and disciplined? No, this is not the case! Maybe our comrades were starting to be re-born into unbelievers in socialism? Again, this is not so! Then what is the problem? Where did this blindness and non-vigilance come from?
The answer is closer to these facts: party comrades, overburdened with the economic and agricultural work, dealing with colossal victories, unfortunately forgot a about some very relevant facts that all Bolsheviks have no right to forget. They forgot that the Soviet Union finds itself surrounded by capitalist states. We like to talk about capitalism and its surrounding us around our country, but these comrades do not seriously understand what this encirclement means to us. We are only one country building socialism, but all the other countries are capitalist, just waiting for our weak points to appear and pounce on us, if not liquidating us as a whole, they try to weaken us, dismember us, plus find weak people who would do this job for them.
Our comrades forgot these facts in their excitement over our victories. Naive people could only think that there should be or are good relations between us and them. The truth is that even among the capitalist states there is disunity. These capitalist states also send spies into each other's territory.
It is far from the truth that capitalist states have "good relations" between themselves. This is a fact–markets, conquest, and competition for markets that brings these countries sometimes to war with each other. It was like this before, and it is like this now. Spies are in each other's country–in England, U.S.A., France, Germany, Japan, and other developed countries.
Why should the capitalist countries treat us less cruelly than they treat each other, some may ask? It is exactly the opposite. Why should they send into our country fewer spies than they do into each other's? Where is this fallacy among some of our comrades coming from? It is a fact, as Marxists, we should know that as long as there is capitalism, they will keep sending into our midst spies, assassins, saboteurs, and provocateurs.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 230-231

[At the Feb. March 1937 Plenum Stalin stated], We must never forget the fact of the encirclement of the Soviet Union by capitalist states. This is a fact of life, that we cannot afford to forget or let our guard down. We must also impress on the people the fact, that as long as there are capitalist states surrounding us, there will be spies, sabotage, diversionists, terrorists, all sent into the Soviet Union by our class enemies. We must struggle with those comrades who still do not believe the dangers that are facing the USSR. Explain to them that no matter what colossal achievements we might make, this will not stop these enemies from trying to subvert our people, our policies, and our defenses.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 238

[At the Feb. March 1937 Plenum Stalin stated], …There is no longer the need for discussions and debates, trying to win them over to our side–we must use the methods of unmasking and of liquidating these enemies.
We must explain that our previous enemies were technically superior to us, and thus we were forced to rely on their services. The modern enemies have a party card in their hands, and wave it for all to see how "patriotic" they are, it's easy for these enemies to fool our

people, to fool them on political grounds, since people trust the communists –in this then, lies the danger.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 239

They could have no idea, he [British Cabinet Minister Anderson] told Radek, of how bitterly all other countries hated the Soviet Union, how determined they were to crush her at the first opportunity. Radek was so impressed that he not only reported to Stalin at once, but insisted on a special directive to all foreign communist parties. If Henderson, the 'arch-opportunist', thought it necessary to give this private warning, how acute the danger must be!
Berger, Joseph. Nothing but the Truth. New York, John Day Co. 1971, p. 86

TROT TRAITORS ARE MUCH BETTER DISGUISED THAN THE OPENLY BOURGEOIS AGENTS

[At the Feb. March 1937 Plenum Stalin stated], This is the tactic of modern Trotskyites–hide everything even from the leadership–except 3-5 people at the top.
Contemporary Trotskyism is not a political idea–they are without principles, diversionists, spies, agents, killers, a band of die-hard enemies of socialism and of the working class, working for the secret services of foreign countries. This is the kind of evolution in the last 7-8 years of Trotskyism.
If you remember, [the defendants in the Shakhty trial] were foreign to us–they were former businessmen, landowners, former company directors, former stock exchange directors, former bourgeois specialists, who were openly our political enemies. None of our people could be taken in by these enemies. They openly showed their hatred of us. But this, we cannot say, applies to modern Trotskyites. The modern enemies, such as Trotskyites, were all former communist party members. These people were not looked upon as foreigners. If the older enemies were going against the masses openly, the modern traitors use flattery, bow before the other communists, go to all ends to praise socialism and our leaders, in order that we will accept them as our own. There is a difference, you see!
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 234

STALIN WARNS ABOUT SUCCESSES PRODUCING COMPLACENCY

[At the Feb. March 1937 Plenum Stalin stated], Victories are great, our growth of socialism is the admiration of the working-class of the world. But… successes have their negative side also. Successes in most people produced dullness in vigilance, self-satisfaction in outlook, just pure consumerism happiness, oblivious to other factors that are working at the same time. Here, I must remind our comrades of the danger of successes.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 236

[At the Feb. March 1937 Plenum Stalin stated], We must discard the theory that is being perpetuated by enemies, that with every successful step we take, with every new step forward towards socialism, our class enemy becomes weaker and slowly but surely will evolve into a communist and support socialism. This is not only a wrong theory, but it is

extremely dangerous because it makes our people unaware of the danger and takes them away from being vigilant towards the class enemy.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 240

[At the Feb. March 1937 Plenum Stalin stated], The situation is the other way around, as more and more successes pile up in our building of socialism. The enemies will more and more become bold, ruthless, more sharper struggles will occur, the more sabotage these elements will perpetrate on the Soviet Union–they will go over towards more and more terroristic attacks against the state and its leaders.
It is imperative to defeat and discard another theory that is being promoted, stating that, an enemy cannot be an enemy unless he is constantly deriding socialism, or, how can he be an enemy if he is fulfilling his given task and also over-fulfilling it? This strange theory reveals the naivete of its authors. Not every enemy will always criticize and do harm to socialism; otherwise, he would be unmasked in no time. The opposite is true–the hidden enemy works even harder than maybe a dedicated Bolshevik–but at any given opportunity, he will sabotage, if he can. I think that this question is very clear and we do not have to dwell on it.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 241

STALIN SAYS IT TAKES MANY TO BUILT BUT ONLY A FEW TO DESTROY

[At the Feb. March 1937 Plenum Stalin stated], What about the well-known horde of journalists-writers in America headed by a well-known crook, Eastman, all these crooks of the pen, who live there and heap lies upon us and the working-class of the USSR–are they not a reserve for Trotskyism?
To build a steel, iron bridge, it needs thousands of people, from raw materials to builders to operators, but to destroy the bridge, you need only a couple of saboteurs.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 244

THE SOVIET LEADERS HAD GOOD REASONS TO FEAR IMMINENT ATTACKS

…Throughout the 1920s there were regular war scares, often based on the most trivial pretext–in 1923 when the Frenchman Marshal Foch visited Warsaw, in 1925 after the signing of the Treaty of Locarno (“preparation for war against the USSR,” as the Soviet newspaper Pravda put it), in 1927 following the British decision to break off diplomatic relations. It is customary to see these fears as a product of domestic politics, a device to focus popular attention on the external enemy and to unify the Party, but Russia’s recent history, which included invasion by Germany and the Hapsburg empire in 1914, intervention by 14 states in the Civil War and invasion by Poland in 1920, was enough in itself to encourage a constant vigilance and helps to explain the almost paranoid fear of attack or subversion that distinguished the [Soviet leadership]….
Overy, R. J. Russia’s War: Blood Upon the Snow. New York: TV Books, c1997, p. 23

The antagonism between the workers' first state and world capitalism was unabated, even though it did not show itself in any clash of arms.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 377

DEUTSCHER WAS EXPELLED FROM THE POLISH CP FOR ANTI-SOVIET ACTS

From the middle 1920s I was active in the Polish Communist party which stood closer to Bolshevism than did any other party; soon thereafter I was leading spokesman of an inner -party opposition strongly influenced by Trotsky's ideas; in 1932 I had the somewhat curious distinction of being the first member ever to be expelled from the Polish party for his anti-Stalinism.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. xi

TROTSKY PROPOSES COMPROMISES WITH LIBERALS AND ENTERING BOURGEOIS GOVTS

… Trotsky came to the fore as the chief expounder of the International's strategy and tactics. He advocated once again the united front. He went a step farther and urged the Communist parties to support, on conditions, Social Democratic governments and even, under special circumstances, in pre-revolutionary situations, when such coalitions could pave the way for proletarian dictatorship, to participate in them.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 65

HEALTH PROBLEMS OF TROTSKY'S FAMILY ARE AGGRAVATED BY EXILING SON IN LAW

In the middle of all this political excitement tragedy visited Trotsky's family. Both his daughters, Zina and Nina, had been ill with consumption. The health of Nina, the younger of the two–she was 26– broke down after the imprisonmen and deportation of Nevelson, her husband.
Finally, he [Trotsky] learned that Nina had died on 9 June….
Messages of condolence from many deportees were still arriving at Alma Ata when another blow caused Trotsky much sorrow and grief. After Nina's death Zina had intended to go to Alma Ata. Her husband too had been deported and she had strained her health in nursing her sister. From week to week she delayed the journey until news reached Alma Ata that she was dangerously ill and unable to travel. Her malady was aggravated by a severe and protracted nervous disorder; and she was not to rejoin her father before his banishment from Russia.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 428-429

TROTSKY URGED HIS FOLLOWERS TO STAY IN GOVT POSITIONS WHEN THEY WANTED TO LEAVE

He [Blumkin] put before Trotsky his own cas de conscience and spoke of his wish to resign from the GPU. Trotsky firmly dissuaded him. Difficult as his situation was, Trotsky said, he must go on working loyally for the GPU. The Opposition was committed to defend the workers' state; and no Oppositionist should withdraw from any official post in which he acted in the broad interest of the state and not in that of the Stalinist faction.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 86

TROTSKY NEGLECTED THE ILLS OF HIS CHILDREN VERSUS THOSE OF THE WORLD

"To Papa," she [Zina] often repeated, "I am a good-for-nothing." More resentment, more reproach and self-reproach, more gloom, and more and graver mental disturbance made everyone feel worse. In the summer she left home, and in a nearby sanatorium underwent the operations on her lungs. She returned, her physical health somewhat restored, but her misery unrelieved.
Distressed and shaken with pity, Trotsky was a prey to guilt and helplessness. How much easier it was to see in what way the great ills of society should be fought against than to relieve the sufferings of an incurable daughter! How much easier to diagnose the turmoil in the collective mind of the German petty bourgeoisie than to penetrate into the pain-laden recesses of Zina's personality!
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 150

She [Zina's mother, Alexandra] quoted what Zina had written her only a few weeks earlier: "It is sad that I can no longer return to Papa. You know how I have adored and worshipped him from my earliest days. And now we are in utter discord. This has been at the bottom of my illness." Zina had complained about his coolness towards her…. She had yearned for political activity and she needed scope, for she had taken after her father; and–"you, her father, you could have saved her."
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 197

CAPITALISTS WOULD NEVER ALLOW SOCIALISM TO DEVELOP IN PEACE

History, it might be said, did not leave the Soviet Union alone long enough to allow a laboratory experiment with socialism in a single country to be carried into any advanced stage, let alone to be completed.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 516

TRAITORS IN THE GOVT IS PROVEN BY THE LARGE NUMBER OF STALIN SUPPORTERS IN JAIL

This analysis sheds light on the question of why so many Stalinists fell victim in 1936-38. Whereas those arrested between Kirov's murder and mid-1936 usually had some large or small oppositional blot on their records, very many among the huge numbers repressed in the rampant phase of the Terror were not only free of past oppositional leanings but had been stout supporters of Stalin's General Line and enthusiasts of the piatiletka; some were prominent in the party's Stalin faction. Why did they come to grief?…

On the other hand, the mass denunciations of persons in low to middle ranks of administrative authority inevitably victimized quite a few of the promotees in the early 1930s, who were true believers in Stalin as a genius-leader and who, on turning up in the camps as prisoners, went on professing their loyalty and believing that, while other prisoners were being properly punished as traitors, mistakes had been made in their own cases.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 538

STALIN ADVOCATES USING FOREIGN SPECIALISTS WHO SPY RATHER THAN EXPELLING THEM

[In a letter to Voroshilov, Kaganovich, and Molotov on 7 August 1932 Stalin stated] I would not advise you to simply and "politely" send Barlow packing from the USSR. All foreign bourgeois specialists are or may be intelligence agents. But that does not necessarily mean that they should be "politely" sent packing. No, it doesn't! I advise you not to cut off ties with Barlow, to be considerate of him, toss him some money, take his drawings, but don't show him our achievements (you can say that we are backward people and are ready to learn from Barlow, on a paid basis, of course–of course!).
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 178

STALIN COMPLAINS THAT THE UKRAINE HAS TOO MANY SUBVERSIVE ELEMENTS

[in a letter to Kaganovich on 11 August 1932 Stalin stated] Unless we begin to straighten out the situation in the Ukraine, we may lose the Ukraine. Keep in mind that Pilsudski is not daydreaming, and his agents in the Ukraine are many times stronger than Redens or Kosior thinks. Keep in mind, too, that the Ukraine Communist Party (500,000 members, ha-ha) has quite a lot (yes, quite a lot!) of rotten elements, conscious and unconscious Petliura adherents, and, finally, direct agents of Pilsudski. As soon as things get worse, these elements will waste no time opening a front inside (and outside) the party, against the party. The worst aspect is that the Ukraine leadership does not see these dangers.
Things cannot go on this way.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 180

KAGANOVICH WRITES LETTER TO NORWAY DEMANDING IT EXPEL TROTSKY FOR TERRORISM

[In a letter to Stalin on 27 August 1936 Kaganovich stated] I am transmitting to you the draft of a message to the Norwegian government. Please give me your instructions.
On the instructions of my government, I have the honor of stating the following: on 1 December 1934 Kirov, secretary of the regional committee of the Communist Party and a member of the presidium of the Central Executive Committee of Soviets was assassinated in Leningrad. A court investigation determined that the assassination was committed by a member of a terrorist organization that had set the objective of perpetrating acts of terrorism against members of the Soviet government and other leaders. This was admitted in court by

Kirov's assassin himself, as well as his accomplices. An additional investigation, as well as a court inquiry on 19-23 August of this year, further determined that the aforesaid terrorist organization was established at the initiative of Trotsky, currently a resident of Norway, who issued detailed instructions to his accomplices in the USSR for the assassination of Stalin, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Ordzhonikidze, and other members of the government and local organizations. To this end Trotsky sent special agents from abroad. All of the above facts were confirmed at an open court inquiry by all of Trotsky's accomplices and agents, who were on trial.
…Therefore it may be regarded as proven that Trotsky, a resident of Norway, is the organizer and leader, and inspirer, of acts of terrorism aimed at assassinating members of the Soviet government and the leaders of the Soviet people.
In bringing the foregoing to the notice of the Norwegian government, the Soviet government believes that continuing to afford asylum to Trotsky, an organizer of acts of terrorism, may cause damage to the friendly relations between the USSR and Norway and would run counter to modern concepts of the norms of international relations. It may be recalled on this occasion that, in regard to the assassination of the Yugoslav king Alexander and the French foreign minister Barthou, the attitude of governments toward the preparation within their territory of acts of terrorism against other governments was a subject of discussion in the Council of the League of Nations on 10 December 1934, when the obligation of members of the League to assist one another in the fight against terrorism was established and it was even deemed desirable that an international convention for this purpose be concluded.
The Soviet government firmly expects that the Norwegian government will not fail to take appropriate measures to deprive Trotsky of a continued right of asylum in Norwegian territory.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 340

STALIN FAVORS SENDING A NOTE TO NORWAY/GERMANY DEMANDING THEY EXPEL LEON/SEDOV

[In a letter to Kaganovich on 27 August 1936 Stalin stated] I think we can agree with Litvinov on delivering our note to the Norwegian government orally rather than in writing, but with the idea that a report on this will be issued in the press. I think the same note should be sent orally to the German government about Sedov, Trotsky's son.
Simultaneously with the delivery of the note to the Norwegian government we must go on the attack against the leadership of the Norwegian Labor Party. This leadership is apparently privy to all of Trotsky's secrets, and as a result it vigorously defends Trotsky in its newspaper. We should openly fling in the face of these Norwegian vermin the accusation that they are backing Trotsky's criminal, terrorist schemes.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 342

STALIN COULD SEE TRAITORS HIDE THEIR FACE UNTIL THEY SEE AN OPPORTUNITY TO ACT

To be sure, they [higher commanders of the Red Army] appeared loyal. But he [Stalin] himself had developed the brilliant insight that the most dangerous traitor is the one who

seems in fact most of the time to be perfectly loyal, awaiting the opportunity to reveal his "two-faced" character.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 450

TROTSKY AND HIS SON UNITE WITH OTHERS & CALL FOR AN OVERTHROW WHILE IN EXILE

Despite arrests, deportations, and executions, the secret committees of the opposition continued their activities. The program of the younger malcontents was becoming ardently revolutionary. They no longer demanded "a coup d'etat inside the Party"; they issued appeals to the peasants and workers and officials, calling upon them to overthrow "the ignoble regime of oppression installed by Stalin." Trotsky, from his exile in Barbizon, sent more and more definite instructions. His son, Lev Sedov, wrote openly: "One need not be scrupulous as to the tactics and methods to be employed in the struggle against Stalin. A tyrant deserves to be fought as a tyrant."
…This was the appeal to the knife.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 173

THE MOST DANGEROUS ENEMIES ARE SUBVERSIVES WITHIN THE STATE

The easiest way to capture a fortress is from within. To attain victory, the Party of the working class, its directing staff, its advanced fortress, must first be purged of capitulators, deserters, scabs, and traitors.
Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Ed. History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks): Short Course. Moscow: FLPH, 1939, p. 360

HALLGREN RESIGNED FROM THE TROTSKY COMMITTEE BECAUSE IT WAS AN ANTI-STALIN FARCE

To: Mr. Felix Morrow, Acting Secretary,
American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky
Room 511, 22 E. 17th St.,
New York, New York

From: Mauritz Hallgren
Glenwood, Maryland, January 27, 1937.

Dear Sir:
It has become necessary for me to clarify my position with respect to the Moscow trials and particularly with respect to Trotsky's relation thereto.
Since joining your committee I have given deep and earnest thought to the whole problem here involved. I have examined, so far as they have been made available in this country, all of the documents bearing upon the case. I have followed closely all of the news reports. I have consulted some of the reports made by non-Communists who attended the first trial. I have carefully studied the published arguments of the partisans on both sides. And I have

just as carefully restudied the writings of Trotsky concerning his case against Stalinism and his theory of the permanent revolution, that is, such of his writings on these questions as have been published to date.

I believed when I joined your committee, and I still believe, in the right of asylum for persons exiled because of their political or other beliefs. Trotsky has been granted asylum in Mexico and this part of the committee's task would seem, therefore, to have been brought to a close…

Second, there was in my mind at that time sufficient doubt concerning certain aspects of the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial to lead me to suppose that the trial was not entirely genuine. This doubt hinged upon the possibility that, while Zinoviev and his associates had been taken in conspiracy (for I have never seen any good reason to doubt their own guilt), they had been promised mitigation of their sentences in return for a public confession that would implicate Trotsky as well in their crimes. In view of this doubt I was glad to join with the committee in endeavoring to provide Trotsky with an opportunity to answer the charges brought against him. This was not because of any desire to be "just" or "liberal" in the meaningless sense that those terms are usually employed by American liberals, but simply because I would have regarded it as hardly less reprehensible and dangerous to the future of socialism for Stalin and his colleagues to be perverting Soviet justice to their own personal ends as for Trotsky to be plotting to overthrow the government of the only socialist republic in the world.

Very soon after the first trial, Zinoviev and his associates were executed. It has been asserted that they had been promised lenient treatment if they would for their part publicly accuse Trotsky of having conspired with them to overthrow Stalin and the Soviet government. In truth, it was largely upon this supposition that rested the contention that the first trial was a "frame up." But now that the men were put to death Trotsky and his adherents declared that they, the defendants, had been "double-crossed." To the Trotskyites this was further proof of their contention that the first trial had been "framed." To the disinterested student, however, it might just as easily have proven the contrary. After all, it is one of the simplest rules of logic that one cannot use a premise to prove a thesis and then use the denial of that premise to prove the same thesis. Logically, therefore, one should have looked elsewhere for an explanation of the executions, and the only other possible explanation was that the men were actually put to death in the regular course of justice and for the single reason that they were guilty of the crimes charged against them. Still it was possible, despite the rise of this counter-doubt, that they had been "double-crossed."

Now we have come to the second trial [the Jan 1937 Pyatakov trial]. What is the situation? The men now on trial cannot possibly be under any delusion as to their fate. They must know and they do know that they will be put to death. Despite this they do not hesitate to confess their crimes. Why? The only conceivable answer is that they are guilty. Surely it cannot and will not be argued this time as well that there has been a "deal," for men like Radek are obviously not so stupid as to believe that they are going to save their lives in that manner after what happened to Kamenev and Zinoviev. It has been said that they have been tortured into confessing. But what greater and more effective torture can there be than knowledge of certain death? In any case, the men in the courtroom have shown not the slightest evidence of having been tortured or of being under duress. It is said by some that they have been hypnotized into confessing, or that the prosecution, working upon its knowledge of Slav psychology, has somehow trapped these men into confessing deeds of which they are not guilty. For example, the unanimity with which the men have been confessing is taken as proof that the confessions are false and have been obtained by some mysterious means. Yet these assertions rest upon no tangible or logical proof whatever. The

idea that some inexplicable form of oriental mesmerism has been used is one that sound reason must reject as utterly fantastic. The very unanimity of the defendants, far from proving that this trial is also a “frame-up,” appears to me to prove directly the contrary. For if these men are innocent, then certainly at least one of the three dozen, knowing that he faced death in any case, would have blurted out the truth. It is inconceivable that out of this great number of defendants, all should lie when lies would not do one of them any good. But why look beyond the obvious for the truth, why seek in mysticism or in dark magic for facts that are before one’s very nose? Why not accept the plain fact that the men are guilty? And this fact, if accepted with regard to the men now on trial, must also be accepted with regard to the men who were executed after the first trial.

I now see no valid reason for believing that the defendants in the first trial were unfairly dealt with. Certainly it cannot now be maintained that they were “double-crossed,” for that contention falls of its own weight when we stop for a moment to consider the fact that the Soviet government has brought a second group of men to trial on the same charges. Since the government could not hope to induce the second group to confess under the pressure of false promises, it is reasonable to suppose that it did not rely upon false promises in the first case. Moreover, I am now completely convinced that the defendants in the first trial were given every opportunity to clear themselves, that they were denied none of the rights of impartial justice. It is significant that those who contend that this was not the case have offered no evidence at all, apart from their own unsupported allegations and suspicions, in substantiation of their contention. On the other side we have not only the court record, but also the unsolicited reports of non-Communist observers who were present at the trial.

One such statement has been presented by D. N, Pritt, English lawyer and a Labor Party representative in the House of Commons. Mr. Pritt can by no means be accused of sympathy with the Communists or with Stalin. He has, indeed, stood with the Right wing of the Labor Party. But he has also been trained in law, while, moreover, unlike Walter Citrine and others who have charged that there was a gross miscarriage of justice, he was present in person at the trial in Moscow. He reported later that he was “completely satisfied” that the trial was “properly conducted” and that the accused were “fairly and judicially treated.” He added that their appearance and demeanor were such as to indicate the “absence of any ill-treatment or fear.” He declared that there was “no ground for insinuating any unfairness in form or substance.” His view has been confirmed by all other non-Communist observers at the trial whose reports I have consulted. To be sure, Trotsky has now taken to denouncing Pritt for having rendered this “service” to “Stalinism.” But Trotsky has produced no evidence at all to show that Pritt was in any way prejudiced in favor of the Stalin government. Indeed, if I may repeat, while the evidence that the men were fairly tried appears both substantial and convincing, the counter-charge that they were not fairly tried is backed up by no evidence of any kind, convincing or otherwise. The same can be said for the conduct of the second trial so far as that has been reported to date.

It is a curious fact, which seems to have escaped liberals both in this country and in England, that the Soviet government is hurting itself far more than it could possibly help itself by holding these trials, especially at this time. The very fact that the liberals and Socialists have been aroused by this event, the very fact that this defense committee has been formed, reveal the great extent to which the Soviet Union is being harmed. What has Stalin to gain by taking action that is tending to alienate these elements? Is obvious that he has nothing whatever to gain. On the contrary, he stands to lose a good deal. At the moment there is grave danger of intervention. The Soviet government needs all the support it can get from workers and liberals and democrats in other countries. Without such support the rising tide of

fascism might soon engulf Soviet Russia–whereupon, of course, Stalin and his government would inevitably disappear.

Shall we suppose, then, that Stalin has stupidly thrown all caution to the wind merely to wreck vengeance upon his personal enemies? Shall we suppose that he is anxious to have popular fronts erected to guard the Soviet Union against an external danger and at the same time is so blind as to take action that might destroy these popular fronts in order to satisfy some purely personal whim or ambition? Shall we suppose that he is so thick-headed as not to appreciate the gravity of this external danger not only to the Soviet Union but to himself as well? Now, no one will say that Stalin is stupid. Even the Trotskyites complain that the menace of "Stalinism" lies not in stupidity but in diabolical cleverness. It must follow, since the Stalin government is apparently risking a good deal by holding these trials that it has detected an internal danger hardly less grave than the external danger. In short, it must follow that the government has uncovered a conspiracy against itself, the evidence of which is so abundant and the peril from which is so apparent that it dare not withhold its hand, even though in destroying the conspiracy it may alienate its democratic support abroad and so increase the external danger.

Until now we have considered only the conspirators in Moscow. Little has been said of Leon Trotsky. Is he guilty, too? The conspirators say that he is. He denies it most emphatically (and brings other charges of equal gravity against Stalin). We have the Moscow evidence. Where is Trotsky's evidence? One may grant that he has not had his day in court. And one may grant that toward the end of his stay in Norway he was literally held incommunicado. Yet he has been out of Norway now for several weeks, and still no tangible proof of his contentions has come from him, no documents, not even anything in the way of circumstantial statements. He has issued nothing but negative denials. Even some of those denials are of a questionable sort. His gratuitous attack upon D. N. Pritt, offered without any supporting facts, certainly did not help him. His statement that he had never heard of Vladimir Romm, a leading Soviet journalist and for years a stellar correspondent for Tass and later for Izvestia, is simply incredible and goes far, indeed, toward discrediting Trotsky. But this is the sort of "proof" he has been cabling to The New York Times, the Baltimore Sun and the Manchester Guardian.

If Trotsky is innocent and has the documentary proof of his innocence that he says he has, why does he not produce it? The Hearst press would be only to glad to publish it and pay Trotsky fabulously well for his documents. The New York Times, the London Times, and other bourgeois journals would likewise be only too happy to give space to his documents. The Manchester Guardian has stood by him through thick and thin in the last several months; it would not desert him now. It has been said that he intends to put his proof into the new book he is writing on Stalinism. And it might also be argued that it would be better for him to put his proof before the projected international commission that is to give him a hearing. But consider the absurdity, the astounding cynicism, of such an attitude. Here are men awaiting death on charges that Trotsky says are utterly false and here is Trotsky who contends that he can prove that they are false–and yet he withholds this indispensable proof for the sake of a book, or for the sake of an international inquiry not yet arranged! And here are countless liberals and Socialists who earnestly believe that justice is being destroyed at the command of Stalin, but who have not a shred of evidence to support this belief apart from their own fears and suspicions, and here is Trotsky who has the essential evidence–and yet he fails to produce it when it is most needed.

Consider one thing further. Trotsky has in recent years written many books and pamphlets expounding his doctrine of the permanent revolution and purporting to expose Stalin and

Stalinism. He contends, not once but again and again, that Stalin must be overthrown if the revolution is to be saved. Now either Trotsky's arguments and exhortations are wholly passive and academic, in which case they might well be forgotten, or else he means that they should be acted upon. It is obvious, however, that Trotsky is playing no passive role, that he is consciously the agitator, and that he regards himself as the acting leader of the movement against Stalin. That stands out from every line he has written on the problem and it is apparent from all his activities. But how is Stalin to be overthrown? It is clear, even to Trotsky's followers, that there can be no hope of provoking a popular uprising within the Soviet Union. It can only be done by foreign intervention, or by a conspiracy within the Soviet government, or by a combination of the two. Through whom might such a conspiracy be undertaken? Obviously, through persons within the government who have had experience in such work in the past. Even more obviously, by old conspirators who believe, or once believed, in Trotsky's doctrine. And what have the Moscow trials revealed? They have revealed precisely this kind of conspiracy. They have revealed the very sort of plot against the Soviet government that Trotsky's teachings call for!

To be sure, this in itself does not prove that Trotsky has conspired with the Moscow defendants. Yet the reasonable man is compelled to agree that, given Trotsky's known disposition to action and his forceful presentation of his own case against Stalin, the circumstantial evidence against him is very strong indeed. It might well be said, and it cannot be denied, that the Soviet government's case against Trotsky is not perfect. It has made mistakes. It has made assertions that are apparently contrary to fact. But then, there has never been a controversy in which the facts on one side have been all black and those on the other side pure white. One must judge these matters, not by any rigid or absolute standards, but by weighing the evidence. And in the present instance the preponderance of evidence is on the side of the Soviet government and clearly against Trotsky.

I readily agree that Stalin has his faults. I am far from agreeing with everything that the Soviet government and Comintern have done or are doing. Yet every fair-minded person must concede that under its present leadership the Soviet Union has made remarkable progress toward establishing socialism. It is only among the Nazis and fascists and reactionaries in other countries, among the few groups within the Second International, and among the Trotskyites that it is contended that the Soviet Union under Stalin and his associates is moving, not toward socialism, but toward capitalism or Bonapartism or something called "Red fascism." Persons acquainted with the facts must and do consider these allegations preposterous. One who has an understanding of economics can readily see that it is socialism and nothing else that is being developed in Soviet Russia. To make any statement to the contrary is, in view of the established facts, mere wish-thinking–or deliberate distortion. This being so, any attack upon the Communist leadership in the Soviet Union, imperfect though that leadership might be, that has for its purpose the overthrow of the Soviet government must be regarded as a deliberate and malicious attack upon socialism itself. This does not mean that I regard the Soviet government as being above criticism. Far from it. But it does mean that I regard dishonest criticism or any effort to go beyond criticism (for example, an effort to destroy rather than to aid in the development of socialism in the Soviet Union) as a betrayal of socialism. And that, quite apart from the outcry against the Moscow trials, is the objective purpose of Trotsky's writings and agitational activities. If one is inclined to doubt this, one has only to compare Trotsky's writings on "Stalinism" with the Webb's study of socialism in the Soviet Union.

Let us now sum up the situation. On the one hand we have the confessions of the Moscow defendants, the court record, the statements of disinterested observers at the first trial, and

reports on the second trial of such reputable journalists as Walter Duranty. These provide us with an abundance of evidence tending to prove that the defendants were fairly tried and that their guilt in conspiring to overthrow the Soviet government has been established. They also tend to prove that Trotsky participated in the conspiracy, or that he at least had guilty knowledge of it, though the direct proof of his part in the crime is not so substantial as that involving the men on trial. However, we also had his writings and they tend greatly to strengthen the presumption, if not of actual guilt, at least of moral responsibility. On the other hand, we have nothing concrete with which to offset the charge of conspiracy. We have only the unsupported allegations of Trotsky and the unverified fears and suspicions of numerous liberals and Socialists.

Possibly Trotsky can support his allegations. He should certainly not be denied the opportunity to produce the proof he says he has. But his reluctance or inability to produce his proof when it is most needed must count against him. Moreover, and this is a point of extreme importance, it has to be borne in mind that Trotsky is not a disinterested party. He does not come into court with clean hands. He is a sworn adversary of the Stalin government. It must be presumed, therefore, that he is at least equally as much interested, and in all probability for more interested, in carrying on his campaign to destroy the Stalin government as he is in obtaining abstract justice for himself. Let him state that it is justice alone that he desires, and then let him publicly promise that, in the event he fails to substantiate his allegations against the Soviet government, he will promptly cease his efforts to destroy that government. If he refuses to bind himself in this particular, the reasonable man must conclude that he is using his demand for justice solely as a means of enlisting additional support for his campaign against socialism in the Soviet Union. Chronologically, indeed, the evidence on this point is already against him. The outcry against the Moscow trials first came from the Trotskyites. It was they who first raised the charge that Soviet justice was being hamstrung by Stalin. It was not until later that certain disinterested liberals took up the cry. There can be no question that the Trotskyites knew, when they shouted “persecution,” that they would win the sympathy and perhaps the active aid of these liberals. And there can be little question that this, rather than justice, was their true objective. Surely if they really believed, as they asserted, that the Stalin government knew no law and no justice, then they could not have expected the liberals to help obtain justice from the Stalin government for them. And as they still maintain this position, it is only logical to suppose that their real purpose in appealing to the liberals was not to win justice for themselves, but to win liberal support for Trotskyism, that is, for Trotsky’s campaign against socialism in the Soviet Union, and to do so in the name of that holy but meaningless liberal principle known as abstract justice.

In any case, at least until Trotsky comes into court with his own hands clean, I shall remain convinced that the present liberal movement to win justice for him is nothing more than a Trotskyite maneuver against the Soviet Union and against socialism. I am equally convinced, as I must be under the circumstances, that the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky has, perhaps unwittingly, become an instrument of the Trotskyites for political intervention against the Soviet Union. Indeed, apart from the considerations cited above, it is abundantly plain that the whole approach and phraseology of the committee has been radically altered since the committee was formed. For example, those who were invited to join were asked to do so in order to provide Trotsky with “the fullest opportunity to state his case.” But now the committee’s literature talks of “working for a complete and impartial investigation of the Moscow trials.” The implications of this change in attitude are too obvious to need emphasizing here. It is the liberal who would give Trotsky an opportunity to be

heard, but it is only the Trotskyite (or someone else with an ax to grind where the Communist Party is concerned) who would demand the sort of political intervention that would be required to undertake “a complete and impartial investigation of the Moscow trials.” This is nothing but propaganda. It shows all too plainly that the Trotskyites have captured the committee.
Perhaps the liberal members are not aware of the real nature of the committee. But that cannot be true of the political members, of the Trotskyites and others, who have but one purpose and that is to use the committee as a springboard for new attacks upon the Soviet Union. I do not intend under any circumstances to allow myself to become a party to any arrangement that has for its objective purpose (whatever might be its subjective justification) the impairment or destruction of the socialist system now being built in Soviet Russia. You will, therefore, withdraw my name as a member of the committee.
It may be unnecessary to point out that I speak for no party and no faction. I do not now belong and have never belonged to any political party or political organization. I speak for myself alone.
It is, however, necessary to add that I am putting copies of this letter at the disposal of certain individuals and groups who no doubt will be interested in its contents.
Respectfully, Mauritz Hallgren
Hallgren, Mauritz. Why I Resigned from the Trotsky Defense Committee. New York: International Publishers, 1937, p. 3-14

CONSPIRING BY THE CONSPIRATORS IS EASY TO SEE BECAUSE OF THEIR LONG HISTORY IN IT

It is not without significance that it was in the dark days of 1931-1933, when the fate of the collective farms seemed to many to be trembling in the balance, that the conspiracies unveiled in the trials of 1937 are stated, by Radek and others, to have taken shape. It was only to be expected that those who thought the government policy wrong and disastrous to the country should take to underground conspiracy to resist it and to upset the government which had adopted it. If some of these conspirators took in their stride both wrecking and assassination, this was exactly what Stalin and others of them had been doing, with a good conscience, most of their lives prior to 1917. If it is true that they called in aid of their conspiracy hostile governments, this is just what the patriotic and high-minded English and Scottish nobility, statesmen and ministers of religion did three centuries ago in calling in alternately the Dutch and the French.
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, p. 930

CAPITALISTS SPY ON ONE ANOTHER SO CLEARLY THEY WOULD SPY ON THE SU

France and England at the present day are swarming with German spies and diversionists and, on the other hand, Anglo-French spies and diversionists in turn are at work in Germany. America is swarming with Japanese spies and diversionists, and Japan with American. Such is the law of relations between bourgeois states.
The question must be put: why should the bourgeois countries be gentler and more neighborly to the soviet socialist government than they are to bourgeois states of their own

type? Why should they send fewer spies, wrecker's, diversionists, and murderers behind the frontiers of the Soviet Union than they send behind the frontiers of bourgeois countries which are akin to them?… Will it not be truer, from the point of view of Marxism, to suppose that the bourgeois states must be sending twice or three times as many wreckers, spies, diversionists and murderers behind the lines of the Soviet Union than behind those of any bourgeois state?
Stalin, Joseph. Mastering Bolshevism. San Francisco: Proletarian Publishers, 1972, p. 8

STALIN WARNS PARTY LEADERS AGAINST BECOMING CONCEITED

…we leaders must not become conceited; and we must understand that if we are members of the Central Committee or are People's Commissars, this does not mean that we possess all the knowledge necessary for giving correct leadership.
Stalin, Joseph. Mastering Bolshevism. San Francisco: Proletarian Publishers, 1972, p. 41

THERE WAS EVIDENCE OF A CONSPIRACY

After weighing all the available evidence, I have come to the conclusion that there had indeed been a conspiracy, but that the conspirators were justified in attempting to replace Stalin by a saner leadership…. When they failed to replace him, they realized that the Soviet Union would have to face the impending storm under Stalin's leadership and that they would weaken their country by discrediting him. In this respect they may well have been right: without the almost religious faith in Stalin, morale might well have collapsed in the Soviet Union under the terrible blows of the Nazi invasion, as it did in France.
Blumenfeld, Hans. Life Begins at 65. Montreal, Canada: Harvest House, c1987, p. 175

SUBVERSIVES CONCOCT GOOD REPORTS WHILE DESTROYING FROM WITHIN

Even successes in production should be treated with caution since, according to the report, they were not necessarily proof of the political integrity of their creators; after all, "saboteurs" had to shelter behind excellent results and economic plans regularly set targets that were all too easy to attain.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 122

SEPT 1937 LAW GETS TOUGHER ON WRECKERS AND SUBVERSION

…It became increasingly clear that confusion did not spare even the top of the apparatus. One of the first obvious indications of this came from the growing inconsistency in penal legislation. It seems that the courts had been hesitating to apply the extraordinary legislation that allowed an accelerated procedure for executing "terrorists" and "conspirators," since on 14 September 1937 a decree of the Central Executive Committee extended its field of applicability. As amended, the law became applicable to all cases of "wrecking and counter-revolutionary subversion." It provided for the filing of charges on the day before the trial, abolished the right of appeal against conviction, and ordered that "the execution of

capital punishment is to be carried out immediately after the refusal of the appeals for clemency."
Not three weeks had gone by when another decree on the same topic was issued by the same supreme authority, this time in some slight contradiction to the stringent measures of the "law of September 14." Its promoters seem to have thought it was very important, since it was even published in the daily papers, appearing on the same day that the Party cell at the Western Regional Court "unmasked" a "spy" in its ranks. The new decree was dated October 2, and it amended current legislation by allowing those guilty of spying, sabotage, or subversion to be condemned either to a maximum of 10 years imprisonment, or to death. Under the new provision, sentences of up to 25 years could be imposed in the "further struggle against crimes of this nature, and also to grant the court the possibility not only to choose capital punishment, but also imprisonment for more prolonged terms in such cases…." Since a decree of 1936 already permitted imprisonment "of those convicted of the most dangerous crimes," the passing of this new "law of October 2" was probably hurried through, at least in part, because some courts were being over-zealous in applying the order of September 14th so as to avoid any possible accusation of "petty-bourgeois sentimentality" or "lack of intransigence."
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 165-166

SPIES ARE ALL THROUGH SOVIET SOCIETY

There were no doubt spies in the USSR in the 1930s. What modern state has ever been free of them? The USSR had enormous and somewhat porous borders. It was a haven for political emigres fleeing oppression and the object of antipathy of many governments. Soviet security officials were convinced that German, Polish, Japanese, and other intelligence agencies engaged in disinformation and other activities designed to destabilize the USSR. To believe that there were no spies is naïve.
Chase, William J., Enemies Within the Gates?, translated by Vadim A. Staklo, New Haven: Yale University Press, c2001, p. 8.

In seeking to understand the origins of the Soviet leadership's distrust of foreigners, it would be prudent not to dismiss out of hand the possibility that foreign intelligence agencies had sent spies into the USSR and that Soviet intelligence agencies had learned of their existence. The Soviet government and the Comintern support a wide espionage network abroad and believed that other countries did the same within the USSR. To believe that there were no spies in the USSR would be as naive as it is mad to believe that all foreigners were potential spies.
Chase, William J., Enemies Within the Gates?, translated by Vadim A. Staklo, New Haven: Yale University Press, c2001, p. 412.

SOME PEOPLE ADMIT TRYING TO OVERTHROW THE SOVIET GOVT

[At the closed joint meeting of the ECCI party organization and the ECCI Komsomol organization on 28 December 1934]
KNORIN: One of the accused admits: "We watched for some sort of contradictions in the party leadership. We relied on any opening to help us come to the leadership, to come to

power. That is why we preserved our cadres, why we established connections with everyone who was against the party leadership, who had an oppositional sentiment. Until the very last moment, we cherished hopes that in this way, through some disagreements, through some difficulties, we would be able to rise to [positions of] leadership and turn the country onto another road, onto our road."
Chase, William J., Enemies Within the Gates?, translated by Vadim A. Staklo, New Haven: Yale University Press, c2001, p. 79.

ECCI LEADERS CONDEMN TROTSKY'S ALLIANCE WITH HEARST

[23 January 1936 telegram from the ECCI Secretariat of Dimitrov, Manuilsky, and Moskvin to communist parties regarding Trotsky's bloc with Hearst]
Trotsky is carrying on a libelous campaign against the Soviet Union and Stalin in the Hearst press. On 19 January, Trotsky began to publish in the "New York American" a series of articles in which he accuses the Soviet government of imprisoning and torturing "innocent" Trotskyists and asserts that Stalin and the Comintern aided Hitler's rise to power. You should use this fact of a bloc between Trotsky and Hearst, the vilest anti-Soviet instigator, the supporter of Hitler, and the local coordinator of American fascism, to further expose the counterrevolutionary role of Trotsky, who is the accomplice of fascism in the struggle against the proletarian revolution and the Soviet Union. At the same time you should hasten the separation of all honest elements from Trotskyist groups. During this [campaign] condemning Trotsky's bloc with Hearst, determine who still exhibits sympathies with Trotsky.
Chase, William J., Enemies Within the Gates?, translated by Vadim A. Staklo, New Haven: Yale University Press, c2001, p. 127.

STALIN PROMOTED BUKHARIN UP THROUGH THE RANKS

Nine years younger than Stalin, Bukharin had made his reputation mainly as a theoretician and publicist. Although he had had serious differences with Lenin, especially in opposing the peace treaty with Germany in 1918, his talents were appreciated by the founder. They also were appreciated by Stalin, who must have supported Bukharin's promotion to full member of the Politburo shortly after Lenin's death and rewarded him for loyalty in the factional struggle of the mid-1920s by making him Zinoviev's successor as head of the Executive Committee of the Comintern in 1926. Bukharin was one of the men Stalin cultivated, and for a time they were on very friendly terms.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 117

NEW EVIDENCE PROVES THERE WAS AN UNDERGROUND BLOC LED BY TROTSKY

It seems to have been just a little later that Stalin obtained some evidence that was considerably more authentic and potent. The timing suggests that it came from an agent named Mark Zborowski, who around 1935 succeeded better than any predecessor in becoming the confidant of Trotsky's son, Lev Sedov, who operated the small secretariat of the Trotskyist movement, first in Berlin, then in Paris. What Zborowski, if it was he, learned was that in 1932 Trotsky, communicating through Sedov, had formed what they called a 'bloc' with dissident elements in the Soviet Union. There a Trotskyist named I Smirnov had

proposed to form a coalition of underground opposition to Stalin. Only after a previously closed section of the Trotsky archive at Harvard University was opened in 1980 was it demonstrated that this bloc, although feeble, actually had existed. The evidence is incomplete because somebody, quite possibly Trotsky himself, had removed from the file the letters that he had attempted to send to Sokolnikov, Preobrazhensky, Radek, Kollontai and Litvinov. Nor is there a direct evidence in the archive that Stalin came into possession of this material, but the resemblance between the account of the formation of this bloc, as it appears in the Trotsky papers and as it emerged in the show trial of August 1936, makes it reasonably clear that the trial was based on this evidence. This implies significant revision of the previous interpretation of the trial of 1936 by non-Stalinists, for it shows that the confessions were not totally fabricated by the police. It also demonstrates, by the way, that Trotsky did not tell the precise truth to the 'Dewey Commission', a counter-trial that he arranged in 1937 to exculpate him of Stalin's charges, before which he testified that he had not been organizing an underground.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 184

CONSPIRATORS DESTROY LETTERS AND KEEP MEETINGS SECRET

In conspiratorial life, compromising letters were destroyed; personal contacts with people abroad were rare,…
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 133

ANDREYEV AND MALENKOV WERE SECRET TROTSKYITES AND RADEK KNEW IT

Radek's appearance in the dock created a sensation…. With which Trotskyists did he maintain contact? asked Vyshinsky–and out came the list they wanted: Mrachkovsky, Smirnov, Dreitzer, Gayevsky, Pyatakov, Preobrazhensky, Smilga, Serebryakov…but of course, never a mention of such real Trotskyists as, for instance, Andreyev-or Malenkov.

Not that Malenkov has ever been a very precise ideologist…. However, in 1924 he became secretary of the Party branch of the Moscow Technical Institute, then one of Trotsky's bastions. In those days Malenkov signed many an anti-Stalin, Trotskyist resolution: not by deep conviction, but rather by sheer inertia. Of all the living members of the Soviet Olympus, Andreyev and he had been the most outstanding supporters of Trotsky. This Radek knew quite well, yet never a hint did he give at the trial.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 67

ILLEGAL UNDERGROUND TROTSKYIST GROUP DISCOVERED

February 1, 1929–authorities recently discovered that an active Trotskyist organization in Moscow was carrying on a vigorous propaganda in Moscow and other urban centers by means of hand bills and other methods, particularly among Communist youth and the Army. The organization had arranged for an "underground railroad" for the transmission of letters to and from the exiled leaders and to sympathetic newspapers in Berlin, Riga, and elsewhere abroad.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 163

Despite the clearly counter revolutionary character of their aims and methods, the offenders were treated with comparative leniency and deported to Siberia instead of being brought to trial on a capital charge.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 163

STALIN INCENSED OVER ORDZHONIKIDZE'S DEATH

…I was at a dinner with Stalin and some of the other comrades and just happened to bring up the subject of Sergo Ordzhonikidze:
"Sergo! Now there was a real man. What a pity he died before his time. What a loss!"
There was an embarrassed silence. I sensed that I had said something wrong. I asked Malenkov as we were leaving after dinner, "What did I say that I shouldn't have said?"
"Don't you know?"
"No."
"You mean you thought Sergo died a natural death? You didn't know he shot himself? Stalin won't forgive him for that…."
After Stalin's death Mikoyan, who had been very close to Sergo, told me he had had a talk with him on the very eve of his suicide. On a Saturday evening they had gone for a walk together around the Kremlin. Sergo told Mikoyan that he couldn't go on living.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 85

YENUKIDZE TRIES TO ACT INNOCENT OF INTENTIONAL CRIMES

[June 6, 1935 speech of Yenukidze to the Central Committee plenum]
…In my attitude to the apparat and in my trust in it, I failed to guarantee the security of the Kremlin and therefore it was necessary to remove me….
What was the most criminal thing I did? Confident of the reliability of the apparat, I did not, for instance, immediately draw the appropriate conclusion from the report given to me by the commandant of the Kremlin to the effect that a certain cleaning woman was engaged in counter-revolutionary conversations and, in particular, conversations directed against Comrade Stalin. Instead of immediately arresting the cleaning woman and handing her over to the NKVD, I said to Peterson [the commandant]: "Look into it once again."
Of course, such a situation ought not to have been tolerated. Surely, immediate action ought to have been taken. These instructions of mind to the commandant of the Kremlin fell into the hands of the NKVD and then into the hands of Comrade Stalin. Comrade Stalin was the first to call attention to this, saying that this was no mere idle chatter, that it concealed very grave counter-revolutionary activity. And in fact, that is the way it turned out….
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 169

Yenukidze: It's all true. Now I am even more indignant about it than you. It's all true, comrades. I handed out a lot of money. Perhaps there were swindlers, cheats among them. …Measures ought to be taken in my case that will serve as a lesson in the future for every Communist occupying this or that post in order to really strengthen our vigilance….
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 171

In 1937, together with Colonel General Gay, Yenukidze fled from Moscow to Transcaucasia, where he proposed to establish an independent Soviet Republic. However, he was captured near Baku by security officers and shot.
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 248

SPEAKER AFTER SPEAKER DENOUNCED YENUKIDZE

Speaker after speaker denounced Yenukidze's sins in a ritual display of nomenklatura unity and anger.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 176

[In a letter to Kaganovich on 8 September 1935 Stalin stated] I am sending you Agranov's memorandum on Yenukidze's group of "old Bolsheviks" ("old farts" in Lenin's phrase). Yenukidze is a person who is alien to us.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 307

STALIN ADVOCATES GOING EASY ON YENUKIDZE

There is some reason to suspect that in the end Yenukidze was punished rather more harshly than Stalin had originally intended. At the first plausible opportunity, two plenums later in June 1936, Stalin personally proposed that Yenukidze be permitted to rejoin the party. At that time, Stalin explained that this was the earliest moment Yenukidze's readmission could take place: "It would have turned out then that he had been expelled at one plenum and reinstated at the next."
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 178

…Yenukidze's rehabilitation by Stalin in June 1936.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 179

…Stalin and his team seem rather to have been unprepared for this escalation of the attack on Yenukidze. For his part, Stalin's comments on the speeches were limited to criticizing Yenukidze's use of state funds to aid exiles, noting that Yenukidze could have innocently used his own money for this without censure. His interjections never touched on the political side of the accusations, never supported Yezhov's terrorist characterization (or Yagoda's strong remedies), and were, in general, not particularly hostile. Kaganovich then recounted to the plenum the Politburo's deliberations on proper punishment for Yenukidze. He noted that at first Stalin had suggested only removing him from the national Central Executive Committee and sending him to run the Central Executive Committee of the Transcaucasus. Then, when the matter seemed more serious (possibly after another Yezhov report to the Politburo), Stalin had agreed to remove Yenukidze from the Central Executive Committee system altogether and to send him to run a resort in Kislovodsk, concluding that expulsion from the Central Committee was in fact warranted "to make an example."
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 52

But, oddly enough, Yenukidze's surprise expulsion from the party was not the end of the story. Exactly one year later, at the June 1936 Plenum of the Central Committee, the Yenukidze affair resurfaced. Molotov, who was chairing the meeting, said that at the beginning of 1936, Yenukidze had applied for readmission to the party. That had been too soon for consideration (Stalin interjected: "That would have been to expel him at one plenum and except him at the next."). After Molotov observed that readmitting him would make Yenukidze very happy, and after Stalin spoke in favor, the plenum voted to approve his readmission.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 53

But there was no campaign by Stalin against Enukidze before his troubles began, and he was at liberty long after his expulsion. Enukidze's story is too full of twists, turns, and contradictions to suggest a plan to destroy him.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 43

STALIN ATTACKS POSTYSHEV & KOSIOR FOR COVERING FOR TROTS IN THE GOVT

[Jan. 13, 1937 telegram by Stalin removing Postyshev from Kiev]
On the unsatisfactory party leadership of the Kiev Regional Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukraine and on deficiencies in the work of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukraine.
Occupying the majority of leading posts in the apparat of the regional committee, these Trotskyists selected for the apparat either their own people, traitors just like themselves, or else people who, keeping silent, wouldn't dare to say anything bad about their bosses. Whenever an official from the lower ranks of the party organization complained about Radkov or any of the other members of the Trotskyist group, he was transferred to another job.
…Comrades Postyshev and Ilin, leaders of the regional committee, trusted Radkov with such blindness that they turned over to him the verification of declarations entered into the record against Trotskyists, while he in turn investigated them in such a manner that it was those who submitted the declarations who turned out to be guilty.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 353

[Stalin continues]
First, Comrade Kosior, first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukraine, is to be admonished for lack of vigilance, for slackened attention paid to party work, and for failure to take measures against contamination of the apparat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukraine….
Second, Comrade Postyshev, first secretary of the Kiev Regional Committee, is to be reprimanded and furthermore is to be warned that in case such slackening of party vigilance and failure to pay attention to party work or repeated, harsher penalties will be taken against him.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 355

[Feb. 17-20, 1938 Central That decision “On Comrade Postyshev”]
During his tenure in Kuibyshev, Postyshev in essence not only did not unmask any enemies of the people but, on the contrary, made it difficult, by his antiparty actions, for party organizations and the NKVD to unmask such enemies. Declaring that “he was surrounded everywhere by enemies,” he struck a blow against honest Communists loyal to the Party.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 514

STALIN STIFLES RESOLUTION CONDEMNING SHEBOLDAEV AND POSTYSHEV

The Politburo was at pains to show that Sheboldaev and Postyshev were not to be considered enemies themselves; they had simply been negligent, even though Sheboldaev’s personal secretary and most of Postyshev’s lieutenants in Kiev had been arrested as Trotskyists…. Significantly, both secretaries were transferred to lesser but important posts: Postyshev became first secretary of Kuibyshev oblast, and Sheboldaev was sent to head the Kursk party organization. Andreev, who had led the sacking of Sheboldaev, had prepared a resolution for the February-March plenum linking Sheboldaev and Postyshev and denouncing them in rather strong language. Apparently, though, Stalin decided not to allow such a strong statement, and a resolution was never introduced.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 360

Although Postyshev was to be sacked from his Kuibyshev position, he was not expelled from the party, nor was he denounced as an enemy.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 502

CCCP DISMISSES SHARANGOVICH FOR SABOTAGE AND SENDS HIS CASE TO THE NKVD

[Politburo resolution “On the leadership of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Byelorussia”]
More than two months ago, the Central Committee of the Communist Party instructed the new leadership of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Byelorussia (Sharangovich) to liquidate the effects of sabotage committed by Polish spies–namely, Cherviakov, Goloded, Benek, and their fascist-espionage gang.
In particular, the Central Committee of the Communist Party instructed the new leadership to liquidate the sovkhozy created by the wreckers on peasant lands at the order of Polish intelligence and to grant to the kolkhoz members the personal plots due to them by law. Sharangovich, first Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Byelorussia; Deniskevich, second secretary; and Nizovtsev, people’s commissar for agriculture of Byelorussia, not only failed to carry out this assignment of the Central Committee of the Communist Party but did not even set out to do so. Furthermore, by their acts of sabotage, Sharangovich and Deniskevich artificially created breadlines throughout Byelorussia. Instead of turning to the Central Committee of the Communist Party for help, they concealed this fact from the Central Committee of the Communist Party, even though the Central Committee of the Communist Party had never refused such help to Belorussia in the past.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party considers the actions of Sharangovich, Deniskevich, and Nizovtsev as sabotage, as hostile acts toward Soviet power and the people of Byelorussia. The Central committee hereby decrees:
1. That Sharangovich, first Secretary of the Central Committee of the Congress Party of Byelorussia, be dismissed from his post as an enemy of the people and that his case, like that of Deniskevich and Nizovtsev, [also] enemies of the people, be referred to the NKVD.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 453

STALIN AND POSTYSHEV WERE NOT ENEMIES

The documents show that Postyshev had enemies and critics in the party for years…. But it is hard to avoid the impression that Stalin was not among Postyshev's longtime enemies.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 513

ORDJONIKIDZE WANTS LOMINADZE SHOT WHICH STALIN OPPOSES

In another case, Ordjonikidze had tried to shield another client, the former dissident Lominadze, from arrest, by promising Stalin to bring Lominadze around to a loyal position. But when Ordjonikidze became convinced that Lominadze was a lost cause, he proposed having him shot, a solution that was at the time too radical even for Stalin.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 284

ORDJONIKIDZE WAS UNSTABLE, SPINELESS AND OPPOSED THE PARTY LINE

You can find a range of opinions about Ordjonikidze. But I think the intellectuals praised him too highly. By his last act he proved that ultimately he was unstable. He had opposed Stalin, of course, and the party line. Yes, the party line.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 114

Ordjonikidze was a good Bolshevik but spineless, especially in matters of principle.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 115

ORDJONIKIDZE'S FAMILY BLAMES STALIN FOR HIS SUICIDE

CHUEV: Ordjonikidze's family considers Stalin responsible for his death.
MOLOTOV: They will always say that. If the final push toward his suicide was the repression of his brother, they can say this. They can heap blame on Stalin. But if my brother was to conduct anti-Soviet agitation, what could I say if he was arrested? I can say nothing.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 114

KRIVITSKY KILLED HIMSELF AND THE SECRET POLICE DID NOT DO IT

Walter Krivitsky, an intelligence officer who defected in 1937 and emerged in America in 1939, wrote a book, In Stalin's Secret Service, and in February 1941 was found dead in a hotel room in Washington, D.C.. It was assumed that he was assassinated by the NKVD, although the police verdict was that his death was a suicide. There was an NKVD order

issued to look for Krivitsky, but this was routine for all defectors. We were not sorry to see him go, but it was not through our efforts that he died. We believed he shot himself in despair as a result of a nervous breakdown.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 49

YENUKIDZE HAD PLANNED TO DESTROY STALINISM ROOT AND BRANCH

… a few words must be said about the program of Yenukidze and his group. I myself was never a supporter of Yenukidze's program, nor was I in his conspiracy. Yet his proposals are of considerable interest, as representing the conception of a reformed USSR…. The plan was outlined to me by one of Yenukidze's closest associates, Sheboldayev, who said that they aimed at destroying Stalinism 'root and branch'….

Yenukidze was not at once imprisoned, but was put under house arrest in a small building, standing by itself on the outskirts of Moscow, and surrounded by N. K. V. D. guards. Though every precaution was taken against his escape, one day the heavily guarded house was found to be empty. The prisoner had vanished.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 20-21

ORDJONIKIDZE COULD NOT HAVE BEEN MURDERED BY AN ASSASSIN

His [Ordjonikidze] wife [Gavrilovna] was extremely worried and phoned her sister, asking her to come over. February days are short, and as it began to grow dark, just after five, Gavrilovna decided to go into her husband's room, but while she was on her way, turning on the light in the living room, a shot exploded in his bedroom. Running in, she saw her husband lying on the bed, dead, the bedclothes stained with blood.

According to Gavrilovna, the apartment had a side entrance, which everyone used, and a main entrance that was always closed, with bookshelves against it. Moreover, the main entrance led into the living room, where Gavrilovna was at the moment the shot was fired; so it could not have been used by an assassin.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 401

The arrest of various subordinates of Ordjonikidze's before and after his death does not prove that Stalin was conducting a campaign against him, for the same thing occurred around men like Kaganovich and Shvernik, the national trade union leader, whom Stalin continued to trust and employ. Just before Ordjonikidze killed himself, he had several long conversations with Stalin. Why the Vozhd would have devoted so much time to someone he planned to destroy is curious; perhaps Stalin recognized his old friend's disturbed state of mind and tried to calm him down. In any event, the suicide had to be hushed up. But the available evidence is not convincing that Stalin planned to liquidate someone who had served him loyally, had not been in the opposition, and still held key assignments.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 42

MERCADER SAYS HE KILLED TROTSKY BECAUSE HE CONCLUDED HE WAS A CAPITALIST AGENT

Mercader left a letter in which he claimed that he had been originally a devoted follower of Trotsky's, "ready to shed his last drop of blood for him." But once in Mexico, he had realized that the beloved leader was merely a criminal counter-revolutionary in the service of (unnamed) capitalist governments. Then, and only then, did he decide to liberate the world from this monster.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 56

ENGINEER AND SPECIALIST SABOTAGE

The Russian revolution, however, had produced like all revolutions numbers of bitter, discontented, people who hated the government in power. The first two years of the five-year plan, for instance, were marked by an epidemic of sabotage in the higher engineering staff, many of whom had formerly worked for the foreign capitalist owners of large properties now nationalized by the Revolution. Any American who worked in Soviet industry in the years of the first five-year plan can give you dozens of examples of sabotage by engineers.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 122

Russia in 1920 was only half socialist. Most of industry was socially owned but farming was in the hands of peasant proprietors, the stronger of whom were petty capitalists, struggling not only to survive but to grow. Class strife went on between these emerging rural capitalists and impoverished farmhands….
It was a bitter fight, carried through against the upper sections of the peasantry and part of the middle class. An epidemic of sabotage broke out in the industries among the higher engineering staff, who had consciously or half-consciously expected to advance towards privilege and wealth.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 52

With this as background we consider Russia…. The first two years of the Five-Year Plan saw an "epidemic of sabotage" by the higher engineering staff, many of whom had contacts with former foreign owners of industries now nationalized. Let us glance at this sabotage; any American who in those years worked in Soviet industry can give you examples.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 58

Many Americans told me of sabotage they found in industry.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 60

As more Russians learned the technical side of industry, sabotage lessened for it was more easily detected…. The "epidemic of sabotage" thus passed but the deeper sabotage inspired by foreign agents remained. This, when it reached the courts, was treated with increasing leniency in 1931-34. The economy was advancing; the few saboteurs were not greatly feared. Earlier "wreckers," most of whom had been sentenced to work in their own profession on some construction under the GPU, reappeared in normal occupations, sometimes with the Order of Lenin, which they had won while working under duress.

The GPU still justified itself by turning up plots, but sentences lessened. The 52 engineers and technicians in the Shakhty case, convicted in 1928 of wrecking coal mines, were given death sentences, and five were actually executed. A similar conviction two years later, in the Industrial Party case, brought automatic death sentences but these were commuted “in view of repentance.” Those convicted soon had good jobs again. The Mensheviks convicted in 1931 of “inspiring peasant uprisings in connivance with foreign powers; were only given prison terms; it was stated that they were no longer dangerous enough to be executed. This growing leniency was due to the country’s growing confidence…. As the first Five-Year Plan passed into the second, the good feeling we noted in the previous chapter grew. Especially after the 1933 harvest, the Soviet people felt confident in their growing strength. The assassination of Kirov, on December first, 1934, smashed this dream of security.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 61

Some specialists, however, actually became involved in anti-Soviet activity, including conspiratorial work. In the early 30s several counter-revolutionary organizations and groups sprang up inside the Soviet Union as well as abroad…. The overwhelming majority continued to work honestly trying to help the party leaders in charge of the various economic organizations. Many of the specialists were genuinely inspired by the tremendous scope of the first five-year plans.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 257

…Worst of all, thousands of tons of high-grade ore had been irretrievably lost by the introduction into two mines of methods which I had specifically warned against during my previous visit.
We American engineers had evolved for some of the mines at Kalata a more productive system of working the stopes, and had managed to introduce it….
But I now learned that almost immediately after the American engineers were sent home, the same Russian engineers whom I had warned about the danger, had applied this [destructive] method in the remaining mines, with the result that the mines caved in and much ore was lost beyond recovery.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 97

Men high in the canning industry put broken glass, animal hair and fish tails into food destined for industrial workers. A township veterinarian who hated collectivization inoculated 6000 horses with the plague. An irrigation engineer tried to discourage the policy of settling nomad races on the land by using 30-year-old surveys that he knew were incorrect and that would not deliver the water. All of these and thousands more confessed.
What were the causes? Resentment of the highly aristocratic Russian engineer against workers’ rule; resentment of new technique that made their knowledge out of date; actual bribes by foreign firms; anger at the final drive against capitalism embodied in the Five-Year Plan. This led in 1928-30 to what Stalin called “an epidemic of sabotage” among the higher engineering staff.
Scapegoats for failure were not needed, for the Five-Year Plan did not fail. The energy and sacrifice of loyal workers and technicians carried it through. Its success won over many earlier saboteurs, so that by 1931 Stalin was able to report that “these intellectuals are turning towards the Soviet government,” and should be met “by a policy of conciliation.” Thereafter sabotage cases rapidly diminished both in number and seriousness.
Strong, Anna Louise. “Searching Out the Soviets.” New Republic: August 7, 1935, p. 358

TREATMENT OF WRECKERS

A township veterinarian who hated collectivization innoculated 6000 horses with plague.
All these cases, and thousands more like them, can be found in confessions of men who later repented, or in the tales of American engineers experienced in Soviet industry.
If a man made the same “mistake” more than once, and had enough engineering knowledge to “know better,” they called him a wrecker and put him where he could do no harm. This does not mean that they shot him; they usually sent him to work on a construction job in his own profession, but under the direct control of the GPU. As more Russians learned the technical side of industry, sabotage became more difficult, for it was more easily detected.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 125

Even such sabotage, when a came to light in Soviet courts, was treated with increasing leniency in the years from 1931 to 1934. The condition of the country was improving, and the occasional saboteurs were not considered especially dangerous.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 126

In the famous Shakhty case in 1928, for instance, 52 engineers and technicians were convicted of wrecking coal mines in the interest of foreign powers, chiefly Germany; 11 were sentenced to death, and five were actually executed. Two years later in the “Industrial Party” case, a group of engineers admitted conspiracy to wreck state industry in order to put a sort of technocratic party of engineers in control. They were sentenced to death as the law required, but were then immediately given a computation of sentence “in view of their repentance”; shortly after this they were holding good jobs again.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 126

Similarly, a group of Mensheviks convicted in 1931 of inspiring peasant uprisings in connivance with foreign powers were given prison sentences for the announced reason that they were no longer dangerous enough to be executed. In the Metro-Vickers case in 1933, a group of Russian engineers and one Englishman admitted several minor acts of sabotage in power plants which were intended to get their hand in for a widespread wrecking of power plants in case of war. I sat less than 10 feet away from the defendants and watched their faces; it was clear that most of the Russians expected the death sentence. Most of them got only nominal sentences, while the three principal offenders were given ten years.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 127

The increasing leniency in all these cases was due to the lessened tension in the country. As the first five-year plan passed into the second, as Soviet workers became more skilled, an era of good feeling seemed to dawn.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 127

BOLSHEVIKS CLAIM SYSTEM HAS PROVEN SUPERIORITY WHEN THERE IS NO SABOTAGE

The Bolsheviks contend, apparently with justice, that where the new system has received proper trial without sabotage it has already amply proved its superiority and has greatly increased both food production and the actual happiness of the peasant producers.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 308

SCOTT SAYS WRECKING WAS DEFINITELY GOING ON

While the activities of Glazer, Shevchenko, and others above described probably do not coincide with most Westerners' ideas of wrecking, there unquestionably was wrecking going on in Magnitogorsk.
Scott, John. Behind the Urals, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1942, p. 182

Unquestionably some genuine sabotage went on in Magnitogorsk. Here are two examples which I knew of personally:
A certain foreman in the blowing house of the blast-furnace department was rather outspoken in his criticism of the Soviet power. He was a heavy drinker, and under the influence of vodka his tongue would sometimes run away with him. Once he boasted openly in the presence of several foreigners that he would 'wreck the works.' One day not long afterward a heavy stilson wrench was found in the mashed blades of one of the imported German gas turbines. The frame of the machine was cracked and the whole thing ruined, involving a loss of several tens of thousands of rubles and a good deal of labor. Several days later the foreman was arrested and confessed that he had done the job. He got eight years.
Another case I ran into personally which would be termed sabotage in any country, was the following:
The second part of the power house in Magnitogorsk was under construction, and two large (24,000 kW) turbines were being installed. The reinforced concrete work–foundations, walls, and grouted roofs–was done by ex-kulak labor. As on many Soviet construction jobs, the erection of the equipment started before the building was completely finished. Consequently, when the big turbine was already in place and the mechanics working on it, the ex-kulaks were still around pouring concrete.
One morning the mechanics found the main bearings and some of the minor grease cups of the big turbine filled with ground glass. This substance will ruin a bearing very rapidly. Investigations were made immediately, and several pails of the glass were found near the shack where the ex-kulaks reported when they came to work in the morning. It was there for the electric welders, who used it, mixed with chalk and water, to coat their electrodes. Obviously one of the embittered, illiterate, dekulakized laborers had taken a pocketful of the glass and put it into the bearings. Unnoticed, this act would have caused great loss. The action was clearly deliberate and malicious wrecking, and the motivations of the wrecker were easily understood.
During the late twenties and early thirties the rich peasants, or kulaks, were liquidated. Their property was confiscated and given to the collective farms. They were shipped out to some construction jobs for five years or so, to be re-educated. Some of the young ones, like my friend Shabkov, lent themselves to this re-education; but most of the old ones were bitter and hopeless. They were ready to do anything, in their blind hatred, to strike back at the Soviet power.
But the Soviet power was not around to strike. There were only workers and engineers and other ex-kulaks building a steel mill. But the machines were symbolic of the new power, of

the force which had confiscated their property and sent them out onto the steppe to pour concrete. And they struck at the machines.
Scott, John. Behind the Urals, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1942, p. 186-187

WRITER SAYS HE SAW DOCUMENTS PROVING SABOTAGE

What remained of the Trotsky-Zinoviev movement had consistently fought against the reforms and policies proposed by Stalin and approved by the Party. The Rykov group violently opposed collectivization of agriculture. Sabotage in industry and in mining began to break out. Henri Barbusse, the well-known French writer, who visited Russia at this time, made the following observations, “What subterranean maneuvers; what scheming and plotting! I am still bewildered by all the photographs of documents which I have seen personally. For years one could search in any corner of the Union and one would infallibly discover the English, French, Polish, or Romanian microbe of spying and foul play mixed with the virus of the ‘white’ plague. A certain amount of it still remains. The same people who blew up the bridges and whatever public works still remained in liberated Russia, gasping for breath, who threw emery into the machines and put the few remaining railway engines out of action–these same people put powdered glass into cooperative food supplies in 1933.”
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 28

The sabotage of budding industry, which the USSR made super human efforts to revive, has been raised to the level of an international institution, in which important personages, military officers, technical experts, political agents and the diplomacy and police of the Great Powers have all taken part. What subterranean maneuvers, what scheming and plotting! I am still bewildered by all the photographs of documents which I have seen personally. For years one could search in any corner of the Union and one would infallibly discover the English, French, Polish, or Rumanian microbe of spying and foul play, mixed with the virus of the White plague. A certain amount of it still remains. The same people who blew up the bridges and whatever public works still remained in liberated Russia, gasping for breath, who threw emery into the machines and put the few remaining railway engines out of action–these same people put powdered glass into cooperative food supplies in 1933, and in December 1934 appointed one of their number to blow out Kirov’s brains from behind, in the middle of the Smolny Institute in Leningrad. They unearthed nests of vipers and found that assassins and terrorists have been streaming into the country from Finland, Poland, and Lithuania where they swarm,…
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 114

EXPLOSIONS IN MINES LED TO DEBATE OVER USING BOURGEOIS SPECIALISTS

On September 23, 1936 a wave of explosions hit the Siberian mines, the second in nine months. There were 12 dead. Three days later, Yagoda became Commissar of Communications and Yezhov chief of the NKVD. At least until that time, Stalin had sustained the more or less liberal policies of Yagoda.
Investigations in Siberia led to the arrest of Pyatakov, an old Trotskyist, assistant to Ordzhonikidze, Commissar of Heavy Industry since 1932. Close to Stalin, Ordzhonikidze

had followed a policy of using and re-educating bourgeois specialists. Hence, in February 1936, he had amnestied nine `bourgeois engineers', condemned in 1930 during a major trial on sabotage.
On the question of industry, there had been for several years debates and divisions within the Party. Radicals, led by Molotov, opposed most of the bourgeois specialists, in whom they had little political trust. They had long called for a purge. Ordzhonikidze, on the other hand, said that they were needed and that their specialties had to be used.
This recurring debate about old specialists with a suspect past resurfaced with the sabotage in the Siberian mines. Inquiries revealed that Pyatakov, Ordzhonikidze's assistant, had widely used bourgeois specialists to sabotage the mines.
In January 1937, the trial of Pyatakov, Radek and other old Trotskyists was held; they admitted their clandestine activities. For Ordzhonikidze, the blow was so hard that he committed suicide.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 141 [p. 125 on the NET]

LITTLEPAGE SHOWED THE SABOTAGE CHARGES WERE VALID & NOT ANTI-OPPONENT EXCUSES

Of course, several bourgeois authors have claimed that the accusations of systematic sabotage were completely invented, that these were frameups whose sole r™le was to eliminate political opponents. But there was a U.S. engineer who worked between 1928 and 1937 as a leading cadre in the mines of Ural and Siberia, many of which had been sabotaged. The testimony of this apolitical technician John Littlepage is interesting on many counts.
Littlepage described how, as soon as he arrived in the Soviet mines in 1928, he became aware of the scope of industrial sabotage, the method of struggle preferred by enemies of the Soviet regime. There was therefore a large base fighting against the Bolshevik leadership, and if some well-placed Party cadres were encouraging or simply protecting the saboteurs, they could seriously weaken the regime. Here is Littlepage's description.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 141 [p. 125 on the NET]

[a correspondent for the Christian Science Monitor stated the following]
… the Soviet Government started a series of conspiracy trials in August, 1936, with prominent Communists as defendants,…
Littlepage did not come to Moscow during this trial, and emerged from a long stay in the Soviet Far East only after the second trial, in January, 1937, when important Communists confessed that they had "wrecked" several Soviet industrial enterprises in order to discredit Stalin.
I asked Littlepage: "What do you think? Was the trial a frame-up or not?"
He replied: "I don't know anything about politics. But I know quite a lot about Soviet industry. And I know that a large part of Soviet industry has been deliberately wrecked, and that would hardly be possible without the help of highly placed Communists. Someone wrecked those industries, and the Communists hold all the high positions in industry. Therefore, I figure Communists helped to wreck those industries."

No theories for Littlepage. But he believed what he saw…. He was unique among foreigners, so far as I knew, in the fact that he had worked intimately on close terms with Soviet organizations and at the same time had never departed, by a hair's breath, from his original American outlook…. Littlepage had been inside the system for many years, and still remained as dispassionate as when he started.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. xi

He watched what went on, and was not much surprised by anything he saw. These people had their own peculiar ways of doing things, he said, and it wasn't his business to judge them. They had hired him to do a job of work, producing as much gold as possible for them, and he was doing it as well as he could. He got along with them very well, because he didn't mix up in their intrigues, and didn't try to stick his nose into matters which weren't connected with mining and smelting gold.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. xii

Of course, there is plenty of need for close police supervision in Soviet industry. In the gold industry the police guard shipments of gold, which don't take up much space, and might easily be diverted. But they are kept even busier looking out for sabotage.
…I knew there were people who sometimes tried to wreck plant or machinery in the United States, but I didn't know just how or why they operated. However, I hadn't worked many weeks in Russia before I encountered questionable instances of deliberate and malicious wrecking.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 198

One day in 1928, I went into a power station at the Kochkar gold mines. I just happened to drop my hand on one of the main bearings of a large Diesel engine as I walked by, and felt something gritty in the oil. I had the engine stopped immediately, and we removed from the oil reservoir about a quart of quartz sand, which could have been placed there only by design. On several other occasions, in the new milling plants at Kochkar, we found sand inside such equipment as speed reducers, which are entirely enclosed, and can be reached only by removing the hand-hold covers.
Such petty industrial sabotage was, and still is, so common in all branches of Soviet industry that Russian engineers can do little about it and were surprised at my own concern when I first encountered it. There was, and still is, so much of this sort of thing that the police have had to create a whole army of professional and amateur spies to cut the amount down. In fact, so many people in Soviet institutions are busy watching producers to see that they behave properly that I suspect there are more watchers than producers.
Why, I have been asked, is sabotage of this description so common in Soviet Russia, and so rare in most other countries? Do Russians have a peculiar bent for industrial wrecking? PEOPLE WHO ASK SUCH QUESTIONS APPARENTLY HAVEN'T REALIZED THAT THE AUTHORITIES IN RUSSIA HAVE BEEN, AND STILL ARE, FIGHTING A WHOLE SERIES OF OPEN OR DISGUISED CIVIL WARS. In the beginning, they fought and dispossessed the old aristocracy, the bankers and landowners and merchants of the Tsarist regime. I have described how they later fought and dispossessed the little independent farmers and the little retail merchants and the nomad herders in Asia.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 199

Of course, it's all for their own good, say the Communists. But many of these people can't see things that way, and remain bitter enemies of the Communists and their ideas, even after they have been put back to work in state industries. From these groups have come a considerable number of disgruntled workers who dislike Communists so much that they would gladly damage any of their enterprises if they could.
For this reason, the police have records of every industrial worker, and have traced back their careers to the time of the Revolution, so far as possible. Those who belong to any group which has been dispossessed are given a black mark, and kept under constant watch. When anything serious happens, such as a fire or a cave-in a mine, the police round up such people before they do anything else. And in the case of any big political crime, such as the Kirov assassination, the round up becomes nationwide.
However, the police assigned to Soviet industrial enterprises do not confine themselves to watching potential wreckers. I know from my own observation that they also organize a network of labor spies. It is a fact that any trouble-maker among the workmen, who grumbles excessively or shows any tendency to criticize the Government, is likely to disappear quietly. The police handle such cases with great skill, and seldom raise a rumpus. I don't mean to suggest that such workers are treated violently; they're probably shipped off to out-of-the-way enterprises, perhaps to some of those operated by the police themselves.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 200

The federal police were a great deal less in evidence when I arrived in Russia in 1928 than when I left that country in 1937. It seems to me that their functions have accumulated something like a snowball. So far as their number was concerned, it seemed to expand and contract in sympathy with the political atmosphere. After the enormous police activity at the time of the Kirov assassination, there was a period of comparative quiet through 1935 and the early part of 1936. Then, with the discovery of the "wrecking" conspiracy among higher Communists in 1936, and the removal of the police chief, Yagoda, the activity of the federal police became more frenzied than at any other time in my experience, and was at its height when I left.
…Both Soviet workers and officials often are so green, industrially speaking, that it takes a very wise man indeed to determine between so-called wrecking and plain ignorance. There has been plenty of real wrecking in Soviet industry, as my experience has shown me.
…I can understand why a certain amount of police supervision is necessary in Russian industry, whereas it would not be in Alaska, for example. There are still a lot of people in Russia who do not like the regime, and would be glad to damage it by sabotaging industry which it operates.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 203-204

The Ridder lead and zinc mines in southern Kazakhstan, I was informed, were in a critical state, and I was instructed to hurry down and see what I could do about it. I have already told how I reorganized these mines in 1932, and what I discovered there when I returned on this occasion, in 1937. Undoubted sabotage had occurred in high quarters, and this mine, which is one of the most valuable in the world, was very nearly lost. The business of rescuing it occupied me for several months, and was the final task of my Russian experience.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 265

In some ways it was unfortunate that my last months in Russia should be spent working for the Copper-Lead Trust, some of whose managers I had never trusted, and who, in my opinion, were deliberate wreckers.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 266

STALIN SAYS THEY MUST NOT AUTOMATICALLY ASSUME EVERY EXPERT IS GUILTY

But from this it follows that we must change our policy towards the old technical intelligentsia. If, during the height of the wrecking movement, we adopted smashing tactics toward the old technical intelligentsia, now, when these intellectuals are turning toward the Soviet government, our policy toward them must be one of conciliation and solicitude. It would be wrong and dialectically incorrect to continue our former policy when conditions have changed. It would be foolish and unwise to regard almost every expert and engineer of the old school as an undetected criminal and wrecker. “Expert-baiting” always was, and still is regarded by us as a noxious and disgraceful phenomenon.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 139

INCOMPETENCE RATHER THAN WRECKING WAS OFTEN THE PROBLEM

But gradually a real “wrecker” psychosis has grown up amongst the people. They have come to interpret everything that goes wrong as sabotage, whilst most certainly a great part of the defects are traceable to incompetence pure and simple.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 38

THERE WAS NO WORKER URGE TO REVOLT IN THE EARLY 1930’S

The writers of a majority of books about Russia are either tourists, who almost never write anything worth more than entertainment, or they are what the Russians would call specialists. These latter people are very fond of studying documents and figures given to them by the Soviet authorities. It is not surprising to me that such observers, sitting in Moscow, reading the excited articles in the Moscow newspapers, and seeing that the country actually was experiencing a food shortage, should get the idea that industrial workers were on the verge of revolting against the authorities.
But I spent this period down among the rank-and-file of the industrial army, sweating and straining like the workers around me to meet increasing demands for production. And I never got any feeling that the workers were on the verge of revolt.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 83

LITTLEPAGE HATES PEOPLE WHO SABOTAGE

I must say that while I took no sides in the Communist internal political disputes, I never had any sympathy for people who talk about “betrayals” in Russia. My experience there was almost entirely in industry, and in one branch of industry, mining. But, as a completely disinterested engineer, my indignation was aroused chiefly against those who deliberately

wrecked mines and destroyed valuable machinery and ore bodies. Whatever their motive may have been, their actions were inexcusable.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 161

SPECULATORS ENGAGE IN CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

We have already mentioned a few of the new-style criminals in Russia, the kulaks, and others who resisted collectivization and were given several years of forced labor under police supervision. Another vast new class of criminals are those known as “speculators.” A workman’s wife, for example, stands in line at a state-owned drygoods store, and buys a dozen yards of cloth, which is all the store will sell at one time. She stands in line several times, waiting several hours each time, and finally gets together 50 or 100 yards of cloth. If she sells this cloth, and takes any profit at all for her pains, she becomes a speculator. The Soviet newspapers often report prison sentences, sometimes even the maximum of ten years, for women who have bought articles in Government stores, and sold them for what we would consider a very modest profit, in view of the trouble they had taken.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 201

CRACKDOWN BECAME MUCH STIFFER AFTER THE PLOT TO KILL STALIN WAS REVEALED IN 1936

But when the great anti-Stalin conspiracy was discovered in 1936, a greater reign of terror started than any which preceded it, and industry was particularly affected, because the conspirators confessed that they had concentrated on wrecking several industries.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 214

LITTLEPAGE GIVES A GOOD SUMMARY OF WHY SUBVERSION DEVELOPED FROM 1924 TO 1939

To keep things in their own hands, the Communist General staff appoint members of their own party to all key positions. Technical experts were always subject to orders from Communists. Having attained an iron hold on everything in the country, the Communists have arranged to keep it forever by forbidding the organization of any other political party, or even the expression of any other political views. A large police force has been built up to suppress actual or potential political opponents.
This is about the slickest device ever conceived to keep one group permanently in power. However, there proved to be one catch: the Communist leaders could not agree among themselves. These hard-boiled revolutionaries had risked their lives more than once in pre-Revolutionary Russia for the sake of their ideas. The same men now held key positions in the Communist Government. But they couldn’t think exactly alike, and when they had disagreements, these strong-willed men couldn’t surrender their own ideas simply because they had been voted down by a majority of the Party.
The disputes inside the party became so serious that they threatened to break up the whole system. Unless the system was to be modified, something must be done to restore discipline inside the Communist Party. So Joseph Stalin, an Asiatic with Asiatic conceptions of enforcing discipline, and at the same time one of the shrewdest political manipulators

imaginable, got hold of of the Party machine and began to enforce discipline by suppressing, exiling, imprisoning leaders of opposition Communist groups.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 293

From 1927, or thereabouts, a new policy was instituted. Before that time, political opposition had been forbidden outside of the Communist Party. From this time onward political opposition was also forbidden inside the Party. The Party took a vote on any dispute; and if 51 percent of the members voted for one side, the other 49 percent could no longer argue for their opinions or expressed any critical views.
Some of the strong-minded revolutionaries inside the Party could not adapt themselves to any such system. They were especially disgruntled because Stalin proved to be a much more clever political manipulator than they were, and could always get a party majority for any project he favored.
From 1929 onward, Stalin began to introduce the whole flock of new policies and projects. This was the period of the Five Year Plans, of the Second Communist Revolution, of all sorts of changes and shifts in the Soviet system and in Communist theory and practice. Through the political machinery he had worked out and established, Stalin directed all these changes entirely to suit his own ideas, and the other old revolutionaries, unless they agreed with Stalin, were left out in the cold.
With human nature being what it is, this situation naturally created many powerful enemies for Stalin, especially among the veteran revolutionaries who had been willing to die for their ideas in the past, and still were. They tried to start underground political agitation as they had done under the Tsars. But the political system which they had helped to create was something much more powerful and subtle than the system they had helped to overthrow. Stalin and the directors of his political police knew all the tricks of underground agitation.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 294

If I have figured it out correctly, the great conspiracy which has almost wrecked the Soviet system in recent years, and hasn't yet been cleared up, is the natural consequence of the unnatural political scheme which forbids strong men to express their opinions openly and freely. Such a system is bound to produce underground conspirators.
Stalin and his associates apparently didn't foresee this. After defeating political rivals inside the Communist Party in the period 1927-30, they exiled them for a few months or years, and then brought them back and gave them responsible positions in politics and industry. They seemed to think these veteran revolutionaries would now buckle down and faithfully follow the course laid out for them by Stalin and the lesser men he had promoted to the highest positions because they had always agreed with him.
My own experience in the Copper and Lead Trust provides a good example of Stalin's treatment of defeated rivals among the veteran revolutionaries, and of the consequences. When I started to work for this Trust in 1931, the men chiefly responsible for its work and that of other allied industrial enterprises, was Pyatakov, a veteran Revolutionary who had disputed with Stalin about several Communist projects, and had been sent into exile for a time, and then brought back, had publicly apologized for his past actions, been "forgiven," and assigned to this responsible position.
There were dozens of men all through Soviet industry, in key positions, who had gone through a similar experience. Yet they were expected to entertain no hard feelings, to agree with Stalin about everything in the future, and to work with all their energy and enthusiasm to

increase his prestige at home and abroad. Among their other duties, they were expected to get up almost every day and make speeches praising Stalin to the skies.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 295

Well, to my mind it is incredible how any man as smart as Stalin could think subordinates of this sort would work loyally in support of himself and his ideas, especially when he knew from past experience how stubbornly they had stuck to their own ideas, and what sacrifices they were willing to make for them. But these former enemies were certainly given a lot of responsibility, and were in a position to cause tremendous damage to Soviet industry if they were so minded.
The testimony in the 1938 trial has done much to explain why Stalin was thrown off his guard. He placed a great deal of reliance, as any man in his position would have to do, upon the chief of the political police. This man, Yagoda, stood high in Stalin's favor, and was the most feared and hated man in the country. He had the power to arrest and imprison any Soviet citizen indefinitely without trial, or to send him to a concentration camp or into exile without even announcing that he had been arrested.
Yet this man, who was arrested in 1937, testified at his trial in 1938 that he had been conspiring against Stalin for years, and that he and his associates were slowly preparing a coup d'etat which would replace Stalin with the group of those same former rivals whom Stalin had brought back and given responsible positions, even though they had much less prestige and power than before they broke with Stalin.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 296

If this man's story is true, and I don't see why it couldn't be true, the chief of the police force, which is the central instrument of power for a dictator like Stalin, was on the side of Stalin's enemies, and was only awaiting a favorable opportunity to seize the Government. So many important Communists were on the other side that it was easy to cover up industrial sabotage or anything else.
I never followed the subtleties of political ideas and maneuvers in Russia, except when I couldn't get away from them; but I had to study what went on in Soviet industry in order to get through my work satisfactorily. AND I AM FIRMLY CONVINCED THAT STALIN AND HIS ASSOCIATES WERE A LONG TIME GETTING AROUND TO THE DISCOVERY THAT DISGRUNTLED COMMUNIST REVOLUTIONARIES WERE THE MOST DANGEROUS ENEMIES THEY HAD. It naturally wasn't my business to warn my Communist employers against their fellow Party members, but some Russians can bear witness that I mentioned my suspicions to them as early as 1932, after I had worked for some months in the Ural copper mines.
During the past two or three years, the Soviet government has shot more people for industrial sabotage than any other government has ever done, so far as I can discover. A large proportion of those shot were Communists who had previously disagreed with Stalin and then been brought back and given less important but responsible jobs in industry. Some Americans seem to find it hard to believe that Communists would try to wreck industries in a country where other Communists are in control. But anyone who knows Communists can understand that they will fight each other more fiercely than they fight so-called capitalists, when they disagree over some of their hair-splitting ideas.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 297

Sabotage is a familiar Communist weapon in every country…. It is hardly surprising that some Communists should use this same weapon in Russia, once they have decided that the existing regime does not satisfy their own peculiar notions.
It hardly seems necessary to study Dostoevsky's novels or to dig deep into Russian history to find a complicated explanation for what has happened in Soviet Russia since 1936, as some more subtle minds than mine have preferred to do. MY EXPERIENCE CONFIRMS THE OFFICIAL EXPLANATION WHICH, WHEN IT IS STRIPPED OF A LOT OF HIGH-FLOWN AND OUTLANDISH VERBIAGE, COMES DOWN TO THE SIMPLE ASSERTION THAT "OUTS" AMONG THE COMMUNISTS CONSPIRED TO OVERTHROW THE "INS," AND RESORTED TO UNDERGROUND CONSPIRACY AND INDUSTRIAL SABOTAGE because the Soviet system has stifled all legitimate means for waging a political struggle.
This Communist feud developed into such a big affair that many non-Communists were dragged into it, and had to pick one side or the other. Those who could avoid making a decision stood to one side; they didn't want to get caught, whichever way the battle went. Disgruntled persons of all kinds were in a mood to support any kind of underground opposition movement, simply because they were discontented with things as they stood. I saw what this conspiracy did to some of the mines, and I can well believe that it was equally destructive to other branches of Soviet industry, as the official reports say it was.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 298

SUBVERSIVES INFILTRATED COLLECTIVES' LEADERSHIP AND DID SABOTAGE

Industry and agriculture in the Soviet Union are Socialist, but this does not exclude the existence within this Socialist structure of virulent enemies of the new Socialist order. Leaving aside the recent Trotskyist activities for subsequent examination, we can illustrate this proposition by a reference to the wholesale sabotage carried out in the collective farms in the years 1931-33. In the North Caucasus, for example, it was found that amongst the leaders of collective farms were ex-officers who had served with Kolchak and Denikin, and a number of sons of rich peasants. These elements had not only penetrated the collective farms but also occupied important posts in the Communist Party in that area. A similar state of affairs was discovered in the Ukraine. Now obviously these people were utterly incapable of developing a successful movement for the overthrow of the Soviet Government, but they were capable of disorganizing the work of the collectives and, on this foundation, rousing intense opposition amongst the peasantry to the whole policy of co-operation.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 144

[Letter from Bochkaryov, Middle Volga Krai, on Specialists in 1930]
We poor peasants haven't retreated from our post but have fought to the last drop. We finally took power into our own hands, as expected of us we switched to normal work, but then, however, the Tsarist hangers-on saw at once what the deal was. They saw that our government paid for our toil as much as was needed to make a living. Then they began to enter our ranks to help us as specialists, and then snuck into our party as well. Now this is really the way all Tsarist hangers-on infiltrated the Soviet Union. The last year I was in the service, I kept a strict eye on this. They were infiltrating our lives by joining some of our trade unions, for example, our communication services union. In this union there was some

specialist-bureaucrat who works in this business, at first as a specialist, and then he sneaks his way into the party, and then he's in charge of us. He immediately sees those who stand on the side of soviet power and immediately has those dismissed from the union. This is away all specialists of this sort work their way into the party…. When we went to repair the lines, I saw these types of specialists when we began to screw the hooks into the telephone poles, and what happens? I screw in three hooks, and he screws in one. I hold two poles, and he one, and all his work is that way, but just the same they've made him into my boss because he's the old specialist. Finally he dismissed all of us poor peasants from the union and put in his own types, those he wanted. Here's an example for you of how they climbed into our party. Now our party as begun to worry about purging its ranks.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 72

[1939 essay on life in Voronezh Oblast village sent by rural correspondent Grebennikov to Krest'ianskaia Gazeta]
But some people began to find the kolkhoz farmers' labor offensive and harmful. People who wormed their way into the leading raion organizations, now exposed as enemies of the people, the Polish spy Sandlir, the enemy of the people Shapkin, Riabinina, and Zhuzhalov, who did their foul deeds and stooped to the worst acts of nastiness they could think of. Making sure it was in the middle of the coldest frost, they summoned 200 carts to the raion under court order, supposedly for essential matters of national importance. Without preparing any shelter, they left people and horses out in the open air around the clock, and for two years these tricks deprived the Kalinin kolkhoz of draft animals.
But in May 1938 the glorious Soviet intelligence agents exposed the people who were perpetrating these outrages and they must bear their proper punishment. And only in 1938 did the people of Kazinka, after heaving a sigh of relief, freely set about their work, proving that labor is valor in heroism.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 299

[September 19, 1937 Letter of rural correspondent Alekseev to Krest'ianskaia Gazeta on violations of law in Northern Oblast kolkhozes]
The kolkhozes of Lesha Raion in Northern Oblast this year are getting a very abundant harvest, that even our grandfathers do not remember such an abundance of produce, but the enemies of the people, seeing that the kolkhozes are growing stronger, the kolkhoz farmers are becoming well-off and are becoming even more devoted to the party and its leader Comrade Stalin, at the same time are trying to muck things up, prevent the harvest from being gathered and stir up the masses on the kolkhoz. Take [for example] at our machine-tractor stations the enemies of the people Trotskyists Bukharinists have put machines out of commission, machines as decisive in the harvest as the 17 VNIL-5 flax pullers. Flax has been harvested from only 35 hectares for the season. Combines are not being used, they are standing in the fields and the manager is doing nothing. MTS contracts with kolkhozes are not being honored and MTS leaders have yet to give a single accounting to kolkhoz farmers, fearful that their wrecking work will be exposed to the masses.
…But in spite of all this the masses of kolkhoz farmers themselves are struggling with all their might to preserve the abundant crop and the harvest is going through to completion. Then the enemies of the people took another method of struggle to irritate the masses. They are setting fire to villages, the biggest and most packed [densely settled], so that they burn

more, like the village of Otemetenikovo recently burned down, a fire was set in a nonresidential structure, today Sept. 19, 1937 the village of Ramenovo burned down, the fire was set in a nonresidential structure, it burned down in the village of Antipino, the same thing on the same night a threshing barn with grain on a kolkhoz was set afire. And what is no secret is that there used to be SR [Socialist-Revolutionary] groups in these villages, and apparently their offspring are the ones that are operating.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 305

[May 1938 appeal from Chairman of the Kolkhoz Board in Ivanovo Oblast, Khalistov, sent to Krest'ianskaia Gazet]
In 1937 the worst sort of wrecking flourish at our Gorskaia MTS and the Il'insky Raion Executive Committee. Based on an alarm sent to the newspaper Pravda the wreckers were unmasked and incurred the punishment they deserved from two to five years in prison and were ousted from their jobs. The population was able to breathe freely, the wreckers were gone, but the spring of 1938 brought them back. They have felled trees, heaps of suckers have come out of the roots, there are more wreckers and they are worse than in 1937. The stock of tractors was left in the fields in the local villages, and they just stood there all winter, and some of the machines got all rusted. The same wreckers filched and pilfered them….
On the basis of the foregoing we request that you urgently untangle this mess with the wreckers at the Gorskaia MTS and Il'insky Raion, which are covering up and hushing up all the acts of wrecking and laying waste to the kolkhoz stock of horses. They are wearing out the horses which are already weak as it is with overwork, dragging out the sowing indefinitely. They have ruined all the plans for spring work. Is this abomination going to continue much longer, the kolkhoz boards and kolkhoz farmers are outraged and demand an investigation.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 307

[November 3, 1938 Letter from ex-kolkhoznik Rogudilin to Krest'ianskaia Gazeta on abuses on Karl Marx kolkhoz, Orel Oblast]
In 1936 I was forced to leave, or otherwise the enemies wanted to lock me up for the fact that I was unmasking enemies. But even so I feel sorry for my beloved kolkhoz where the enemies are ruining it and want to ruin it like in the spring of 1937. Didn't I write you that the people at Karl Marx Kolkhoz of the Kalabinsky Village Soviet in Zadonsk Raion, Orel oblast, with criminal intent sowed ordinary wheat instead of high-quality. Also I receive more than one letter from home where they write me that the kolkhoz chairman on our kolkhoz swapped all the chaff for drink.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 310

t was then "revealed" that "saboteurs…were groundlessly putting on trial and sentencing a significant number of grassroots activists in the soviets and collective farms. This was done with a definite aim: to stir up animosity among working people."
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 254

SPIES AND WRECKERS WERE SENT TO THE SU AS TECHNICIANS AND ENGINEERS

During the first and second Five Year Plans thousands of technicians and tens of thousands of skilled workers were brought into the country by the Soviet government, in order to assist in the construction of new industries. What could be easier than for the enemies of the Soviet Union to send in groups of spies and wreckers in the guise of technicians? Thousands of Germans entered the country in flight from the Fascist terror in Germany. While the overwhelming majority of them were devoted revolutionaries, it was possible for the Fascists to incorporate in their ranks groups of agents and spies who, on arrival in the country, cooperated with the organizations of Rights and Trotskyists. And just as the Fascist agents in Britain are under the protection of certain aristocratic groups, so the agents of Fascism in the Soviet Union were under the protection of the Right Wing Chief of the political police, Yagoda.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 232

SABOTAGE IN THE EARLY 30'S ON THE RAILROADS

[1932 Party Verification of Railroad Employees]
Renewed activity by the Class Enemy and the Fight against It
We possess a substantial number of facts pointing to renewed activity by class-alien, counter-revolutionary, kulak, SR, and Trotskyist factions that is manifested in deteriorating work discipline, declining work quality, and various incidents of sabotage and wholesale theft (on the Moscow-Kazan RR, SR factions in Ruzaevka, Penza, and Yudin; on the Moscow-Kursk RR, in Plekhanovo and Tula SR and Trotskyist terrorist groups with two "Communist" collaborators; on the North Caucasus RR, at Krasnodar Station a counter-revolutionary organization of men from former "haves": a priest, a Tsarist military officer, a kulak, and a military bureaucrat, and others; on the Western RR, a counter-revolutionary bandit organization headed by bureaucrats from Tsarist times with connections abroad, and a "shock worker" and his band of 25).
Proof of sabotage: at the Maloiaroslavets repair shops repeated arson in the cabs of competing locomotives. In the October RR's Moscow shops competing engineers have been systematically harassed, sand poured into the axle boxes of their locomotives, and tools looted. Timetables on the Yekaterinsk RR were designed to sabotage, and the Siberian, Far East, and other lines have sabotage organizations.
In December on the Moscow-Kazan railroad communication lines were damaged 14 times, rendering the lines useless for a total of more than 10 hours.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 122

Recently, Party organizers and cell members have significantly intensified their fight against the class enemy. For example, class enemies holding Party cards have been exposed and expelled: six "Communists" from the cell at the Golutvino Shops of the Moscow-Kazan RR, a secret tie between the secretary of the party collective at Kurgan station and kulaks. In Zlatoust the secretary of the Komsomol cell and head of the technical propaganda office were exposed as kulak agents. The secretary of the party cell of workers also had a secret tie [with class enemies]. Secret enemies were exposed who had shielded themselves with

party membership along the North Caucasian and Trans-Siberian Railroads, at the Krasnodar, Novocherkassk, Tikhoretsk, Baku, Nantlug, and other stations.
However, to put it bluntly, the fight against the class enemy is still far from being sufficiently intense in day-to-day work….
In view of the facts cited here, we think the purge of the party on the railroads should have the highest priority, that new, broad, and thorough verifications should be carried out in conjunction with the GPU, and that class-alien and kulak elements should be chased out of the transportation industry.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 123

In 1934 there were 62,000 “mishaps,” some of them serious wrecks, on the Soviet railway system.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 539

MOLOTOV SAYS THERE IS GREAT WRECKING IN INDUSTRY LED BY PYATAKOV & TRAITORS

Molotov gave a major report on wrecking in industry. He said that Piatakov was the chief organizer of wrecking in heavy industry. Because he held so high a post, wreckers and spies had every opportunity to place their people in the chief administrations, trusts, and enterprises. Then Molotov made it clear that the purge in heavy industry was already far along: ” Not just a single hundred industrial leaders with party cards, but also ‘nonparty” engineers and technicians who had key posts in institutions of the Heavy Industry Commissariat and for years carried on criminal wrecking work there have now been exposed.” Drawing heavily on materials of the January trial, he drew a picture of an economy infested with wrecking by “Japanese-German-Trotskyist agents” plus–now that this was settled–Bukharinist and Rykovist wreckers of the Right.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 423

SUBVERSIVES HEAVILY INFILTRATED INDUSTRY AND WHILE UNDERMINING PROTECTED OTHERS

In industry too, there is no doubt that the circle of “secret agents” to be traced and punished was a fairly large one, which would have had to include, among others, such “subversive elements” as authors of false reports on the completion of unfinished projects, skeptics on reorganization and reforms, producers of regularly substandard goods, those who wasted raw materials, and all kinds of incompetent and corrupt officials. Within the Party apparatus too there were cadres to be found everywhere who might be suspected of “hostile activities.” There, “enemies of the people” constituted formidable cliques. They protected other “saboteurs,” took vengeance on those who tried to denounce them, outwitted the vigilance of control agencies, neglected important duties, and systematically communicated false information up to the central authorities, where in any case a good many of them manifestly benefited from the connivance of highly-placed protectors.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 252

SOME WORKING GROUPS ADMIT SABOTAGE

During walks I had the opportunity to meet a group of workers from the Navy dockyards, who were lodged in another ward. They were accused of having sabotaged the loan for the Five-Year Plan in certain workshops of the Dockyard. They were accused of Trotskyism; some, indeed, were tainted with it, but most of them were plain non-Party workers. They assured me that the Dockyard workers had sabotaged the loan without anybody's prompting in order to protest against the continual worsening of their material conditions.
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 168

Moscow Trials

OUTLINES OF THE SHAKHTY, INDUSTRIAL PARTY & METRO-VICKERS TRIALS

In 1928 came the trial of the engineers of the Shakhty mining area in the Donetz Basin. There's no need to go into the details of the trial. These engineers had never lost touch with their former chiefs, the directors and large shareholders of the Donetz mines, who had fled abroad during the revolution. It was natural that those former Russian captains of industry should have many connections with influential circles in their countries of asylum, particularly France and England. From these former owners the engineers received instructions in regard to sabotage, and especially requests to flood certain mines to preserve them for the former owners. That these things had been done was fully confirmed at the trial; other charges remained unproved. But the trial showed clearly that part of an important group of educated Russians, the engineers, were absolutely opposed to the Soviet regime.
This was not the first and not the last such trial in this period of Russian history. Two years later came the case against the illegal Industrial Party. It showed plainly the lines along which the thoughts of the leading technical experts in Russia were running. The chief defendant in that case was a professor Ramzin, a prominent engineer who had played an important part during the First World War as an organizer of the heating industries and also as leader of the bourgeois Democratic Party. Later, with a number of leading engineers, he had entered the Soviet service. These engineers, with Ramzin at their head, were firmly convinced of the disastrousness of Stalin's policy. In order to ward off chaos and to form a government, they had founded the illegal Industrial Party. Their ideology was that of the Technocrats, who hold that in our day the state should be ruled and administered by trained technicians–a sort of dictatorship of the engineers…. Ramzin had formed a secret Cabinet of engineers for the future, in which he was to be Prime Minister. They wanted to arrest the coming catastrophe. Rykov, Stalin's more moderate opponent, who had already been removed from the Office of Prime Minister, was to become Prime Minister again after the fall of Stalin, but to yield the office to Ramzin after a period of transition. What was fatal for Ramzin and his colleagues was that they all considered it essential to enter into relations with persons abroad. His Industrial Party actually tried to get in touch with the British and French Governments, but only came into contact with the intelligence services of those countries, which showed great caution. These contacts, however, led to the discovery of the plot.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 173

In a…trial in Moscow in April 1933, engineers "of the old school" were accused of espionage and sabotage on behalf of Great Britain. This "Metro-Vickers" trial was the latest in a series of open proceedings against engineers and technicians of the old regime that included the Shakhty trial of 1928, and the trial of the Industrial Party in 1930…. Several of the defendants were released on bail before the trial. No death sentences were handed out, and two of the defendants received no punishment at all.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 110

The trial of the Metro-Vickers engineers and their Russian colleagues in January 1933 revealed (though only in some of the defendants) not only cases of mild bribery and the systematic collection of information coming within the legal definition of espionage, but also a negligence that was hardly to be distinguished from sabotage, which was visited by the court with sentences of discriminating moderation. There promptly followed a renewed campaign of incitement by the emigres of Prague and Paris, with which was apparently connected the illegal and secret entry into the USSR, across its western land frontier during 1934, of more than 100 emissaries, bearing arms (and some of them bombs), nearly all of whom were, without publicity, promptly arrested, and held for interrogation. It will be recalled that it was during this period that Hitler was proclaiming his intention of annexing the Ukraine, and of securing forced concessions of much-needed minerals from the Urals–a threat which, it might be argued, implied that he was aware of there being allies within the USSR who would help him to overcome Stalin's government, just as he later became aware of confederates in Spain among the army officers bent on overthrowing the Republic Government, and installing a Fascist regime in alliance with the Fascist Powers.
In December 1934 the head Bolshevik official in Leningrad (Kirov) was assassinated by a dismissed employee, who may have acted independently out of personal revenge, but who was discovered to have secret connections with conspiratorial circles of ever-widening range. The Government reaction to this murder was to hurry on the trial, condemnation, and summary execution of the hundred or more persons above referred to, who were undoubtedly guilty of illegal entry and inexcusably bearing arms and bombs, although it was apparently not proved that they had any connection with Kirov's assassination or the conspiracies associated therewith.
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, p. 926

The Shakhty trial case was the first signal. The Shakhty case showed that the Party organizations and the trade unions lacked revolutionary vigilance. It showed that our business managers were disgracefully backward in regard to technique, that some of the old engineers and technicians, who work without being controlled, slide more easily towards the path of wrecking activities, especially as they were constantly besieged by "offers" from our enemies abroad….
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 123

The first major political trial to have the effect of seriously aggravating the internal political situation in the Soviet Union was the so-called Shakhty case. The defendants were engineers and technicians in the coal industry of the Donetz basin. They were accused of "wrecking," deliberately causing explosions in the mines, and maintaining criminal ties with the former mine owners, as well as less serious crimes, such as buying unnecessary imported equipment, violating safety procedures and labor laws, incorrectly laying out new mines, and so on.
At the trial some of the defendants confessed their guilt, but many denied it or confessed to only some of the charges. The court acquitted four of the 53 defendants, gave suspended sentences to four, and prison terms of one to three years to 10. Most of the defendants were given four to 10 years. Eleven were condemned to be shot, and five of them were executed in July 1928. The other six were granted clemency by the All-Union Central Executive Committee.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 258

From November 25 to December 7, 1930, a new political trial was held in Moscow, this time an open one. A group of prominent technical specialists were accused of wrecking and counter-revolutionary activities as members of an alleged Industrial Party….
Their alleged gains were to organize wrecking, diversionary actions, sabotage, and espionage and to prepare for the intervention of the Western powers and the overthrow of the Soviet government.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 263

At a trial the defendants confessed their guilt and willingly gave the most improbable detailed testimony about their wrecking and spying, their connections with foreign embassies in Moscow, even with Poincare, the president of France. A wave of meetings swept the country, with the speakers demanding that the leaders of the Industrial Party be shot. The court obligingly sentenced most of them to death, but a decree of the Central Executive Committee granted clemency, reducing the sentences to various terms of imprisonment.
[The president of France denied any involvement and] It is significant that the complete text of Poincare's declaration was published in Pravda and entered in the court record. Evidently this was done to show the court's objectivity…. The bulk of Soviet citizens regarded Poincare's declaration as proof of a real plot.
In March 1931, a few months after the trial of the Industrial Party, another open political trial was held in Moscow, that of an alleged Union Bureau of the Central Committee of the Menshevik Party.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 264

The "Union Bureau" was accused of wrecking, especially in the drafting of plans for economic development. If the indictment is to be believed, the accused systematically lowered all the draft plans, trying thereby to slow down the development of Soviet industry and agriculture. The Mensheviks were also supposed to have formed a secret block with the Industrial Party and the Toiling Peasant Party to prepare for armed intervention from without and insurrection from within. Each contracting party was assigned a certain function: the Industrial Party was to conduct preliminary negotiations with representatives of the countries that were supposed to inspire or take part in armed intervention, to organize flying brigades of engineers for diversionary and terrorist actions, and to arrange for military conspiracies with certain individuals in the high command of the Red Army; the Toiling Peasant Party was to organize peasant revolts, supply the rebels with weapons and munitions, and create disturbances in Red Army units; and the Union Bureau was to prepare a citizens' guard in the cities, which could seize government institutions and provide the initial support for a new counter-revolutionary government.
At the trial all the defendants [of the Union Bureau] confessed, giving highly detailed accounts of their wrecking activities. As prosecutor, Krylenko tried at one session to demonstrate the objectivity of the court by reading a special declaration from the emigre leaders of the Menshevik Party. They [the emigre leaders] categorically denied any connection between the Menshevik Party and the defendants, who had quit the party in the early twenties or had never belonged to it at all…. In any case, none of the accused had ever been in touch with the emissaries of the Menshevik Party. After this declaration had been read, the accused, at the suggestion of the presiding judge, refuted it and reaffirmed their guilt. A few days later the court sentenced all 14 defendants to terms of imprisonment ranging from 5 to 10 years.

Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 265-266

The subsequent fate of these people [scholars in the humanities] worked out in different ways. Many of them were freed after a few years and went on to brilliant scholarly careers; such was the case for Tarle, Lorkh, Vinogradov, and Talanov. In the ’40s and ’50s they headed the most important scientific institutions in the Soviet Union, enjoyed great respect, and were awarded the highest honors.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 288

Eleven death sentences were announced [in the Shakhty case], of which six were commuted because of the prisoners’ co-operation. [Conquests distorts]
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 154

RAMZIN GETS A LIGHT SENTENCE AND REDEEMS HIMSELF

Two days after the completion of the Industrial Party trial, Professor Ramzin and the other four defendants who had been sentenced to death petitioned the Soviet Supreme Court for a reprieve. The court granted the petition and commuted the sentences of death to sentences of ten years imprisonment on the grounds that Ramzin and his colleagues had been the tools of the real conspirators who were outside the Soviet Union. In the years following the trial, Professor Ramzin, who was granted every opportunity by the Soviet authorities for new scientific work, became completely won over to the Soviet way of life and began making valuable contributions to the industrial program of the USSR. On July 7, 1943, Professor Ramzin was awarded the Order of Lenin and the Joseph Stalin Prize of 30 thousand dollars for the invention of a simplified turbo generator, said to be better than any other in the world. Under a decree issued by the Kremlin, the turbo generator bares the inventors name.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 170

The internal detente remained in force for the deserving. Even some former anti-Bolsheviks found themselves among them. A governmental decree amnestied Ramzin and eight fellow convicts in the Industrial Party trial for their successful work on boiler design while in prison. Along with the decree was printed a letter of thanks for clemency in which Ramzin and three others took note of the “solicitude for man” that the NKVD had shown during their five-year imprisonment by providing all conditions for continued scientific work.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 322

Stalin was capable of gratitude. The main defendant, Ramzin, was sentenced to death by shooting, but this was commuted to imprisonment. The same Ramzin whose name had been anathema to the country at large was shortly released, and eventually became director of the very same Technological Institute, and a winner of the country’s highest award, the Stalin Prize. Several other of the “inveterate wreckers” would be numbered among Stalin’s pet scientists.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 251

STALIN SAYS BY LAW FOREIGNERS ARE TREATED VERY WELL AND FAIRLY IN THE SU

It is true that, after the arrests had been made public, Mr. Barnes, the Moscow correspondent of the New York Herald Tribune, wrote to Stalin at the Kremlin asking for an assurance that American citizens in Russia were in no danger of molestation or of arbitrary arrest…. Stalin wrote to the ecstatic Mr. Barnes, who showed me the original as one of his most precious documentary possessions, the following letter:

Dear Mr. Barnes,

There is not the slightest ground for your fears about the security of American citizens here. The USSR is one of the few countries in which the display of hate or unfriendliness towards foreigners, as foreigners, is prohibited by law. There has been no case, nor can there be one, of anyone becoming the object of persecution because of his nationality.

This is especially true in the case of the foreign specialists in the USSR , including Americans, whose work, in my opinion, is worthy of appreciation.

As for the few Englishman, the employees of the Metropolitan-Vickers Co., they are being prosecuted, not as Englishmen, but as persons who, according to the affirmation of the investigating authorities, have violated the law of the USSR …. J. Stalin.

One statement in Stalin's letter I can amplify and endorse from personal experience. Not merely is "the display of hate or unfriendliness towards foreigners, as foreigners" prohibited by law; but foreigners are treated with the utmost kindness and goodwill. One of the most frequent questions asked me on my return to England was whether during the trial or afterwards I had been molested because of my nationality, or threatened or treated with harshness and discourtesy. My answer is that I never once met with a sullen look or an insulting or unkind word. In Moscow no such passions were aroused as in London , where the sudden display of frenzied emotion startled the whole world. Even at the height of the trial, when feeling against Mr. Thornton in particular was strong and strongly expressed–inside and outside the Court, and the street, in the hotel, in tramcars and in official quarters–there was not the slightest change in this friendly attitude…. My experience was that of other Englishmen in Moscow who compared notes with me and were as surprised as I was that we were called upon to suffer no reprisals even in the mildest form. The "law" as to foreigners is in fact faithfully observed. I know of no country in the world in which individual foreigners, to whatever nationality they may belong, can be so assured of being treated with affability and good manners.

Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London : Vic. Gollancz, 1933, p. 63-65

POLICE METHODS OF OBTAINING EVIDENCE AND CONFESSIONS ARE EXCELLENT AND ENVIABLE

In connection with these "systematic breakdowns" proceedings were instituted against the Russian engineer Gussev, chief of the Zlatoust Electric Power Station. Gussev, whose personality at the trial deeply interested me, seems to have given himself away as promptly as he gave away the English installation engineer MacDonald.

From this standpoint the indictment, both in form and substance, should be an inspiration to the earnest student of the records of police transactions. In the completeness of its presentation, in the dovetailing one into another of all the parts of the case, in the intelligent detailed exactitude with which most of the accused persons incriminate themselves and give away others, in the skill with which at just the right moment one prisoner is confronted with the testimony or person of another prisoner and so induced to confess and corroborate, it is something of a masterpiece. There is not a police organization in the world which would not

regard the final result with admiring envy as an almost perfect artistic achievement or would not be glad to discover the secret of the GPU's technique and in practice imitate the method….
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London : Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 75

DEFENDANTS CONFESS AND IMPLICATE OTHERS IN THE METRO-VICKERS TRIAL

Gussev, admitting everything, gives away MacDonald. MacDonald gives himself away and gives away Thornton . Thornton , admitting less, yet gives away himself and his colleagues. Monkhouse apparently gives away something; Cushny very little, Nordwall not much. The remaining eleven Russians follow eagerly Gussev's example, making full and voluminous confessions, telling all they claim to know and of course giving away in turn one or more of the six Englishmen….
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London : Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 76

GUSSEV CONFESSES AND IMPLICATES MACDONALD WHO IMPLICATES THORNTON

When the evidence so far obtained was put before him by the officers of the GPU, Gussev admitted at once that he was guilty of organizing a group of wreckers at Zlatoust and added that for causing the breakdowns he received money from MacDonald. He testified also that from 1922, during the whole period of his duties at Zlatoust , he was "sharply hostile" to the Soviet Government and mixed in hostile circles.
As he grew more intimate with MacDonald, Gussev became more and more frank with him, openly expressed his anti-Soviet views, and told him about his service in the White campaign against the Red Army.
At one meeting in MacDonald's flat, MacDonald (said Gussev) "openly proposed to me that I should engage in collecting information about the work at Zlatoust . It was clear that he meant espionage work. When he spoke to me again two or three days later I consented because of my striving to be more active in my anti-Soviet hostility."
…Having done so well with Gussev the interrogators turned their attention to MacDonald, who, "after the concrete facts of his crime had been presented to him admitted in the very first examination on March 12 the correctness of Gussev's evidence and corroborated it at a confrontation on March 13."
… Just before his departure for Zlatoust he was asked specifically by Thornton to "collect for him information about the production of military supplies there and about the state of the power supply…."
…MacDonald "corroborated" Gussev as to the character and scope of his espionage activities.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London : Vic. Gollancz, 1933, p. 77-79

GUSSEV AND MACDONALD DESCRIBE IN DETAIL THE WRECKING THEY DID

The indictment then passes on to what the prosecution regarded as “the main content of Gussev’s counter-revolutionary activity”–the organization of the breakdowns at Zlatoust and the delay of work on the extension of the electric power station “for the purpose of undermining the industry and the military power of the USSR .”
Gussev made frequent admissions on these matters. He received, he said, from MacDonald two tasks: (1) to reduce the output of shells and cold weapons at the mechanical works and (2) to reduce the output of high-quality steel at the metallurgical works. He was helped in this work by Sokolov, who said he agreed in the first place as “a school chum of Gussev’s and knowing that Gussev was on good terms with MacDonald.”
MacDonald, completing this agreeable picture of deliberate sabotage, once more admitted “the correctness of the evidence,” and supplemented with further information of his own.
The industrious and enterprising Gussev then told his examiners how he had drawn up a plan which he had submitted to MacDonald, who accepted it, and with what zeal he carried out the following wrecking acts:
(1) Put out of action five or six times the 1400 horsepower motor which serves to drive the large shaping rolling mill.
(2) Froze L. M. Z. boiler No. 8.
(3) Put out of action the coal conveyor by, among other means, throwing small metal objects into the cylindrical gear drive.
(4) Delayed the installation of U. M. T. boiler No. 11 by sending working parts to the scrap melting furnace on the pretense that they were scrap.
The damage to the rolling mill motor put the shell shop itself out of action for six weeks.
As to this effective piece of sabotage, MacDonald said:
“I told Gussev that for the purpose of a struggle with the Soviet power one must use also such means as the organization of breakages in the works and especially in their most important points. I requested him, considering it to be a very important undertaking in order to stop the production, to organize a breakage of the above-mentioned motor, being aware that it will lead to most definite effective consequences. Gussev first hesitated but afterwards agreed to it.”
The next point to be considered was what was to be done in the event of war.
Thus Gussev: MacDonald discussed with me the measures to be taken to put the equipment of the station out of order in the event of war. He told me and gave me direct instructions to cause breakdowns on the declaration of war in the most important sections of the station, namely in the boiler house and the coal conveyor. By this means I was to strive to keep the station constantly at a level considerably below that which was provided for in the mobilization plan. In this way, had I succeeded in maintaining the level at about 6000 kW instead of 12,000 nominal kW, provided for in the mobilization plan, that would have meant the disruption of the work of munitions supply in wartime.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London : Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 80

CILIGA BACKS UP CLAIMS OF METRO-VICKERS WRECKING ACTS

Of course, people spoke with caution, for the most part only of what they had seen and heard. Nevertheless, I did on three or four occasions hear open and direct criticism of the government. One of the most outspoken in this respect was a young student from among the specialists. He declared that he had been imprisoned “on account of a counter-revolutionary organization in the electrical industry.” The public trial of this case took place, if I remember

correctly, in Moscow in the spring of 1933. Apart from the Russian accused there were also some English engineers on trial, who were freed after being sentenced, and extradited at the request of the British government. [The Metro-Vickers trial, 12-19 April, 1933].
This young fellow's story struck me not only because of its outspokenness against the government, but also, and particularly because of his detailed account of the "counter-revolutionary organization." According to him the affair was far more serious than had been made public by the Court proceedings. The government, he thought, did not want too many revelations, and deliberately conducted it as a wreckers' case, whereas it was in fact a real conspiracy. He asserted that the organization had a complete plan to plunge the whole of Moscow into darkness at a moment' s notice and to blow up the Kremlin and other strategically important points in the town by means of some mysterious rays. The blowing up of the Kremlin would result in the overthrow of the government and its replacement by one composed of specialist-technicians.
"Only by means of modern technique and only with the aid of technicians and specialists can the communists be overthrown," the young fellow declared, repeating one of the clichEs fairly widespread in Soviet circles.
The conspiracy had apparently been exposed quite accidentally. One of the chief engineers of the "Electric Combinat" in Moscow , a leader of the plot, while taking some papers from the safe in his office, had inadvertently dropped a map of Moscow with the points to be blown up marked on it in front of the nose of a communist who happened to be there.
According to the student, he himself was a close relative of one of the principal accused, but had contrived to escape immediately after the first arrests had taken place. With false papers he had managed to get taken on at a ship-building yard on the Baikal, and thought that having traveled so far he was no longer in danger. However, after six months he had been traced and arrested.
"When arresting me the GPU addressed me by my real name. I realized then that further denial was senseless and I admitted everything. I was threatened with shooting of course, but on account of my youth I got off with 10 years in a concentration camp."
The whole tale sounded fantastic, incredible, pure conceit and boasting–if not worse. I mention it only because this was the sole case where an accused assured me that the accusation of wrecking was not a frame-up but the truth. It goes without saying that I cannot vouch that this young man had really been accused of the things of which he told me. One thing, however, was undoubtedly true. He came from the technical-intelligentsia circles of Moscow , and yet he did not look like a son of the old-style bourgeois-intelligentsia.
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London : Ink Links, 1979, p. 344-345

GUSSEV AND SOKOLOV RECEIVE MONEY FROM MACDONALD FOR WRECKING

Thus MacDonald: The respective declaration of Mr. Gussev coincides with my instructions.
And like an echo then comes the corroborative voice of the faithful Sokolov.
Gussev next informed his accusers that he received at various times from MacDonald sums of money amounting to between 2000 and 3000 rubles.
"Yes," said MacDonald, "I gave money to Gussev for his spying work and breakages in accordance with my commissions. The total sum I handed over to him was about 2000 or 3000 rubles."

“In June 1932,” says Sokolov, “Gussev in his office gave me 1000 rubles; and in handing it to me said, ‘Here is a bonus from MacDonald.’ “I consider,” continues Sokolov, “that I received this sum principally for putting the 1400 horsepower motor out of order.”
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London : Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 82

THORNTON ADMITS ENLISTING AND PAYING MACDONALD FOR ESPIONAGE

The depositions of Gussev and MacDonald as to the complicity of Thornton “in the activities of the counter-revolutionary group” and their references to Thornton as the source of the payments for counter-revolutionary acts led to his arrest.
He was examined, and when confronted with his two accusers, Gussev and MacDonald, he is alleged to have to the following effect:
(1) In those places where MacDonald was engaged in installation work “MacDonald did indeed engage in collecting information for Thornton and on his instructions.”
(2) Thornton first enlisted MacDonald for espionage activity in May-June 1930 in Losino-Ostrovskaya.
(3) Thornton did indeed receive information from MacDonald concerning the Zlatoust and Zuevka districts.
(4) Thornton admitted also that he knew that Gussev “was the person whom MacDonald had brought in to collect information about the work of the Zlatoust electric power station on his (Thornton ‘s) instructions.”
Thornton also corroborated the evidence of MacDonald that the latter had received from him a sum of money to pay “these people” who had given espionage information.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London : Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 82

VITVITSKY SAYS THORNTON PAID HIM BRIBES FOR ESPIONAGE INFORMATION

This scene of action now passes to Chelyabinsk , at which station, according to the investigators, the counter-revolutionary group was acting under Vitvitsky (one of the accused Russians) who were also connected with MacDonald, Gussev, and Thornton.
… Thornton promised that the information, which should be conveyed to MacDonald at Zlatoust through Gussev, would be well paid for; and as a reward for his “wrecking acts” Vitvitsky said he received repeated bribes amounting altogether to 6900 rubles. The money was usually handed to him by Gussev when he gave the latter the letters with the information asked for.
According to Vitvitsky, the “wrecking” chiefly employed at Chelyabinsk was to slow down the development of the station by various subtle means which he enumerated and which included, among other things, the concentration of attention on objects that had nothing to do with the station and failing to take adequate measures when anything went wrong. Like the group at Zlatoust , the wreckers at Chelyabinsk “also had a program of action drawn up in the event of war.”
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London : Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 84

KOTLYAREVSKY SAYS HE ENGAGED IN WRECKING FOR MACDONALD AT ELECTRIC POWER PLANT

Now for the electric power station at Zuevka. There MacDonald comes again into action. The "chief wrecker" at Zuevka was Kotlyarevsky, who, on being charged, admitted that he carried out the work in conjunction with MacDonald with whom he became on very friendly terms "which MacDonald tried to maintain all the time."
Kotlyarevsky insisted that he did no more than conceal defects in the equipment. But the examiners refute such attempts "to belittle his wrecking work" by quoting a statement made on April 3 by MacDonald in which he said "In June or July 1932 there was organized a breakdown of the third generator. This breakdown took place as a result of leaving a bolt in the air gap of the generator. It was done under my instructions by Fomichev or Kotlyarevsky."
From Zuevka the melancholy and monotonous tale is transferred to Ivanov, at which station, in addition to various breakdowns and accidents recorded by the Expert Committee, a number of cases of direct damage to equipment are set out in detail in the indictment.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London : Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 85

LOBANOV & ZIVERT SAY NORDWALL & THORNTON PAID THEM FOR WRECKING

Here the Russian villain of the peace is Lobanov, the anti-Sovietist son of a factory owner, who was "in league with" Nordwall, another Metro-Vickers employee.
According to Lobanov, Nordwall urged that the damage should be carried out systematically, so as to interrupt the supply of electric current to industry, and that "attention should be paid to the damage of equipment from Metro-Vickers, and that if such equipment, on which the period of guarantee had not expired, were damaged, it should be done in such a way that the responsibility could not be thrown on the company."
Lobanov, after enumerating in detail his acts of wreckage, says he received as his reward 5000 rubles. Nordwall first gave him 3000 rubles, "wrapped in a newspaper," and promised a larger reward if the work was more energetically carried on. Of this sum Lobanov gave 1000 rubles to Lebedev and 800 to Ugrumov.
Zivert, a foreman at the station, declared that he was drawn into the same business by Thornton whom he met first at the Gorky station in 1925.
He was, he said, "won over by Thornton 's promise to reward him." In the course of ten months "there were 15 accidents to the oil pipes"; and for this and other work Zivert received from Thornton a further 300 rubles.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London : Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 86

SUKHORUCHKIN, KRASHENINNIKOV & ZORIN ADMIT BEING PAID BY THORNTON TO DO WRECKING

Breakdowns at the 0rekhevo Thermo-Power station were caused deliberately by the engineers Sukhoruchkin, Krasheninnikov and Zorin, "acting in collusion with the employees of Metro-Vickers." Sukhoruchkin, "on his own admission," established a connection with Thornton as early as 1927, systematically supplying him with economic information. From the middle of 1929, in addition to this, he "kept quiet about the number of defects in the equipment supplied by the firm," and in 1931 "passed on to direct acts of diversion in accordance with the instructions given me by Thornton personally."

Sukhoruchkin also made the remarkable statement that, in February 1930, when they were examining the switch gear together, not only did they discuss a number of acts of “diversion” they intended to carry out on a larger scale in case of war, but Thornton actually demonstrated to him in technical and exact detail “how easy it would be” to wreck the switch house. And in subsequent conversations Thornton explained other methods.
Sukhoruchkin said he received from Thornton 2000 rubles, and 350 rubles in Torgsin checks.
Krasheninnikov said Oleinik gave him 500 rubles on Thornton ‘s behalf for concealing defects in the equipment. Zorin, chief engineer of the steam turbine group, was given 1000 rubles by Thornton for the same kind of work; and was “prudently warned” by Thornton “of the criminal work of Sukhoruchkin and Krasheninnikov so that he would not expose their “wrecking.”
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London : Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 87

THORNTON ADMITS TO KUTUZOVA THAT HE IS BRIBING RUSSIANS FOR SECRET INFORMATION

As early as 1930 she [Kutuzova] began to notice that something was wrong, when Thornton, Cushny, MacDonald, Monkhouse and others “had secret conversations with Soviet citizens, often locked themselves up in their private office and made secret notes, etc..”
She soon came to the conclusion that they were spying and that they sent information to England . She pressed Thornton to let her know the truth. At first he would only say that, in addition to his work for Metro-Vickers, “he had other tasks of a secret nature.” But at length he told her that he and other English engineers “were collecting secret information of a political and economic nature through the medium of Russian engineers and technicians recruited by them to whom they paid money for this work.”
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London : Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 89

KUTUZOVA ADMITS MAKING PAYMENTS FOR THORNTON & HEARING HIM PLAN WRECKING ACTS

She admitted that she then took part in making these payments; and in the presence of Thornton stated that the expenses for the remuneration of the Russian engineers and technicians who supplied secret information had been recorded by Thornton “not in the office books but in notebooks which he took to England in 1932.”
Questioned about the participation of the British engineers in acts of diversion, Kutuzova asserted that several times she heard Thornton and Monkhouse planning to damage the turbines of the Nizhni, Zuevka, Leningrad and Baku power stations. On the subject of espionage she said she “supposed” that Thornton and the other workers in the firm’s office gave their information to Richards and carried on their espionage under him. She drew this conclusion “from the fact that when Richards came over, secret talks were held with him; and, besides this, Thornton and Monkhouse mentioned the name Richards in their secret conversations.”
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London : Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 90

THORNTON SAYS ENGINEER ALBERT GREGORY GAVE BRIBES

“Among the other employees of Metro-Vickers who gave bribes, according to the statement of Thornton , there was also the engineer Albert Gregory.”
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London : Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 92

ALL 12 RUSSIANS CONFESS WHILE THE ENGLISH CONFESS IN VARYING DEGREES

The confessions of the 12 Russians were full and exhaustive; only in one instance did a Russian make a faltering suggestion that he was not guilty on all counts, and his attempt to “belittle” his participation in crime was quickly disposed of by his interrogators.
Of the British citizens, MacDonald made a full, complete and very damaging confession implicating his superiors and immediate colleagues. Thornton , while denying sabotage, made certain admissions, none of them so serious as those in a document which was not published in the indictment but was reserved for the trial. Monkhouse admitted receiving information that “might be interesting to the firm,” the writing off of money given by Thornton to Dolgov, and machinery defects which caused breakdowns in the power stations. Nordwall admitted “anti-Soviet conversations” with Lobanov but denied everything else. Cushny admitted virtually nothing. As for Gregory, there was no indication even that he was questioned.
Apart from the testimony of two employees at Zlatoust as to the nature of the damage done and the instructions given by Gussev, the only independent witnesses were Ryabova, MacDonald’s elderly housekeeper, who conveyed letters from Gussev to MacDonald; Yemelyanov, who said he heard Cushny speak of the necessity of damaging the Red Power Station in order to stop the development of the oilfields; and Dolgov, head of the control department of Electro-Import (and, I strongly suspect, a GPU spy), who received 3000 rubles from Thornton and handed them over at once to the GPU.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London : Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 98

CONFESSIONS AND MUTUAL ACCUSATIONS OF PRISONERS MADE THE PROSECUTION CASE

Therefore the prisoners’ confessions and accusations against others under arrest provided the core of the case for the prosecution.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London : Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 99

THE SOVIETS PRODUCED A PRIMA FACIE CASE FOR INDICTMENT AND PUBLIC INQUIRY

Allowing for all reasonable objections that can be directed against the form and character of the indictment I defy any fair-minded person to read it through without acknowledging that the Soviets had produced a prima facie case for public inquiry.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London : Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 100

BRITISH PAPER CAN’T GET THE FREED BRITISH PRISONERS TO SAY THEY WERE TORTURED

Whatever methods may have been employed on the Soviet citizens, it is only fair to say that even The Times, in an unimpressive and characteristically sour review of what it describes as a “fishing” inquiry, was unable to extract from the returned British engineers any complaint that “direct physical terror was applied to those of the British prisoners who are now free to speak for themselves.”
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 101

When the British prisoners agreed in court that no torture or other form of pressure had been applied to them, a section of the press declared that if the prisoners were freed from the grip of the OGPU they would tell another story. A few months later, all the prisoners are freed, and can reveal the frightful tortures by which “all human reflexes are destroyed” in order that prisoners may be forced to confess to crimes which they did not commit. Alas for the credulous! The opportunity afforded to these three gentlemen to expose the methods of torture practiced by the OGPU has not been utilized to this day.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 257

ALL OF THE BRITISH ACCUSED WERE ASSIGNED SOVIET LAWYERS & SO WERE THE RUSSIANS

His [Judge Ulrich] first business was to recite the names of the prisoners and to obtain from each one of them their age, occupation, and nationality and a formal acknowledgement of the receipt of the indictment. It was then announced that “at the request and choice of the accused” Braude, one of the most celebrated and flamboyant lawyers in Russia, was to defend Thornton; Smirnov was to act for MacDonald; Kommodov, a very able advocate for Monkhouse; Lidov for Cushny; and Dolmatovsky for Gregory and Nordwall. Four other counsel were engaged for the Russians.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London : Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 115

THE CENSORS WERE FAIR AND REASONABLE WITH REPORTERS AT THE TRIAL

I have no serious complaint to make against the censors. They did their duty in a reasonable spirit and with an obvious desire not to hamper our work unduly or cause us needless irritations as long as we observed the decencies.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 116

REPORTERS ARE SHOCKED THAT THE BRIT MACDONALD ADMITS HIS GUILT

It had been assumed as a matter of course that all the Russian prisoners would plead guilty and all the British prisoners not guilty.
In a dead silence the President turned towards the dock. “Accused Gussev,” he said, “do you plead guilty to the formulated accusations?”

GUSSEV: Yes, I plead guilty.
THE PRESIDENT: Accused Sokolov, do you plead guilty?
SOKOLOV: Yes, I do.

THE PRESIDENT: Accused MacDonald, do you plead guilty?
MACDONALD: Yes, I do you.

The audience gasped in astonishment at this totally unexpected answer.
One heard all the Russians admit their guilt. One heard each of the remaining Englishmen plead not guilty in tones all the sharper and clearer perhaps because of their colleague's defection.
… And a horde of newspaper men dashed out of the hall to tell the world without a moment's delay that one of the six innocent British engineers had pleaded guilty to his crime.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Gollancz, 1933, p. 116-117

MACDONALD ADMITS ASKING GUSSEV FOR MILITARY INFORMATION

VYSHINSKY: What exactly do you mean by that? Did you ask Gussev for information on the power supply?
MACDONALD: I did.
VYSHINSKY: Military information?
MACDONALD: I did.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 120

GUSSEV ADMITS BEING PAID BY MACDONALD TO WRECK AND MACDONALD ADMITS PAYING HIM

Gussev next passed to a comprehensive account of the way in which he organized and carried out, in conjunction with his assistant Sokolov, the engineering breakdowns in the concern. The purpose, he said, was to stop entirely the production of shells and non-firing weapons at Zlatoust, and he decided that the best means of ensuring this was to put out of commission the 1400 horsepower motor, because the work of the mill depended upon it. He accomplished the end by leaving a small piece of sheet iron in the ventilation intake. He described in detail several other breakdowns, upon which Vyshinsky turned again to MacDonald with the question: "Do you corroborate Gussev's testimony in this part?"
MACDONALD: I do.
Gussev said he received altogether about 3000 rubles from MacDonald for his work.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 120

MACDONALD ADMITS GETTING THE MONEY TO PAY GUSSEV FROM THORNTON

VYSHINSKY (to MacDonald): Do you corroborate Gussev's testimony in this part or not?
MACDONALD: I gave him money.
VYSHINSKY: How much?
MACDONALD: About 2500 rubles.
VYSHINSKY: Where did you get it?
MACDONALD: From the firm–from the Moscow office.
VYSHINSKY: From whom personally?
MACDONALD: Through chief engineer Thornton.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 121

GUSSEV ADMITS HE MET WITH MACDONALD AND THORNTON TO PLAN WRECKING ACTS

ROGINSKY: Did you have a talk with Thornton concerning your work as one of their men?
GUSSEV: Yes. On the second occasion this plan [for wrecking activities] was discussed by all three of us–myself, Thornton and McDonald.
ROGINSKY: Where?
GUSSEV: In my office. I was warned by MacDonald that meetings with Thornton outside my office would be unwise.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 122

MACDONALD ADMITS ENGAGING IN ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND MILITARY ESPIONAGE

VYSHINSKY: When in Leningrad did you collect any information?
MACDONALD: Yes.
VYSHINSKY: What information?
MACDONALD: As indicated in my depositions.
VYSHINSKY: You said in them that you engaged in systematic economic espionage. Do you confirm this?
MACDONALD: I confirm it.
VYSHINSKY: Political– do you confirm that?
MACDONALD: I confirm it.
VYSHINSKY: And military?
MACDONALD: Yes.
VYSHINSKY: And where did you get that military information.
MACDONALD: From the “Bolshevik” works near our electric power station.

Airplane motors, MacDonald explained, were tested there; and there were firing ranges at which artillery was tested. And he passed on “whatever there was to hear” to Thornton.
He added, in further replies to questions, that he assumed other engineers of Metro-Vickers, besides Thornton, to be sharing in the intelligence work, including Cushny.
When he went to Zlatoust in 1930 and met Gussev he received from Gussev information “with military data in it” and passed it on to Thornton.

MACDONALD ADMITS TELLING GUSSEV HOW TO WRECK A 1400 HP MOTOR

VYSHINSKY: About wrecking equipment, you deposed that you gave Gussev instructions to wreck the 1400 horsepower motor. Do you confirm this, or not?
MACDONALD: Yes.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 141

MACDONALD REPEATEDLY CONFESSES AND IMPLICATES THORNTON

And so it went on. Vyshinsky carried him at a canter through his various preliminary self-admissions; and in case after case, one after another, MacDonald verified the statements and so incriminated himself (not to mention Thornton) beyond hope of redemption in a Soviet Court.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 141

MACDONALD SAYS THORNTON ASKED HIM TO GET MUNITIONS INFO AND THORNTON DENIES IT

VYSHINSKY: I want to refresh your memory. Did you not ask MacDonald to get you information about the manufacture of munitions at the Zlatoust works?
THORNTON: That is an absolute lie.
VYSHINSKY: (to MacDonald): At the examination you deposed that " Thornton asked me to obtain information about the manufacture of munitions." Do you confirm this?
MACDONALD: I confirm it.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 144

MACDONALD ADMITS TO VIRTUALLY EVERYTHING INCLUDING ESPIONAGE AND WRECKING

… The prosecution, however, had no further difficulties with MacDonald, who "confirmed" virtually everything that was put to him. He confirmed the secret nature of the "military information" he received from Gussev. He confirmed the passing of it on to Thornton. He confirmed the request to Gussev to organize a breakage of the motor as part of the organization of works breakages in their most important points "for the purpose of a struggle with the Soviet power."
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 146

THORNTON ADMITS TO BRIBING FOR ESPIONAGE INFORMATION AND WRECKING

ROGINSKY: I asked you: Do you confirm your words "I obtained espionage information of a military character about the Putilov works"?
THORNTON: Yes, but this does not apply to the Donald.
ROGINSKY: And from the Mytischy Works?
THORNTON: Yes.
ROGINSKY: That means that you collected information of a military nature?
THORNTON: This was common gossip.
ROGINSKY: Did you collect this common gossip that had State and military importance?
THORNTON: No, I did not collect it; it came casually.
Turning to Thornton, Roginsky said: "After this you wrote the following: 'I admit that I am guilty according to the charge presented to me, with the exception of paragraph 4, in which it is stated that I gave instructions to wreck installations.'
"Consequently," added Roginsky leaning forward and thrusting out his chin, "you pleaded guilty to economic and military espionage?"
THORNTON: In that document–yes.

ROGINSKY: You pleaded guilty to paying money for economic and military espionage?
THORNTON: In that document–yes.
ROGINSKY: You pleaded guilty to giving brides for concealing defects in equipment?
THORNTON: In that document–yes….
ROGINSKY: According to this record, when it was presented to you, you admitted the following: “(1) That being the chief erecting engineer of Metro-Vickers and the USSR I carried out espionage.” Did you say this?
THORNTON: Yes.
ROGINSKY: Further “(2) That for carrying out the above-mentioned spying activities I drew in certain Russian engineers and technicians whose names I enumerated in previous testimonies.” Is that your deposition?
THORNTON: Yes.
ROGINSKY: “(3) That financial remuneration was given to the persons recruited by me for carrying on espionage.” Is that your deposition?
THORNTON: Yes.
ROGINSKY: “That this work I have carried out in conjunction not only with Russian engineers and technicians whom I drew in, but I have carried out and organized it in conjunction with certain employees of Metro-Vickers–MacDonald, Cushny, and others whom I mentioned in the protocol of March 13, 1933.” Is that right?
THORNTON: Yes….
ROGINSKY: Further: “I plead guilty to the charge that I gave bribes to Russian engineers and technicians for concealing defects and discrepancies in the operation of the plant and equipment which had been supplied by us.” Did you make this deposition?
THORNTON: Yes, I did.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Gollancz, 1933, p. 147-151

THORNTON TRIES TO DENY HIS EARLIER CONFESSIONS BUT ADMITS THEY WERE FREELY GIVEN

VYSHINSKY: And moreover on March 19 when the question was specifically asked as to how he had made his depositions at the preliminary investigation at the OGPU he gave the following reply which I ask leave to read out. The statement was as follows:
“These testimonies were given by me wholly of my own free will without outside influence or pressure. The testimonies were given by me in the English language and were written in my own handwriting. The protocols of interrogations, first in Gussev’s, mine, and each other’s presence and then in Kutuzova’s, mine, and in each other’s presence that were shown to me during this interrogation, and in which I confessed facts about my spying activities and my connections with other persons, I have read. I can make no additional remarks about the records of these protocols. The protocols are taken down directly and are confirmed by my signature. The protocol was read by me and I confirmed its accuracy. 1933 (Signed) Leslie Thornton.”
VYSHINSKY: Do you confirm this?
THORNTON: No, it was written and I signed it.
VYSHINSKY: Do you confirm that you made it voluntarily without being influenced, without any pressure?
THORNTON: Yes.
VYSHINSKY: Everything that you wrote?

THORNTON: Yes.
VYSHINSKY: Then you signed it?
THORNTON: Yes, and now the court will examine it.
THE PRESIDENT: But why did you give such information? Was it only to take up everyone's time, the Court's and the Public Prosecutor's? Or did you have some special reason? What you are saying is absurd. You have been making depositions for three weeks so as to deny them now.
THORNTON: I merely–
THE PRESIDENT: Decided to provide work for the Court?
THORNTON: I did it because, as I have said, I was frightened.
THE PRESIDENT: How were you frightened? By whom were you frightened? Where and when were you frightened?
THORNTON: I was not frightened by arrest and by the consequences, but simply this way–
THE PRESIDENT: No, you give a straight reply so that it will be clear and plain to everybody. Who frightened you? When did they frighten you? In what room?
THORNTON: I want to speak through the interpreter.
THE PRESIDENT: When you find it difficult to reply you always resort to the aid of the interpreter; but, very well, you may.
THORNTON: No, I will speak in Russian. I was simply afraid, but of what I do not know myself.
VYSHINSKY: Let me ask you something else. I am interested in the circumstances in which you were questioned in the office of the Public Prosecutor by my assistant, Roginsky, in my presence. Were the facts which are set down here written down exactly as you told, or not?"
THORNTON: As I spoke. Yes, correctly.
VYSHINSKY: Nothing was distorted?
THORNTON: No, you did not change anything.
VYSHINSKY: But perhaps Roginsky did?
THORNTON: No.
VYSHINSKY: Perhaps the OGPU distorted it?
THORNTON: No, I signed it with my own hand….

VYSHINSKY: It is important to establish the facts. We will try conclusions later. At present it is important for me to confirm from the deposition which you made on March 19 that the facts which are here set down were really told by you, that there was no falsification and no juggling.
THORNTON: That is so.
VYSHINSKY: (speaking with great deliberation and looking Thornton straight in the eyes): The depositions which you made before were given quite freely and voluntarily, without any pressure or coercion. Understand you correctly?
THORNTON: (in a subdued voice, after a long pause): Correctly.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Gollancz, 1933, p. 154-157

THE USE OF TIBETAN DRUGS TO OBTAIN CONFESSIONS WAS ABSURD

… “Among Russian refugees it was then stated that the OGPU resorted to the use of certain potent drugs to compel its victims to make ‘confessions’ that suited the purpose of the Soviet Government.”
…”These drugs, it was explained (so the newspaper narrative proceeds–The Daily Mail), were unknown in the West; but they were prepared by Tibetans in the employ of the OGPU from herbs and were administered in the food of prisoners without their knowledge. The effect of such concoctions was totally to destroy the will power of those being questioned, and to place them entirely in the psychic power of their jailors, ready to assent to any suggestions.”
Of all the witless trash published in the course of the trial, nothing was quite so witless as this maudlin acceptance of the malicious fable of a handful of Russian refugees.
…Since also MacDonald never again departed from his plea of guilty, either the Tibetan drug must have been sufficiently potent to endure for a week or it must have been administered two or three times daily.
Further, if Thornton, during his stay in prison, made serious admissions because he too was a victim of the Tibetan drug, how was it that the same brilliantly successful treatment was not applied to Cushny and Gregory and Nordwall and last of all to Monkhouse himself, the chief representative of his firm in Moscow, whose “confessions” under the influence of this mysterious oriental herb would have been more important than those of all his colleagues combined? I leave the answer to the resourceful ingenuity of the Daily Mail.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Gollancz, 1933, p. 161-162

The defendants in the show trials had certainly not been drugged.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 129

THORNTON ADMITS IN DEPOSITION THAT SPYING WAS DONE BY BRITISH INTELLIGENCE AGENTS

Vyshinsky then picked up from his table a large open document which he held head high for all to see; and, leaving his seat and walking straight to Thornton at the witness stand, presented it to him with a theatrical flourish. “Take it please,” he said, standing face to face with Thornton, “and examine it carefully from beginning to end, and then we will have it read. Is it your deposition?”
Thornton’s nervousness was apparent. He looked at it with evident repugnance, thrust it away from him and replied curtly “Yes.”
VYSHINSKY: In your own hand?
THORNTON: Yes.
VYSHINSKY: Did you write it?
THORNTON: Yes.
VYSHINSKY: Now we will have it read in full, if necessary, in English first.
This is what he [Judge Martens] read in the deposition written and signed by Thornton.
“All our spying operations on the USSR territory are directed by the British intelligence Service, through their agent, Richards, who occupies the position of Managing Director of the Metropolitan-Vickers Electrical Export Co. Ltd.
…Spying operations on the USSR territory were directed by myself and Monkhouse, representatives of the above-mentioned British firm, who are contractors, by official agreement, to the Soviet Government, for the supply of turbines and electrical equipment

and the furnishing of technical aid agreements. On the instructions of Richards given to me to this end, British personnel were gradually drawn into the spying organization after their arrival on USSR territory and instructed as to the information required. During the whole period of our presence on USSR territory, from the total of British staff employed, 27 men were engaged in spying operations. Of the above, 15 men which included: Monkhouse, Thornton, MacDonald, Nordwall, [and others] were engaged in economic and political spying, also in the investigation of the defense and offense possibilities of the Soviet Union. The remaining 12 men who included the following: Cushny, Gregory, Richards, [and nine others] were engaged in political and economic spying.
On March 11, 1933, the following men were engaged in spying operations:
Nordwall–economic, political, defense and offense investigation.
Gregory–economic and political.
Thornton–economic, political, defense and offense investigation.
Monkhouse–economic, political, defense and offense investigation.
Cushny–economic and political.
[And others]
Facts above [about?] the spying activities of the above-mentioned men who were under my direction, I shall give in a further protocol." (Signed) Thornton

Like others in the Court I was dumbfounded. It seemed to me an incredible production. I could well understand why the Soviet authorities had not inserted it in the indictment but had saved it up as the bonne bouche of the trial.
It is not necessary for me to emphasize the serious nature and the full significance of the statement. Not only does Thornton's confession "present" as spies himself and 26 of his colleagues of the Metro-Vickers staff in Russia and thus expose them to the risk of capital punishment, but it implicates Mr. Richards, a director of the firm, and identifies him and them directly with the British Intelligence Service.
… This was manifestly the trump card the Soviet authorities were able to play in the trial. It created a profound impression in the Court. It created a great impression in all parts of the world to which the text was being dispatched within a few minutes of its recital.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Gollancz, 1933, p. 164-168

FIRST WITNESS DOLGOV SAYS THORNTON GAVE HIM 3000 RUBLES

Dolgov was the first witness called. He is the manager of the control department of Electro-Import, and he described at once the circumstances in which Thornton early in 1932 gave him the 3000 rubles.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 177

KOTLYAREVSKY & MACDONALD ADMIT THE LATTER PAID HIM FOR ESPIONAGE & WRECKING

Kotlyarevsky, a burly engineer of sullen manners who was in charge of the turbine department at Zuevka, was the next witness. He described how he and MacDonald got friendly because they were both fond of music and McDonald had a gramophone and very good records; and how, as they became more intimate, MacDonald suggested that he should obtain for him plans of the station building and pay no attention to defects in the

equipment, besides giving a false estimate of any breakdowns which might take place with the turbines. At MacDonald's instance he also wrecked a turbine by leaving a bolt in the air cap of the generator. For the information he supplied to McDonald he received in two sums a thousand rubles. McDonald freely admitted to the Court the accuracy of Kotlyarevsky's statements.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 179

LOBANOV WAS A COLD-BLOODED WRECKER AND TRAITOR WARRING AGAINST THE SU

Lobanov, the next witness, interested me more than any of the other Russian prisoners. I should describe him without hesitation as a deliberate cold-blooded wrecker. For the first time I saw before me in the flesh one of those "miscreants" about whom we have heard so much from the Soviets as traitors conducting actively a concealed war against the Soviet Union.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 179

THE COMMENTS OF GUSSEV, LOBANOV, ZORIN & OTHERS DEFINITELY PROVE THEIR GUILT

After hearing his evidence an Englishman who has lived in Moscow for the last 10 years said to me that he had never hitherto fully believed in the existence of saboteurs and wreckers in the sense of the charges established in the famous Ramzin trial. But Lobanov, he added, had convinced him of their actuality and had revealed the type. The same, I think, could be said of Gussev, a fortiori of Sukhoruchkin.
After listening to the evidence of Gussev, Lobanov, Sukhoruchkin and Zorin, I personally am no longer left in any doubt of the reality of the wrecking practices in Russia. One must reject altogether any suggestion that either Lobanov or Sukhoruchkin invented the details of their work in trying to put State property out of commission, or that they were agents-provocateurs. These men are convinced and enthusiastic anti-Sovietists.
Lobanov, a close-shaven, hatchet-faced individual, neatly dressed and wearing pince-nez, gave his evidence with extraordinary cynicism and with a glacial hostility to the Soviet regime which astonished the Court and which clearly was not the outcome of any GPU promptings or persuasions.
Later, in his turn, Sukhoruchkin, also another self-confessed anti-Sovietist, admitted six separate acts of wreckage at the Moscow Power Station, of which he was manager, with as much detachment, as Vyshinsky afterwards observed, as if he were at an academic meeting of professors, describing a number of wonderful scientific achievements.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 181-182

THE STORY OF THE TREASON OF ONE MAN, KONAR, SETS THE STANDARD AND SAYS IT ALL

The story behind these 35 executions [on the previous day 35 Russian officials accused of agricultural sabotage had been condemned to death by shooting by the Collegium of the OGPU; 22 to 10 years and 18 to 16 years imprisonment] was told me by a leading

Communist and by some well-informed foreigners in Moscow. It is a dramatic tale of almost unbelievable treachery. The central figure was a person named Konar, lately Vice-Commissar for Agriculture in the Soviet Union, who in that capacity had access to the meetings and minutes of the Council of Commissars when his chief was absent on leave or on business. In 1920, Konar had been expelled from the Party on the ground of his responsibility for the failure of the Soviet Government established in Polish Galicia during the Soviet-Polish war. But he managed to persuade Moscow that there had been a confusion of identities; and in the following year he went to live in Moscow with his brother, who also was a prominent member of the Communist Party.

The flat which he and his brother occupied became the center of the “true blue incorruptibles of the Kremlin policy,” and these men were on excellent terms with the highest officers in the State. Suddenly towards the end of last February, it was discovered that Konar was also on excellent terms with persons in the Polish Intelligence Service; and this discovery led to his arrest and the exposure of a long and successful career in espionage and sabotage.

If Konar had been content with his employment as a Polish spy he might have been alive today; but he rose to such distinction in the councils of the Soviet State that he decided to desert his Polish masters and to become a good Soviet citizen, in the belief that he would soon rise to very high office. Unfortunately, when information ceased to pass from him through the usual channels to the Polish Intelligence Service, an emissary was sent to Konar to ask the reason for this scandalous negligence. The angry conversation between Konar and the emissary from abroad was overheard and thus his secret was betrayed.

The GPU made an exhaustive investigation. They found that not only had this man been acting as a spy for 13 years but that with his associates he had struck at the most vital point in the Soviet programme by diminishing the food supplies and driving the peasants to ruin and hostility by deliberate mismanagement and sabotage of the grain collections.

I believe it was established that he had actually gained credit as a zealous administrator by shooting peasants whom he accused of having destroyed grain crops which in fact had been burnt upon his own secret orders.

In his position as Vice-Commissar for Agriculture he had control of hundreds of large tractors in Southern Russia; and one of his most successful methods of sabotage was to arrange for the oil taps of these tractors to be loosened on the night before the machines were to be worked, so that after they had been in service for an hour or two they “seized up” and were rendered useless.

The story goes that he was summoned by the GPU guards, but tried to bluster them away by threatening to ring up the Kremlin at once. When the guards showed him Stalin’s signature on the warrant, he buried his head in his hands and confessed everything.

This is in brief the true, if nightmare, story of an episode which has never appeared in the Press, except sketchily in the New York Times, to justify the executions admitted by the Soviets….

I asked a high Soviet official why his government had not the “nous” to publish a short statement setting forth the facts as soon as the British White Paper appeared. He merely shrugged his shoulders. I suppose the gesture meant that such a statement, even if it had appeared in the British Press, would have found no credence in a capitalist country riding on the crest of an anti-Bolshevik tidal wave.

Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Gollancz, 1933, p. 183-186

LOBANOV ADMITS NORDWALL RECRUITED HIM FOR EXTENSIVE WRECKING

At the witness stand Lobanov was the picture of complete self-possession and answered Vyshinsky's questions, in fact all questions, with distant calm. He explained to the Court that his anti-Soviet sentiments were due very largely to the capitalist associations of his family. His father had a flour mill and an oil refinery, and his brother had also rented a a flour mill. After he was appointed manager of the electrical operating department of the Ivanovo Power Station towards the end of 1930, he became acquainted with Nordwall.
"One fine morning," he said with something very like a yawn, "some time in February 1931, in my office, Nordwall, after a conversation on general topics, approached me with a proposal to carry on acts of wrecking at Ivanovo.
VYSHINSKY: Why did he make that proposal to you?
LOBANOV: He knew perfectly well by anti-Soviet sentiments.
VYSHINSKY: How did they express themselves?
LOBANOV: In utterances of dissatisfaction with the existing order, in all kinds of complaints of hardships in my personal life.

"After many talks of this kind," went on Lobanov, "Nordwall said, 'if you desire personal well-being, then let us pass from words to deeds.' That is just the way he said it. He told me it was necessary to hit at trifles so as not to get caught, but that these trifles should be such as to bring about heavy consequences. He pointed out that as a rule it was necessary to hit at the important equipment in order to pump out the foreign currency reserves of the Soviet Union and in this way to undermine its economic strength. It was necessary also, he said, to spread out these acts of diversion, to damage the equipment of Metro-Vickers as well as that of other firms, but that this should be done in such a way as to make it impossible to lay the blame on the firm."
Asked to define the concrete acts of wrecking which took place, Lobanov said it consisted of putting the motors of 10 grates out of service, disconnecting the house feeders, damaging the bearings of the feed pumps, clogging the bearings, causing short circuits, and burning out the motor of boiler No. 5.
But Lobanov had forgotten one thing. Vyshinsky asked him about the telephone connections.
LOBANOV: Ah! That's right, we interfered with the telephone connections. So it was.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Gollancz, 1933, p. 186-187

SUKHORUCHKIN DESCRIBES WHAT HE DID AS A WRECKER WORKING WITH THORNTON

Sukhoruchkin, whom I previously mentioned as a wrecker of the first class, was the central figure at the witness stand when the Court reassembled. He is a man of great ability, of high academic distinctions and up to the time of his arrest was chief of the operating department at the First Moscow Power Station, a very responsible position. All his evidence was more like a scientific lecture than the confessions of a man charged with offenses for which death was the maximum penalty.
Many of the technical descriptions and terms he used were clearly outside Vyshinsky's fairly comprehensive understanding; but he left no doubt in the minds of anybody as to the extensive nature of the six wrecking acts which he described with so much particularity.

One of his plans for putting out of order a section of the Power Station would have cut off the current, he said, to several important factories and barracks, to all the radio stations, and to the Kremlin itself. He drew up this plan in conjunction with Thornton, who remarked to him in the switch-board-room how easy the switchboard made it for an act of diversion to be carried out.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Gollancz, 1933, p. 193-194

KRASHENINNIKOV ADMITS HE ENGAGED IN WRECKING WHICH WAS TREASON

KRASHENINNIKOV: I began to conceal defects in the equipment. It all began from that moment.
VYSHINSKY: And how did it end?
KRASHENINNIKOV: It ended in my finding myself in the dock….
Krasheninnikov said his anti-Soviet feelings were modified somewhat when the Government sent him to a rest home. But he didn't stop wrecking….

KRASHENINNIKOV: Yes, I realized this. Such activity as mine should be considered as–
VYSHINSKY: Treason?
KRASHENINNIKOV: Treason.
VYSHINSKY: Which according to our laws is punished; you know how treason is punished by our law.
KRASHENINNIKOV (in a whisper): Yes, I know.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Gollancz, 1933, p. 195-198

ENGINEER ZORIN ADMITS HE ENGAGED IN SABOTAGE AND SCHEMING WITH THORNTON

The dismal tale of sabotage was continued by Zorin, senior engineer at Mosenergo and a lecturer and writer on technical engineering questions. His evidence was full of the now familiar talk of wrecking groups, to one of which he belonged.
ROGINSKY: "Who told you about this group?"
ZORIN: Engineer Thornton.
ROGINSKY: When did he tell you?
ZORIN: In November 1932.
ROGINSKY: Where did the talk take place?
ZORIN: In the offices of the firm…. From our previous conversations Thornton had gathered that as an anti-Sovietist I was a person whom it was easy to use and this is what happened in November 1932.
"I was to conceal the defects of the firm and cover-up the actions of the groups he had organized," stated Zorin.
ROGINSKY: Also to keep contact with the groups he had organized and to be a link between him and them?
ZORIN: Yes.

Answering Thornton's counsel, Zorin said money as well as his counter-revolutionary convictions played a part and his activities. But quite apart from Thornton he would have committed acts of wreckage.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 199

OLEINIK ADMITS ENGAGING IN MILITARY WRECKING & ESPIONAGE FOR THORNTON & MONKHOUSE

ROGINSKY: What wrecking work did you do?
OLEINIK: Concealing defects in the equipment, collecting information, and engineering breakdowns.
ROGINSKY: With whom in the office were you directly connected in this work?
OLEINIK: After Thornton was appointed chief installation engineer, I dealt only with him.
ROGINSKY: And before in 1929?
OLEINIK: With Monkhouse.

Both Monkhouse and Thornton, he said, instructed him to conceal all defects. The only instructions he received from Monkhouse were not to run the tests but to persuade the customers to delay the testing of the turbines, which could not stand the guaranteed steam pressure.

ROGINSKY: But what instructions did you receive from Thornton?
OLEINIK: All kinds of instructions. I had to gather information on the technical conditions of electric power stations, enlargements of stations and works, proposed orders, the sentiments of the masses, and the movement of troops and munitions.
ROGINSKY: You accepted the task?
OLEINIK: Yes.
ROGINSKY: Did you take any steps to carry it out?
OLEINIK: I partly carried it out….
VYSHINSKY: Did Thornton tell you to obtain information on the military work in the factories near Perm when you were sent there, or not?
OLEINIK: He not only gave instructions, but he came there himself.
VYSHINSKY (to Thornton): Were you there?
THORNTON: I was.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Gollancz, 1933, p. 202-204

KUTUZOVA SAYS SHE HEARD THORNTON & MONKHOUSE PLAN WRECKING & DIVERSION ACTS

She [Kutuzova] corroborated briefly what she had said before in the course of her interventions; that she was aware of the bribing of the Russian engineers and technicians for spying purposes. She knew, she said, that this work and the "wrecking activities and acts of diversion" were organized by Monkhouse and Thornton, because she had lived in one house with them for about four years. Her business was to transmit the money.
Though an involuntary accomplice she did not know how to put a stop to these things, because she was tied to Monkhouse and Thornton "organizationally." "Secondly," she said, "I had given my word and when I have given my word I keep it." The money spent on this work

was entered by Thornton in special books, which he took away with him to England in December 1932.
Thornton standing up in his seat and looking earnestly at Kutuzova at the witness stand, challenged her to cite details of the wrecking work about which he was alleged to have given instructions.
Kutuzova, looking steadfastly not in the direction of her friend and superior, but at the presiding judge, said, “I cannot give details, but I heard general conversations.”
THORNTON: Perhaps you will tell us which?
KUTUZOVA: I heard you, together with engineer Monkhouse, plan to damage the turbines at the Baku, Nizhny, and Zuevka Power Stations. I remember your explaining to me that if one throws a foreign object into a turbine–a rag, or a piece of wood–the turbine might blow through the roof.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Gollancz, 1933, p. 215-216

THORNTON & KOTLYAREVSKY ADMIT RUINING A GENERATOR WITH A BOLT

ROGINSKY (to Thornton): Was a bolt put into the generator at the Zuevka Power Station, or not?
THORNTON: Yes, but not into the turbine.
ROGINSKY (to Kotlyarevsky): Was it left there deliberately?
KOTLYAREVSKY: Yes.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 217

VYSHINSKY NOTES THAT THORNTON NEVER REJECTED HIS ORIGINAL TESTIMONY

All these questions led up to the Prosecutor’s comment that not on one of these dates, nor when he was subsequently examined for March 14 to April 1, had Thornton annulled his vital record of March 13.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 220

THORNTON REPEATEDLY SAYS HE WAS NOT PRESSURED OR TORTURED

VYSHINSKY: Here at this court when I examined you during the first days of the trial, did you declare that this record was written under pressure? Answer my question.
THORNTON: No, I didn’t.
VYSHINSKY: I put three questions to you: Was pressure brought to bear on you? You answered “No.”
THORNTON: I answered “No.”
VYSHINSKY: I asked you, Were you tortured? You answered “No.”
THORNTON: That is so.
VYSHINSKY: I asked you, Were you subjected to the third-degree? What did you answer?
THORNTON: “No.”
VYSHINSKY: And now what do you say?
THORNTON: I understood it to mean, was I tortured physically.

VYSHINSKY: Physical or moral torture is torture. I asked you who of the Englishmen in Moscow has taught you not to tell the truth?
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 221

WHEN ALL THE EVIDENCE IS CONSIDERED IT SHOWS THE ENGLISHMEN WERE CLEARLY GUILTY

And one must repeat that the evidence of Russians who admitted their guilt and implicated the six Englishmen would have been subjected in an English court to a far more penetrating scrutiny by counsel for the defense.
But when the large body of testimony is examined separately and as a whole; when the allegations and counter-allegations, the denials, the denunciations, the explanations, the full confessions, the partial admissions, and the documents are carefully sifted and looked at in their true relation to one another–I wonder how many people would accept as a final assessment Monkhouse's statement in Court that the case was a "frame-up," built solely on the evidence of terrorised prisoners. That was the attitude which the British government,… adopted from the beginning and from which it could not afterwards withdraw without losing face.
Yet, to most of us who were not utterly blinded by national prejudice, the frame-up theory as the trial proceeded looked more and more like a piece of hypocritical nonsense; and the futile attempts of The Times to discredit the hearing of the case by placing the word "trial" daily within inverted commas seemed a piece of childish stupidity that could not deceive for any length of time even the most devoted readers of that impartial organ of national opinion.
I look forward with a certain curiosity to the moment when some future editor of The Times, in making an historical allusion to the trial at Moscow of the Russian engineers and the Metro-Vickers employees, will tacitly acknowledge that it was something more than a theatrical farce by printing the sacred word without its setting of inverted commas.
I have thought it well to publish these numerous extracts of the actual evidence, not only because I think they are extremely interesting in themselves in showing the interplay between the various figures at the trial, but also because they are a corrective to the highly colored and necessarily imperfect accounts which were received in this country at the time of the trial.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Gollancz, 1933, p. 225-226

THERE WAS NO BULLYING OF DEFENDANTS AND THEY WERE SHOWN COURTESIES IN COURT

Though Thornton was severely questioned and had to bear the chief burden of the case, there was no bullying of the witnesses, they were not pressed beyond a reasonable point, and the presiding judge showed them little attentions such as allowing the crippled McDonald to be seated at the witness stand while other persons were being questioned.
One should bear in mind these points in reflecting that outside Russia in some sections of the Press the trial scenes were represented as something very much like a lunatic bear-garden.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 227

VYSHINSKY ATTACKS THORNTON FOR NOT SHOWING HOW HE WAS BROWBEATEN & TRICKED

I recall an illustration at the close of Thornton's evidence. Thornton, speaking in English, had complained that he was tired and browbeaten, and that, when told that "everything would be all right," if he confessed, had then signed the document implicating himself and others. Upon that statement Vyshinsky became red in the face with indignation, and working his right arm up and down like a steam hammer and for the first and only time pitching his voice high, demanded to know in a torrent of words why Thornton had failed to use the numerous opportunities available before the trial to challenge a statement written in his own words, signed by his own hand, as he had admitted in Court, without any exercise of methods known as the third-degree.

Thornton, said Vyshinsky did not like the document in which he revealed his network of spies guided by the British Intelligence Service through its agent, Richards, who occupied the position of managing director in Metro-Vickers. He tried to discredit what he had written by talking about "moral pressure." "But why, Thornton," asks Vyshinsky with growing intensity of expression, "did you not tell in detail what this moral pressure was? How was that moral pressure brought to bear upon you? You said 'I was told that if I gave correct information it would be all right.' I will not hesitate to say the same thing now in this hall, in the hearing of the whole world; it will be better if you give correct information than if you say what is untrue. You said, 'I was told that if I gave other information I should be useless both to England and in the USSR.'" Then, gazing with a penetrating glance at the unhappy Thornton, who sat with his head resting wearily on his right hand, Vyshinsky delivered himself of the celebrated passage which, with slight verbal variations, has since appeared in every important newspaper in the civilized world.

"Citizen Thornton," he exclaimed, "you are already useless both here and there, because as a spy you have proved your utter bankruptcy, because 24 hours after your arrest you betrayed your agents and did it because you are a coward and a traitor by nature, so that even your own British spying organization can no longer trust you.

"You have fulfilled your duty neither to our country, because you betrayed your trust, nor to the institution which had confided its secrets to you. You say your deposition of March 13 contains an untruth. Let us suppose it does. But have you considered that when you wrote what you did on March 13 you were playing with the heads of your own comrades?

"Let it remain on your conscience. So far as this country is concerned your only use would be to manure the soil of our Soviet fields."

Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Gollancz, 1933, p. 233-234

QUESTIONING WAS SPEEDED UP FOR THE BRITISH BUT NOT FOR THE RUSSIAN DEFENDANTS

Replying to what he described as Monkhouse's unsuccessful attempt, at the instigation of others, to "discredit our preliminary investigation" by complaining about long hours of questioning, Vyshinsky argued that the British government could not have it both ways, and that in order to meet the urgently expressed desire of the British Embassy the Soviet authorities had worked at high pressure to speed up the proceedings. Under normal conditions examination of Nordwall and Monkhouse would have taken several weeks. It was in fact accomplished in three days.

No such opportunities awaited the counsel defending the accused Russians. All they could do for those who had admitted their guilt was to plead for mercy and to talk of their remorse and their anxiety to work in the future as true citizens for the glory of the Soviet Union. In the case of Gussev and others it was urged, in mitigation, that they had found it impossible to escape the clutches of “these English gentlemen.”
“Simple trustful old Zivert,” said lawyer Pines, with a tear in his voice too, did not even suspect “that the principal subject he was being taught in the study where Thornton helped him in his technical difficulties was the theory and practice of espionage and wrecking.”
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Gollancz, 1933, p. 245-246

MACDONALD’S LAWYER SAYS HE WAS TAKEN IN BY GUSSEV

Lawyer Smirnov, counsel for McDonald, made an earnest appeal for the only Englishman who had pleaded guilty to be given another chance to “go honest.” McDonald, he said, had been led astray by Gussev and was a tool of his bosses and should not be put on the same level as Thornton and Monkhouse.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 247

LAWYERS FOR THE DEFENSE GAVE A GOOD, STRONG DEFENSE WITH ZEAL AND EFFICIENCY

All the members of the “Collegium of Defense” discharged their duties with much greater zeal and efficiency than I had been led to suppose possible. I had been told that they would not dare to make a serious attempt to tear down the fabric of evidence or even to make a strong show of opposition. It was breathed into my ear that any counsel who, in the enthusiasm of the moment, allowed his zeal to outrun his discretion might soon disappear from the Collegium of Defense and perhaps be arrested on some pretext and shot.
If the whisper had a few grains of truth in it–and I rather think it had no more–then some of the defending counsel, especially Lidov, ran considerable risk. I do not pretend that those acting for the five men who pleaded not guilty gave a first-class exhibition of aggressive court advocacy.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 249

RUSSIANS WHO PLED GUILTY ASKED FOR MERCY AND PROMISED LOYALTY

One after another in a melancholy procession the Russians who had pleaded guilty came from the dock to the witness stand before the judges to ask for merciful consideration and pledge their loyalty in the future to the Soviet state.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 252

MONKHOUSE & NORDWALL SAID THEY WERE TREATED FAIRLY AND CONSIDERATELY IN PRISON

He [Monkhouse] admitted that he had been shown consideration in prison.

… Nordwall, in protesting his innocence, expressed appreciation of the fairness with which he had been treated in prison by the OGPU and said he was still a friend of the Soviet Union.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 254

US BUSINESSMEN SAID REPEATEDLY THEY KNEW THE BRITISH USED SPIES

… The remark made to me by an American businessmen, and repeated to me in different forms many times by foreign diplomats and others, was: “Are you surprised that we are all laughing at your Government’s attempt to make us believe that it was a sheer impossibility for Englishmen to play the part of spies in Soviet Russia or elsewhere? We know perfectly well that your Government employs spies wherever it can, as other governments employ them, and that, like other Governments, it must employ them in Russia if it employs them anywhere at all. The Metro-Vickers men may be as blameless as new-born babes; but don’t ask me to pretend that there exists a single foreign firm which does business in Russia without transmitting secret information to its own Government.”
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 257

DELIBERATIONS OF THE RUSSIAN JUDGES WAS SECRET AND USED STRICT GUIDELINES

Over a tumbler of tea a Russian lawyer, who was acting as interpreter for a French newspaper correspondent, explained to me the subsequent judicial procedure as required by Soviet law. While the judges were considering their verdict, he said, they were not allowed even a momentary contact with any other person. No official, shorthand writer, typist, not even a waiter with refreshments, was permitted inside the deliberating chamber; even if their discussions lasted 24 hours they must remain in complete isolation. The judgment must be set down by the President in his own handwriting and signed by himself and at least one of his colleagues. If only one signature was appended, or if there was the smallest infringement of the imposed conditions, the judgment would be invalid
“Would there be a retrial?” I asked in genuine alarm at that ghastly prospect. The Russian lawyer did not seem to know; but the suggestion struck him with so much dismay that he ordered at once three more tumblerfuls of tea.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 257

THE LENIENCY OF THE SENTENCES SHOCKED THE SPECTATORS AND THE PRISONERS

The mildness of the sentences comes as a genuine surprise to all the spectators; and, judging by their strikingly evident expressions of relief, to the prisoners as well.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 262

STRANG VISITED THE PRISONERS, FOUND THEM IN COMFORTABLE QUARTERS & LOOKING WELL

… And still they remained in prison, visited now and again by the watchful Mr. Strang, who found that they were in relatively comfortable quarters, looked well and had no complaints to make about the treatment they were receiving.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 265

BRITISH THOUGHT DEFENDANTS WOULD BE SHOT BUT NO RECORD OF FOREIGNERS BEING SHOT

After the arrests the British public had been induced to believe that the accused men might be “shot without trial,” though, so far as I am aware, there is no instance on record of the shooting in Russia of foreign experts, with or without trial. [Said in early 1933]
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 267

RETALIATION OF THE BRITISH GOVT FOR THE VICKERS TRIAL WAS STUPID AND EXCESSIVE

These are the realities. Instead of facing them and considering them for the good of its own people in a spirit of cool common sense, the [British] Government of the day has declared economic war to the knife upon one of its greatest potential customers because a few Englishmen were judged to be spies and “wreckers” in a properly constituted Court of Justice and mildly punished. That action by a British Government was, in my judgment, a masterpiece of iimbecility unparalleled in the political annals of our time.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 287

HISTORY OF THE LENIENT SENTENCES OF THE TRIALS OF THE 20’S AND EARLY 30’S.

I went over the various precedents in my mind. The great trials of the Revolution had never ended in executions. The one in which the Socialist Revolutionary Party had been involved in 1922 had produced a conditional death sentence at most, although the accused had made civil war against the State and fired on Lenin. The trial of the Shakhty engineers, accused of sabotage, had, it is true, sent a few men to their deaths, but only when they had been found guilty of espionage. The prisoners in the Ramzin affair [the Industrial Party trial], who had pleaded guilty of plotting with the French General Staff to bring about armed intervention in Russia, had been pardoned and were now reinstated. The Social Democrats who had figured in the next big case, and on similar charges, had gotten off with long terms of imprisonment. The Thornton trial [Metro-Vickers trial] in 1933– a suspicious business (I had been in court at the time)–produced a crop of very mild punishments.
Barmine, Alexandre. Memoirs of a Soviet Diplomat. London: L. Dickson limited,1938, p. 315

… In March 1931 a number of ex-Menshevik leaders were publicly tried and sentenced to prison for ‘wrecking’ and being counter-revolutionaries. By mid-1931, however, the degree of non-cooperation and active sabotage by the technical intelligentsia had lessened considerably, and, in response, the state’s attitude was relaxed, insofar as the number of those arrested and tried for such activities decreased after spring 1931, while those convicted now received more lenient sentences.

Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 226

The standard sentence for most of those arrested for counter-revolutionary activities in the 1936-38 period, however, was 5 to 10 years hard labor.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 242

[At the closed joint meeting of the ECCI party organization and the ECCI Komsomol organization on 28 December 1934]
MAGYAR [Member of the Hungarian Communist Party who supported the New Opposition in 1925]:
Kotelnikov is not quite correct when he says that I returned to the party. I was not expelled from the party; the party was extremely lenient toward me. I received an extremely mild party reprimand for my active participation in the Zinovievite, anti-Soviet, anti-party counterrevolutionary group."
Chase, William J., Enemies Within the Gates?, translated by Vadim A. Staklo, New Haven: Yale University Press, c2001, p. 64

NOT JUST RUSSIANS CONFESSED AT THE TRIALS

The idea that only Russians confessed in such circumstances is quite erroneous–the British engineers in the Metro Vickers trial long ago proved that.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 165

SENTENCES IN THE SOCIAL-REVOLUTIONARY/MENSHEVIK TRIAL OF 1922 ARE LENIENT

The verdict [of the SR and Menshevik trial], announced on August 7, 1922, came as no surprise, since Lenin had broadly hinted at what to expect…. Walter Duranty reported to the New York Times on July 23 that the proceedings had demonstrated the "truth" of the charges, that the condemnation of the majority of the defendants was "certain," and that "several death sentences will be carried out." The accused were sentenced under articles 57 through 60 of the Criminal Code. Fourteen were condemned to death, but three who had collaborated with the prosecution received pardons. Defendants who had turned state's evidence were also pardoned. Those in the first group admitted to nothing: they refused to stand up when the judges entered to announce the verdict, for which they were expelled (in the words of Duranty) "from their own funeral."
…and although the SRs refused to petition for pardon, the judges announced a stay of execution.
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 408

SEVERAL EARLY SABOTAGE TRIALS LISTED

The Shakti trial of wreckers in 1928 was the forerunner of events which soon followed one another in rapid sequence. Who were the wreckers? They were counter-revolutionaries intent on fomenting revolt by creating an impression of "Bolshevik inefficiency" through the derailment of train's and the blowing up of factories. In 1930 a group of professional engineers known as "The Industrial Party" were put on trial for sabotage of industrial

construction. 1931 was noticeable for the Trial of the Mensheviks on charges of counter-revolutionary activity. In 1933 came the famous trial of the Metro — Vickers engineers who had become involved in conspiracies to impede construction.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 162

KIROV 'S KILLING CHANGED ALL

The assassination of Kirov in early December, 1934 fell like a bomb into this dream of security.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 128

The murder of Kirov at Leningrad in December 1934 was a turning point in Soviet history, if not in the history of Europe and the world.
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, Inc., 1941, p. 21

Kirov had been Stalin's man from the start, and Stalin had made him party chief in Leningrad to counteract the influence of the opposition leaders….
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, Inc., 1941, p. 25

KIROV'S KILLING WAS FIRST SINCE 1918

Kirov's assassination by Nikolaev was the first murder of a leading member of the party in Soviet Russia since Uritsky had been killed in 1918.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 162

PRIOR TO KIROV KILLING THERE WAS NO CRACKDOWN

Prior to this tragic finale [the decision of the Opposition to use terror and sabotage], Stalin and his colleagues displayed no blood thirsty passion to exterminate opponents, but on the contrary, acted with remarkable patience and toleration in an effort to conciliate and reconvert the dissenters.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 198

POLITBURO CHOSE KIROV AS STALIN'S SUCCESSOR

Kirov, one of Stalin's closest collaborators, was regarded at the time as his probable successor. After the last of the old Bolsheviks, Rykov and Bukharin, had been thrown overboard by the Politburo, the party leaders decided that steps ought to be taken without delay to make sure that in the event of Stalin's sudden death there should be no doubt as to who should succeed him. There must not be another struggle for power as after Lenin's death. The members of the Politburo and the most influential secretaries of provincial party organizations accordingly agreed upon the choice of Kirov.
This assassination [of Kirov] was thus a heavy blow for Stalin and the party leadership….
Nothing had so affected Stalin as this news since the death of his wife….

Stalin was no friend of Yagoda, and did not trust the secret police; and he broke into one of his most fearful outbursts of rage [over the killing of Kirov].
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 284

LENINGRAD SECRET POLICE PROSECUTED FOR NEGLECT

The responsible leaders of the Leningrad secret police were, of course, dismissed and prosecuted for neglect of their duties; they were sentenced to three years imprisonment.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 286

Finally, several high officers of the Leningrad GPU were charged with “neglect of duty” and sentenced, with surprising mildness, to two or three years.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 279

The trial of the chiefs of the Leningrad section of the People’s Commissariat for Home Affairs took place in even greater secrecy. It was held, however, in a different atmosphere. The charges were more mildly formulated. The accused admitted their guilt, but blamed it on the orders that had been issued by Kirov. The sentences were astonishingly mild, especially when it is recalled how severely mere negligence in the guarding of the persons of our “leaders” is usually punished. Balzevich, who was responsible for the guard service at Smolny, was charged only with “criminal negligence” in the exercise of his official duties, and sentenced to 10 years in a concentration camp. The chiefs of the Leningrad section of the Commissariat for Home Affairs and their deputies received only two or three-year sentences, and were, at the same time, given responsible posts in the administration of the concentration camp to which they were sent. Actually, therefore, the punishment meant nothing more than a reduction in rank.
Nicolaevsky, Boris. Power and the Soviet Elite; “The letter of an Old Bolshevik.” New York: Praeger, 1965, p. 53

DESCRIPTION OF 4 MAIN GROUPS AGAINST STALIN AND WHO KILLED KIROV

Nearly a year passed before it was discovered who had been at the back of the outrage. Slowly the tangle of the conspiracy was unraveled, and it was found that the assassination had been the work of the opposition within the party. Neither Stalin nor the other members of the Politburo had dreamt for a moment of this: the opposition had been regarded as politically dead. Its members had publicly recanted all their earlier views, admitted the error of their activities, sought readmission to the party, and been given subordinate posts.
The trials revealed the political background of the assassination and of a good many other political events. Stalin had had to deal in succession with three groups of opponents– Trotsky’s extremist group, the Left wing opposition led by Zinoviev, and a Right-wing opposition under Bukharin. In the past those three groups had been mutually hostile, but now that they had lost influence they had begun to come together. Before long they had united. During the first five-year plan, when Stalin seemed to be leading Russia to disaster, the three groups set up in great secrecy the so-called Right-Left Block.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 287

Spied on and smelt out as it was this Right-Left coalition was, of course, incapable of any real political work….and under Russian conditions…the conspirators were bound inevitably to come sooner or later to the conclusion that there was only one road to their end: the physical extermination of Stalin and his entourage. If they could not reach Stalin himself, the next best thing seemed to be to get rid first of his intended successor.
Such were broadly the plan and course of this conspiracy. Later there began a military conspiracy. Various marshals, generals, and senior officers, who in the past had been supporters of Trotsky, Bukharin, or Zinoviev, or who later had come to regard Stalin's policy as dangerous, came together in a fourth group, planning a military rising.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 288

FIRST GROUP OF CONSPIRATORS DISCOVERED WERE ZINOVIEV AND KAMENEV

The first victims were Zinoviev and Kamenev. The traces had at last been discovered that led from the assassination to the Zinoviev group.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 289

NIKOLAYEV SYMPATHIZED WITH TROTSKY AND KILLED KIROV

On December 1, 1934, a young Communist named Nikolayev, politely requested an interview with the Leningrad Party chief. Kirov apparently imagined his subordinate had some personal trouble to discuss and admitted him to his private office. Without a word, Nikolayev produced a revolver and Kirov fell with a bullet between his eyes.
At first the incident was thought to be the work of Czarist plotters, until the secret police began to check back along Nikolayev's career. From a remarkable diary, in which he had recorded his mental reflections over a period of several years, it became evident that the assassin was one of those young Communist students in whose support Trotsky had so much faith. As a result of the ex-War Commissar's attacks on the alleged "incompetence of the Old Bolsheviks," coupled with subtle flattery of the student youth, Nikolayev came to regard himself as a potential leader of the Russian millions, prevented from taking his rightful place by the machinations of the older Party heads….
Early in 1935, Henry Yagoda, chief of the GPU placed full details of the crime before his chief, demonstrating beyond doubt that the general ideas of the Trotskyist Opposition had been the cause of Nikolayev's deed and also that Zinoviev and Kamenev had actually been aware that some such murder was being planned.
In face of overwhelming evidence, Stalin hesitated no longer. Zinoviev, Kamenev and 95 other responsible leaders of the Opposition were brought from prison or from the subordinate positions they had occupied since their last betrayal, and put on trial on charges of moral responsibility for the murder of Kirov….
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 98

… the assassination of Kirov proved the stupidity of part of the opposition…. Nikolayev had merely carried out the decision of others. Kotolynov, another man who was inculpated, was also merely a subordinate; he had given Nikolayev his instructions, but neither of them was an organizer.

Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 242

SCHEMERS ZINOVIEV AND KAMENEV SHIFTED BLAME TO TROTSKY FOR KILLING KIROV

Once again the schemers saved their skins by shifting the blame to the absent Trotsky and by swearing solemnly to cease all future activity against the government. For the fourth time Stalin accepted their recantation with a magnanimity that must have seemed misplaced to the millions of Russian citizens, who vociferously demanded the execution of the traitors. Smiling secretly, the accused returned to their places of exile to resume the old game of waiting for a more suitable chance to strike. Surely some such opportunity would arise; perhaps the next Nikolayev would succeed in killing the hated general secretary and so prepare their way back to power.

For a further year the scheming continued uninterrupted, but in August 1936 Yagoda announced the completion of his investigation and disclosed full proof of new and even more despicable treason. Even Stalin's patience was exhausted. Zinoviev and Kamenev were brought from their confinement and confronted with the evidence contained in the GPU dossiers. As usual, the two admitted the charges and threw themselves on Stalin's mercy, which had saved them on so many previous occasions.

In the interval Stalin had been forced to listen to the arguments of Yagoda, who had none of his Chief's reverence for the "old associates of Lenin." To continue to pardon such perjured liars was, in Yagoda eyes, not strength but blind sentimentality and would assuredly lead to more plots and more assassinations of indispensable leaders.

As proof of the real worth of the repeated servilities and confessions, the GPU presented extracts from the celebrated "Letter of the old Bolshevik." This document, comprising some 200 pages of minute handwriting, was intercepted by the police in transit from its author, an exiled Oppositionist to sympathizers in Moscow. In one remarkable passage the writer deals with the confessions and the promises of future loyalty, in a manner illustrative of the moral and physical degradation to which the enemies of Stalin had descended….

With such materials to his hand, Yagoda convinced Stalin that an example must be made of the wretched Zinoviev and Kamenev as a deterrent to their supporters.

Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 99

PRIOR TO KIROV SHOOTING ARRESTS AND TRIALS ONLY USED FOR ANTI-SOVIET ACTS

Before the [Kirov] murder, the Cheka rarely resorted to administrative methods for dealing with people. By administrative methods, I mean arrest and trial. Such methods were used only in cases involving activities of an overtly anti-Soviet character. For example, we had always tried to deal with work stoppages and strikes in Moscow by going to the barracks or factories and explaining to the workers that we had to raise production quotas in order to catch up with our enemies…. If certain individuals refused to adapt themselves to the necessary conditions, they would be openly denounced by the party. But we almost always stopped short of using administrative methods against them.

All that suddenly changed after Kirov's murder. Redens told me he had received instructions to "purge" Moscow. Moscow unquestionably needed a purgative. It was constipated with many undesirable elements–nonworkers, parasites, and profiteers.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 78

ZINOVIEV CONFESSED TO PLANNING KIROV'S MURDER

The evidence brought out at the trials seemed almost fantastic–yet all confessed. Zinoviev in his confession frankly stated, "I plead guilty to having been the principal organizer of the murder of Kirov."
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 29

[July 29th, 1936 secret Central Committee letter concerning the terroristic activity of the Trotskyist-Zinovievist counter-revolutionary bloc]
On the basis of new materials gathered by the NKVD in 1936, it can be considered an established fact that Zinoviev and Kamenev were not only the fomenters of terroristic activity against the leaders of our party and government but also the authors of direct instructions regarding the murder of Kirov as well as preparations for attempts on the lives of other leaders of our party and, first and foremost, on the life of Comrade Stalin….
Similarly, it can be considered an established fact that Zinovievists carried out their terroristic practices in a solid bloc with Trotsky and Trotskyists.
THE FACTS
1. During 1936, after the murder of Kirov, a host of terroristic groups made up of Trotskyists and Zinovievists has been exposed by organs of the NKVD in Moscow, Leningrad, Gorky, Minsk, Kiev, Baku, and other cities.
The overwhelming majority of members of these terroristic groups admitted under investigation that they considered the preparation of terroristic acts against the leaders of the party and government to be their fundamental task.
2. The Trotskyist and Zinovievist groups that have been exposed and all of their terroristic activity in the USSR have been led by the Trotskyist and Zinovievist bloc.
The bloc consisting of the Trotskyist group and the Zinovievist-Kamenevist group was formed at the end of 1932 after negotiations carried out among leaders of counter-revolutionary groups. As a result, a united center came into being made up of the Zinoviev camp (Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bakaev, Yevdokimov, Kuklin) and the Trotsky camp (Smirnov, Mrachkovsky, and Ter-Vaganian)….
So, for instance, Zinoviev, when interrogated in connection with the exposure of terroristic groups, admitted the following at the investigation conducted on July 23-25, 1936:
"I was indeed a member of the united Trotskyist-Zinovievist center organized in 1932.
"The Trotskyist-Zinovievist center considered as its chief task the murder of leaders of the All-Union Communist Party and, first and foremost, the murder of Stalin and Kirov. The center was connected with Trotsky through its members Smirnov and Mrachkovsky. Direct instructions from Trotsky for the preparation of Stalin's murder were received by Smirnov."
3. Kirov was killed in accordance with the decision of the united center of the Trotskyist-Zinovievist bloc.
The entire practical work of organizing the assassination attempt was placed on the shoulders of Bakaev, member of the united center. To assist Bakaev, the center assigned

Karev, the notorious Zinovievist working in Leningrad, who was personally closely connected with Zinoviev.
As a result of the decision of the united center, several Trotskyist and Zinovievist terroristic groups were organized in Leningrad, including the Rumyantsev-Katalynov-Nikolaev group, which committed the murder of Kirov.
As for the fact that the murder of Kirov was committed in accordance with the decision of the united Trotskyist-Zinovievist center, this has been attested to at the investigation by the majority of the active members of the terroristic groups, including Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bakaev, Karev, and others.
Thus, for example, Zinoviev testified as follows at the investigation:
"I also confess that Bakaev and Karev, members of the organization, were entrusted by me, in the name of the united center, with the organization of terroristic acts against Stalin in Moscow and Kirov in Leningrad. These instructions by me were given in the fall of 1932." (Zinoviev. Minutes of the interrogation of July 23-25, 1936)
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 251-252

4. The united center of the Trotskyist-Zinovievist counter-revolutionary bloc considered as its fundamental and primary task the murder of Comrades Stalin, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Kirov, Ordzhonikidze, Zhdanov, Kosior, and Postyshev. [Zinoviev did not say this]
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 252

His [Zinoviev] confession was complete, involving him not only in the Zinovievite terrorist groups, but also with M. Lurye, allegedly sent by Trotsky. He invoked Tomsky's name unambiguously, and also named Smilga, the veteran member of Lenin's Central Committee who had led the Baltic Fleet in the seizure of power. He asserted that he was in constant communication with Smirnov, adding:
"… In this situation I had meetings with Smirnov who has accused me here of frequently telling untruths. Yes, I often told untruths. I started doing that from the moment I began fighting the Bolshevik Party. Insofar as Smirnov took the road of fighting the Party, he too is telling untruths. But it seems, the difference between him and myself is that I have decided firmly and irrevocably to tell at this last moment the truth, whereas he, it seems, has adopted a different decision."
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 96

For example, Zinoviev, who was examined in connection with the unmasked terrorist groupings, admitted the following during the July 23-25, 1936 interrogation:
"I definitely was a member of the united Trotskyite-Zinovievite center organized in 1932. 'The Trotskyite-Zinovievite center set as its principal task the killing of the communist party leaders, primarily comrades Stalin and Kirov. Center members, Smirnov and Mrachkovsky, served as the connection with Trotsky who gave direct instructions to Smirnov to prepare to kill Stalin.' (Zinoviev, Record of Interrogation, July 23-25, 1936)
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 170

3. Kirov was murdered by a decision of the united center of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite bloc. All the practical work of organizing the assassination was in the hands of united center

member, Bakaev. To assist Bakaev, the center picked out the prominent Zinovievite, Karev, who was working in Leningrad and had close personal connections with Zinoviev.
As a result of the decision of the united center, several Trotskyite and Zinovievite terrorist groups were organized in Leningrad, including the Rumyantzev-Katalynov-Nikolayev group which carried out the killing of Kirov.
In the investigation the majority of the active participants in the terrorist groups, including Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bakayev, Karev, and others, testified that Kirov was killed by a decision of the united Trotskyite-Zinoviev center.
For example, Zinoviev testified as follows under examination:
"I also admit to have entrusted the organization's members, Bakayev and Karev, in the name of the united center, with the organization of terrorist acts against Stalin in Moscow and Kirov in Leningrad.
I assigned this mission in Ilinsk in the autumn of 1932."
(Zinoviev, Record of Interrogation, July 23-25, 1936)
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 172

NO EVIDENCE STALIN KILLED KIROV

…Beginning in the 1980s other Western and Soviet historians also questioned the Stalin complicity theory [in the Kirov murder], the origins of the story, and Stalin's motive and opportunity, as well as investigating the circumstances surrounding the event. They noted that the sources for the theory derived originally from memoirists, mostly Cold War-era Soviet defectors, whose information was second- and thirdhand and who were in all cases far removed from the event. These writers had generated a huge and sensational literature that largely repeated and echoed itself while providing few verifiable facts, and which sometimes seemed primarily designed to enhance the status and importance of the author. Later historians noted that despite at least two official Soviet investigations and the high-level political advantages of accusing Stalin in the Khrushchev years, even the most anti-Stalin Soviet administrations had never accused Stalin of the crime,…
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 143

…In fact, Kirov seems to have been a staunch Stalinist….
The question of Leningrad police complicity also seems murky. Recent evidence discounts the alleged connections between them and the assassin. One implicated NKVD official was not even in the city during the months he was supposed to have groomed the assassin. It is true that many Leningrad police officials and party leaders were executed in the terror after the assassination, but so were hundreds of thousands of others. There is no compelling reason to believe that they were killed "to cover the tracks" of the Kirov assassination, as Khrushchev put it. Moreover, they were left alive and free to talk for three years following the crime. Some historians have found it unlikely that Stalin would have used these agents to arrange the killing and then given them so much opportunity to betray the plot.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 144

Yagoda (through whom Stalin presumably worked to kill Kirov) was produced in open court and in front of the world press before his execution in 1938. Knowing that he was to be shot in any event, he could have brought Stalin's entire house of cards down with a single remark

about the Kirov killing. Again, such a risk would appear to be unacceptable for a complicit Stalin.
The Stalinists seemed unprepared for the assassination and panicked by it.

Khrushchov hinted that Stalin had Kirov killed. There are some who still believe that story. The seeds of suspicion were planted. A commission was set up in 1956. Some 12 persons, from various backgrounds, looked through a welter of documents but found nothing incriminating Stalin. But these results have never been published…. The commission concluded that Stalin was not implicated in Kirov's assassination. Khrushchev refused to have the findings published since they didn't serve his purpose.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 353

As to Khrushchev's charges, there are no documents implicating Stalin or NKVD personnel in Kirov's murder.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 53

There is no evidence that Stalin ordered the murder of Kirov to eliminate him as a rival center of power;…
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 55

I'll tell you later how shattered he was by the death of both my mother and Kirov. Maybe he never trusted people very much, but after their deaths he stopped trusting them at all.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 77

Kirov spent his last summer, that of 1934, with us as in previous years. Then, in December, Nikolayev shot him. Wouldn't it be more logical to link his killing with the name of Beria than with that of my father, as is done by transparent hints today?
I'll never believe my father was involved in this particular death. Kirov was closer to him than the Svanidzes, the Redensest, his other relatives, or most of his other colleagues. Kirov was close to my father and my father needed him. I remember when we got the awful news that Kirov was dead, and how shaken everybody was.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 139

Whether or not Yagoda was then trying to sow seeds of suspicion in Stalin's mind, the fact remains that Stalin was deeply affected by Kirov's death.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 212

An extensive review of the evidence carried out in 1990 at the behest of Gorbachev's advisor Yakovlev does not implicate Stalin [in the murder of Kirov]. Another explanation for Stalin's assault on party cadres was the rumor that the party faithful at the 17th Party Congress in 1934 had not voted overwhelmingly to elect Stalin to the party's central committee. The documents provided here show this not to be the case,…
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 4

The question of who planned the murder of Kirov and why he was killed has remained one of the great mysteries of Soviet history. Stalin ordered an immediate investigation and traveled to Leningrad to direct the interrogations personally…. [Some] gossip on the street in

Leningrad linked Stalin with the killing…. Nonetheless, Stalin's guilt has never been proven, although the case has been revisited at the highest levels of the Soviet leadership several times since the death of Stalin. Khrushchev, in his secret speech to the 20th Party Congress in 1956, alleged that Stalin was responsible for Kirov's murder, and several commissions were appointed to sift the evidence in the following years. Their conclusion was that there was no conspiracy, that Nikolayev, a disgruntled and unstable party member, had acted alone:. Another Central Committee commission was appointed under Gorbachev to investigate the affair, again, the direct hand of Stalin was not found,…
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 69

Affidavit
On Feb. 17, 1965, we (Klimov, Baturin, Zanaraev, Kuzmin) the undersigned interviewed Comrade Vlasik, the former chief of Stalin's personal bodyguard. During the interview Comrade Vlasik was very reticent and hesitant to talk….
As Comrade Vlasik described it, Stalin and Kirov had a friendly relationship. When Kirov came to Moscow, he would always go to Stalin's home and would often send him fresh fish and game from Leningrad. Vlasik also informed us that he personally never knew of anything and hadn't heard anything from anyone else which would suggest that relations between Stalin and Kirov were anything but friendly….
Comrade Vlasik refused to answer when we asked him whether he knew anything about the circumstances of Kirov's murder. He was deeply upset by the talk that Kirov's murder had been arranged by Stalin. As Comrade Vlasik put it, such rumors were completely groundless. Although he considers himself one of Stalin's victims, having been twice fired from his job and placed under arrest in 1952, he, as a person who was in close contact with Stalin and knew him personally for many years, refuses to entertain the notion that Stalin had anything to do with this crime….
In his recollections of Stalin, Molotov, and Voroshilov's trip to Leningrad after December 1, 1934, he said that after Stalin received the news about the auto accident and the death of Operations Commissar Borisov, Stalin became visibly upset in Molotov's presence and expressed extreme dissatisfaction with the secret policemen who were unable to get Borisov to Smolny safely.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 77

Statement by Vlasik
With respect to the questions posed to me, I can provide the following information:
… The relationship between Stalin and Kirov was a friendly one. Whenever Kirov came to Moscow, he would always stay with Stalin in his apartment in the Kremlin or at his dacha and would even go to Sochi for two or three days if Stalin was vacationing there.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 78

It is widely asserted that Stalin conspired in the assassination of Kirov in December 1934. Yet the evidence for Stalin's complicity is complicated and at least secondhand. In fact, if one traces the assertion that Stalin killed Kirov to its origins, one finds that, before the Cold War, no serious authority argued that Stalin was behind the assassination. The KGB defector

Orlov was the first to make such a claim in his dubious 1953 account…and it has since been widely accepted in Western academic and Soviet dissidents circles.
Equally interesting is a list of those who did not believe Stalin organized the crime. Neither Nicolaevsky [in his Letter of an Old Bolshevik in 1936] nor Khrushchev implicated Stalin. Khrushchev only said that there was much that was "mysterious" about the incident. At the height of his power, he could easily have charged Stalin with the crime had he wanted to…. Trotsky, like Tokaev, believed that the assassination was really the work of misguided young oppositionists. Liushkov, an NKVD defector who outranked Orlov and Krivitsky, told his Japanese protectors that Stalin was not involved. Most recently, Adam Ulam noted that Stalin had little to gain from the killing.
…As Khrushchev noted, much in the situation suggested police complicity. Neither his bodyguard nor anyone else was with Kirov at the time–a probable breach of security rules. The bodyguard (Borisov) was killed in an automobile accident before he could be questioned by Stalin and the Politburo, who rushed to Leningrad to conduct the investigation. Finally, it seems that the assassin (Nikolayev) had been previously detained by the local NKVD and released, even though he carried a revolver and a map of Kirov's route to work.
Although this evidence may implicate the police, it does not necessarily point to higher involvement by Stalin or others. The NKVD officials in Leningrad who had been responsible for Kirov's security received light sentences in Siberia at the hands of their fellows on an NKVD board and remained alive for a few years. They would hardly have survived at all if they could have connected others with the crime. Similarly, the head of the NKVD at the time, Yagoda (to whom Stalin allegedly gave instructions to kill Kirov), confessed in open court in 1938 to having killed Kirov at the instigation of the opposition. If Stalin had used Yagoda to assassinate Kirov, it would have been very dangerous to allow him to appear later before the microphones of the world press. Yagoda knew that he would be shot anyway, and it would have been easy for him to let slip that Stalin had put him up to it. Stalin would not have taken the risk of such a damaging assertion's coming to light.
Many have commented on Stalin's unusually prompt reaction to the shooting. As noted, he and other Politburo members rushed to Leningrad to oversee the investigation…. The shooting was certainly an extraordinary blow to the Soviet government, and the reactions suggest panic. The killing was perceived as the first shot in a coup against the leadership. Such wartime measures are not really surprising, and it would have seemed incongruous that the leadership had not reacted in such a way….
Other circumstances surrounding the assassination point away from Stalin's involvement. When the assassin was apprehended seconds after the shooting, he was carrying a diary that incriminated no one and asserted that he was acting alone. If Stalin had organized the assassination to blame the opposition, an incriminating diary would have been priceless written evidence, and, if Nikolayev had not kept one, an appropriate document could certainly have been manufactured. If the assassination had been planned by Stalin or one of his supporters, a diary implicating the opposition would have been preferred. No diary at all would have been better than one exonerating the opposition. Finally, if Stalin had planned these events, he would hardly have allowed this "dead end" diary to be mentioned in the press. It only weakened an accusation against the opposition. Circumstances suggest that Stalin and his partisans were not in control of the situation.
The immediate official response to the assassination was ad hoc and confused, showing few signs of advance planning. In the days after the killing, the government identified Nikolayev variously as a lone assassin, a tool of a White Guard conspiracy, and finally a follower of the Zinoviev-Kamenev oppositions in Moscow and Leningrad. It was not until December 18 that

the regime hinted that the Zinoviev opposition might be involved. Five days later, the secret police announced that Zinoviev, Kamenev, and 13 of their associates had, indeed, been arrested on Dec. 16. But “in the absence of sufficient evidence to put them on trial,” they were to be administratively exiled within the USSR. It was not until a month later, on Jan. 16, 1935, that an official announcement said that Zinoviev and Kamenev were to be tried for maintaining a secret oppositionist “center” that had indirectly influenced the assassin to commit the crime. The charges and contradictions in the official characterization of the assassin suggest that no story was ready to hand and that the authorities were reacting to events in a confused way.

It is often thought that Stalin and company planned the crime to have a pretext for crushing the opposition. Yet the aftermath of the crime suggests confusion and mindless, unfocused rage. The repression directly following the assassination was diffuse and spasmodic.

… It seemed that the regime, unprepared for the crime and unclear about who should be punished, lashed out in a violent but ad hoc way at traditional enemies of Soviet power.

… Stalin would not have needed the killing of Kirov to justify this type or level of repression.

… Key leaders of the opposition (such as Pyatakov, Radek, Bukharin, and Rykov) continued to work unmolested until 1936. No mention was made of major opposition conspirators in the press after Jan. 18, 1935, and no campaign followed. The Ezhovshchina, with its spy scare, fear of war, and campaign to unmask traitors, was two years away; and the lull suggests that hard-liners were politically unprepared to use the Kirov assassination. When they finally were able to use the assassination against the opposition, it would be on the basis of “new NKVD materials obtained in 1936.” No one was able to capitalize on the situation in 1934-35 by striking at the opposition while the iron was hot.

Neither the sources, circumstances, nor consequences of the crime suggest Stalin’s complicity. The lack of any evidence of political dispute between Stalin and Kirov, discussed earlier, would appear to refute any motive for Stalin to kill his ally,… Based on the sources, there is no good reason to believe that Stalin connived in Kirov’s assassination, and all one can say with any certainty is that Nikolayev, a rank-and-file dissident, pulled the trigger.

Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 207-210

Second, Khrushchev’s focus was actually quite limited. Nowhere did he say that Stalin had a hand in Kirov’s assassination…. he never accused Stalin, although it would have been easy to do so…and, although he said that Kirov’s death was used as an excuse for stepping up repression, he did not really explain why the repression resulting from the assassination was delayed until 1937.

Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 217

The latest attempt to come to grips with the Kirov assassination was the work of Yakovlev’s Politburo Commission, which in 1989 appointed an interagency investigative team consisting of personnel from the USSR Procurator’s Office, the Military Procuracy, the KGB, and various archival administrations. For two years, this team conducted interviews, reviewed thousands of documents, and attempted to check all possible scenarios; their work has added another 15 volumes to the thirty-year-old efforts. Like all of the other research efforts organized by the Politburo Commission to probe aspects of the repression for publication in Izvestia, the team’s charter was to show Stalin’s complicity in the repression. It had little political incentive to let him off the hook; quite the contrary. Nevertheless, members of the

working team concluded that “in this affair, no materials objectively support Stalin’s participation or NKVD participation in the organization and carrying out of Kirov’s murder.” The team concludes that only “one-sided-superficial, unverified facts, rumors and conjectures” support Stalin complicity. With the collapse of Orlov’s always improbable version, much of the folklore of the Kirov murder falls apart.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 46-47

Of course, it may be that Stalin really instigated the murder. But the two main written accounts of his supposed machinations, from which all the other texts derive, have now been shown to be spurious. Their secondhand stories are inconsistent with known facts about the circumstances of the crime. There was always reasonable doubt about Stalin’s participation, and now there is more than before.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 49

But much of the new information seems to support revisionist doubts about older interpretations and their source bases…. It may well be that Stalin killed Kirov as part of a bloody long-term plan. On the other hand, the documents we have today do not prove it and unavoidably provide details that support alternative or revisionist views of events.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 60

But there are many problems with the idea that that he [Stalin] had Kirov killed. Evidence recently released from Russia shows that, contrary to many accounts, the police did not detain Nikolayev three times near Kirov, on each occasion mysteriously releasing him despite the fact that he was carrying a gun. He was stopped only once, and the circumstances were not suspicious. He had not received the gun from a Leningrad NKVD officer, as is typically claimed, but had owned it since 1918 and had registered it legally in 1924 and 1930.
Nikolayev had a diary with him at Smolny, but instead of showing that the party’s enemies helped him in his attack, which would have been logical if Stalin had planned the shooting, it indicated that he had acted alone. Kirov’s bodyguard was not present at the fatal moment because his boss had called to say he would stay at home that day. Kirov went to his office anyway, only to meet Nikolayev by chance. The latter, who had a party card that would automatically admit him to the building, had gone there to ask for a pass to an upcoming conference.
…And an even higher-ranking police defector, Liushkov, who was serving in Leningrad at the time of the murder but fled to Japan in 1938, told his handlers abroad that Stalin had nothing to do with the murder. Moreover, the Gensec would have had to rely on Yagoda, then head of the NKVD, to carry out his plan. Such involvement would have been far from safe, as Yagoda had been a leading figure in the party for some time. He was later arrested and tried in one of the Moscow show processes; it is unlikely that Stalin would have allowed him to testify publicly with such a terrible secret.
Just after the murder, Stalin called in two top officials, Yezhov, a member of the Central Committee, and Kosarev, chief of the Young Communist League (Komsomol). He told them to “look for the killer among the Zinovievites.” Years later Yezhov told the Central Committee that at first relations between himself and Kosarev, on one side, and the secret police, on the

other, were poor; the latter did not want to help. Finally Stalin warned Yagoda that “we’ll smash your mug [if you don’t co-operate].”
One day after Kirov’s death, his bodyguard, Borisov, died under mysterious circumstances. Riding in the back of an NKVD truck on his way to see Stalin, Borisov supposedly suffered fatal head injuries in an accident that somehow hurt no one else. Various writers have seen this incident as an indication of Stalin’s desire to cover his tracks further by eliminating another witness. But the Gensec’s personal bodyguard reported that his chief was upset at Borisov’s death and expressed sharp dissatisfaction with the policeman accompanying him. No evidence has ever emerged to tie Stalin directly to the killing. Generally the materials advanced to support this connection are on the order of Orlov’s: someone who supposedly knew about Stalin’s role told someone else about it, who wrote down the tale years or decades later.
Khrushchev, who had much to gain in the attacks he made on his predecessor in the 1950s and 1960s by tying him to Kirov’s death and who did not hesitate to link him to other murders, never produced clear proof. In early 1991, six years into glasnost, an important Soviet scholar and politician announced that, judging from available archival materials, ” Nikolayev planned and perpetuated the murder alone.” Files on the case “contain no information implicating Stalin and agencies of the NKVD.” Stalin did not know of and had no relation to the organization of the attack on Kirov.”
… But given the problems with the claim that he did [that Stalin murdered Kirov], the simplest answer to the question of who killed Kirov is likely to be the correct one: a disturbed man, Nikolayev, planned and carried out his act by himself.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 20-22

The latest Soviet account concludes, “Stalin’s participation in the murder [of Kirov] is extremely probable, though there is no documentary confirmation”; or, as Khrushchev put it in a section of his memoirs which remained unpublished until mid-1989, “Yagoda could only have acted on secret orders from Stalin.”
Nikolayev had been out of work since March 1934, when he seems to have attacked a decision sending him to work outside the city, which he believed to be a piece of bureaucratic intrigue. He had been expelled from the Party for this breach of discipline, but his membership had been restored two months later on his making a declaration of repentance.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 43

Today, many people state: Stalin this, and Stalin that–killed Kirov! Instead of yelling into a bell, look into history. You must remember that Kirov criticized Trotsky since 1921, when Trotsky decided to give up Astrakhan to the civil war enemy, in order to straighten the front lines. Trotsky never forgave Kirov for this, since Lenin took the side of Kirov and thus, the civil war enemies were defeated at that place. Social-revolutionary Wasserman then started to spread gossips, lies, that Kirov was a monarchist. Kirov at that time was arrested, but these enemies were not able to liquidate him–the Tribunal exposed the provocation and sentenced Wasserman to death. Kirov always opposed Trotsky, knowing full well what Trotsky was capable of and what an enemy he was.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 16

The preliminary examination of Kirov's assassin was concluded in 27 days. The findings were signed by the Assistant State Prosecutor, Andre Vyshinsky, and L. Sheinin, an investigating officer in especially important cases.
…I [the author] talked to Sheinin in the seventies…. In retirement he had started writing plays, so he was a colleague of sorts. He liked showing off his knowledge of secrets, and was quite delighted when I asked him whether Stalin had ordered Kirov's murder. He smiled, and answered amiably, "Stalin was the Leader, not a thug, my dear fellow."
…During Khrushchev's Thaw a commission was set up to decide once and for all whether Stalin really did order Yagoda to kill Kirov. They hoped to find documents–and of course found none. Not because they had been destroyed. I am convinced that they never existed. What Sheinin said was not untrue:…
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 322

As to his [Stalin] feelings concerning Kirov, we cannot go beyond conjecture…. That Kirov had been a leader of the "liberal wing of the Politburo," that he was popular with the Party to the extent that he aroused Stalin's jealousy–all these are later reconstructions with no basis in an established fact. It is said that the ovation according to Kirov at the 17th Congress rivaled Stalin's, but this is certainly not supported by reading the report of the Congress. The average delegates enthusiasm was rationed in accordance with the given notable's proximity to an assumed standing with the Leader, and so Kirov, just like Voroshilov or Molotov, received the quota of Cheers prescribed for "a close comrade-in-arms of Great Stalin"–"loud, long-lasting applause, a warm ovation by the whole gathering, everybody stands up." And it is extravagant to claim that assassination was the only means by which Stalin could get rid of Kirov without encountering party opposition…. Why, especially after he [Stalin] had been enthroned as a Marxian divinity at the 17th Congress, should he have had trouble with Kirov?
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 385

Without their [the colleagues of Khrushchov] help, then, what can we say about the background of the Kirov murder? The hypothesis of what might be called the Renaissance type of crime cannot be supported by facts and reasonable conjectures at our disposal.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 387

As for Kirov's assassination, the source material and the evidence we have explain it so poorly that almost any hypothesis might be allowable.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 6

Supposedly Stalin was behind the killing. In fact all the evidence is circumstantial and no proof as ever been found.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 315

Volodya says, "There is a great deal written about how Stalin was involved in the murder of Kirov. In fact he had nothing to do with it. My mother, Anna, was with Stalin when they phoned him and informed him that Kirov had been murdered. My mother said to me that neither before nor after has she ever see Stalin in the state he was reduced to after that phone call.

…He had nothing to do with the murder."
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 137

AGRANOV COULD NOT FIND EVIDENCE ZINOVIEV DIRECTLY KILLED KIROV

…Deputy commissar of the secret police Agranov was brought in to supervise a special investigation of the crime to be aimed at Zinoviev and his associate Kamenev…. After one month of questioning, Agranov reported that he was not able to prove that they had been directly involved in the assassination. So in the middle of January 1935 they were tried and convicted only for "moral complicity" in the crime. That is, their opposition had created a climate in which others were incited to violence. Zinoviev was sentenced to 10 years in prison, Kamenev to five.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 146

In the Kirov case itself 14 persons were executed, former members of the "Zinoviev opposition," who confessed that they had in recent years formed a "Leningrad Center" to assassinate Soviet leaders. They connected abroad through the Latvian consul-general, who on evidence shown was recalled by his government…. Zinoviev and Kamenev themselves, with a small group of Moscow followers, were imprisoned on their own confession to organizational connection with the Leningrad Center and knowledge of its terrorist views. There was some popular demand for their execution, but it failed, as nothing indicated direct participation in or knowledge of the actual murder.
Strong, Anna Louise. "Searching Out the Soviets." New Republic: August 7, 1935, p. 357

SENTENCING AND REPRESSION DID NOT HARDEN AFTER KIROV KILLING

Sentencing policy in general did not harden following the Kirov assassination.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 157

What followed the Kirov assassination was not mass violence against the entire opposition, but the Stalin constitution and a campaign for party democracy and increased participation of the party rank-and-file.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 115

Whether Stalin ordered Kirov's murder or not, another issue remains, did he use the event to frighten the populace? The answer is no, at least not immediately…. Nothing in the press, the major speeches of the day, the debates over judicial policy, or the overall atmosphere of 1934-35 suggested that the regime intended to repress anyone but a relatively small number of terrorists and former oppositionists.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 23

The internal party reviews of 1935-36 were not "blood purges" that necessarily resulted in tragedy. Expulsion at this point did not always mean arrest or even loss of one's job. The

oblast committee in Smolensk specifically directed lower organizations not to dismiss ousted members “wholesale” from their work. They were to be removed from leading posts but otherwise not touched unless they were discovered to be enemies of the people or “socially dangerous elements,” a phrase encompassing former priests, kulaks, other former “exploiters,” and ordinary criminals.
As shown in the previous chapter, arrests increased in 1935, but the number of political cases declined. The press did not demand a heightened search for enemies at this point. Instead, the policies of relaxation continued. Schools and other organizations for children decreased their emphasis on political education and awareness well into 1936. In short, Kirov’s death made little difference in policy and did not stop the trend toward moderation.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 24

Any fear resulting from Kirov’s murder was more often of internal enemies than of the state. People had no more reason to be afraid of the regime after the killing than they had earlier; as discussed above, it is unlikely that more than several hundred arrests occurred in the aftermath of the murder, most of them in Leningrad.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 143

The treatment of the political prisoners [after Kirov’s murder] underwent a radical change. Hitherto it had not been different from that accorded to them in Tsarist days. Political offenders had enjoyed certain privileges and been allowed to engage in self-education and even in political propaganda. Oppositional memoranda, pamphlets, and periodicals had circulated half freely between prisons and had occasionally been smuggled abroad.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 358

After the assassination of Kirov, terrorists had been deprived by decree of the right of appeal; but, a few days before the opening of the trial of Zinoviev and Kamenev, the right of appeal was restored,…
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 375

In December 1934 a secret letter from the Central Committee, entitled “Lessons of the Events Connected with the Evil Murder of Comrade Kirov,” was sent to all Party Committees. It amounted to a call to them to hunt down, expel, and arrest all former oppositionists who remained in the Party organizations and was followed by a storm of indiscriminate denunciations. At this early phase in the purge, however, some discrimination was still shown in the action taken on these. Friendship with an exposed “Trotskyite” usually received a severe reprimand rather than expulsion:…
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 45

As yet, no NKVD announcement had directly blamed the assassination on anyone but Nikolayev. The “White Guards” had been vaguely charged with “terrorism.” On December 21, 1934, it was at last officially stated that Kirov had been murdered by a “Leningrad Center,” headed by Kotolynov, and consisting of him, Nikolayev, and six others–all of them categorized as former members of the Zinoviev Opposition who had “at various times been expelled from the Party,” though mostly restored to membership after statements of solidarity with the Party line. Six other accomplices were also implicated.

On the following day, a list was given for the first time of the arrested Zinovievite leaders, with a decision on the conduct of their cases.
There were distinguished names among them: Zinoviev and Kamenev, formerly members of the Politburo; Evdokimov, formerly member of the Secretariat; other former members and candidate members of the Central Committee–Zalutsky, who had formed with Molotov and Shliapnikov the first Bolshevik Committee in Petrograd after the February Revolution; Fedorov; Kuklin; Safarov. For the moment, a partial accusation went forward. Regarding 7 of those arrested, including Zinoviev, Kamenev, Zalutsky, and Safarov, it was announced that the NKVD, "lacking sufficient data for bringing them before a court," would take them before a Special Board, with a view to sending them into administrative exile. With the others, headed by Bakayev, "further investigation" would take place.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 47

TRIAL OF LENINGRAD ZINOVIEVISTS AFTER KIROV KILLING WAS RATHER LIGHT

On January 15 and 16, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Evdokimov, Bakayev, Kuklin, and 14 others were brought to trial in Leningrad as the "Moscow center."
… Zinoviev was reported as saying in court, "The former activity of the former opposition could not, by the force of objective circumstances, but stimulate the degeneration of those criminals."
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 48

…The trial of the " Leningrad counterrevolutionary Zinovievist group of Safarov, Zalutsky, and others" sentenced 77 defendants to camp and exile terms of four to five years. Altogether in the 2 1/2 months following the assassination, 843 former Zinovievists were arrested in Leningrad; most of them were exiled to remote regions and not sentenced to camps.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 157

He [Zinoviev] took full responsibility for those he had misled, and summed up by remarking that, "the task that I see confronting me on this subject is to repent fully, frankly and sincerely, before the court of the working class, for what I understand to be a mistake and a crime, and to say it in such a way that it should all end, once and for all, for this group."
On January 16, 1935, Zinoviev was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment, Evdokimov to 8, Bakayev to 8, and Kamenev to 5. The other sentences ranged from 10 years to five.
There was still one batch of prisoners from the Kirov case left to be dealt with–the Leningrad NKVD leadership, whose forthcoming trial had been announced on December 4. On January 23 they finally came before a court under, as ever, Ulrich. Instead of the nine originally charged, there were now 12–and Zaporozhets was among them. Medved and Zaporozhets were charged with failure to observe the basic requirements of State security, in that "having received information about the preparations for the attempt on Kirov… they failed to take the necessary measures to prevent the assassination… although they had every possible means of arresting it."
The sentences were extremely light. One official, Baltesevich, got 10 years for–in addition to the main charge–unspecified wrongful acts during the investigation. Medved got three years, and the others either two or three….

These sentences struck observant NKVD officers as totally out of proportion to the charges, especially as those sentenced for mere “negligence” got two years, and those for “criminal negligence” (apart from Baltesevich) three years–only one year more! Stalin’s natural reaction to a criminal failure to guard against a genuine assassination attempt–of the sort which might strike him next–would have been the exemplary execution of all the NKVD defaulters; in fact, they could scarcely have avoided a charge of complicity in the actual crime. But the whole thing became even odder and more sinister when it was discovered that Medved and Zaporozhets were being treated as though the sentences were little more than a tedious formality.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 49

As was later said at the 1938 trial, Yagoda displayed “exceptional and unusual solicitude” towards them. He had “entrusted the care of the families of Zaporozhets & Medved” to his personal secretary, Bulanov; he had “sent them for detention to the camp in an unusual way–not in the car for prisoners, but in a special through car. Before sending them, he had Zaporozhets & Medved brought to see him.”
This is, of course, impossible to conceive as a personal initiative of Yagoda’s. A higher protection was being provided. Moreover, NKVD officers learned that Pauker and Shanin (Head of the NKVD Transport Department) were sending records and radio sets to Zaporozhets in exile–contrary to the strict Stalinist rule of instantly breaking even with one’s best friend, once arrested.
A prisoner from the White Sea Canal camps reports that Medved appeared at the headquarters of the camp complex, arriving by train in a special compartment and being put up by the head of the project, Rappaport, in his own house, where he gave a party for him. Medved was wearing an NKVD uniform without the insignia of his rank. He then went on, in the same style, to Solvetsk.
When the ice of the Okhotsk Sea made the move possible, Medved, Zaporozhets, and all the others we can trace were sent to Kolyma, where they were technically prisoners, but in fact given high posts — Zaporozhets as head of the road-building administration in the Kolyma complex.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 50

At the same time the members of the Leningrad NKVD responsible for the failure to protect Kirov were charged with criminal negligence leading to his assassination. All pleaded guilty, but instead of the summary executions that would normally have followed, all, with one exception, received a mild sentence of two or three years imprisonment. Only one, who was found guilty, in addition, of “illegal actions during the investigation”–possibly the “accident” to Kirov’s bodyguard, Borisov–was given ten years. Contrary to all precedents, they were treated with “exceptional and unusual solicitude” by Yagoda, the head of the NKVD, and when they ended up in Kolyma, the most isolated of the islands of the Gulag, were rapidly given responsible posts, with every privilege, in the camp administration….
More came to light at the trial of Yagoda himself in March 1938. At the time of Kirov’s murder Yagoda was commissar-general of the NKVD and directly responsible to Stalin for all the operations of the Security Police. At this trial Yagoda confessed that he had then ordered the assistant chief of the Leningrad NKVD, Zaporozhets, “not to place any obstacles in the way of the terrorist act against Kirov,” including the order to release Nikolayev after he had been arrested with a revolver, cartridges, and a chart of the route Kirov usually took, two months

before the assassination. Subsequently Yagoda admitted that he had taken care to see that Zaporozhets and the other NKVD men were well looked after.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 468

Only on 16 January 1935 did Zinoviev, Kamenev and 17 others come to trial for complicity in the Kirov murder. By this time a large number of lesser fry who were in the hands of the police appeared to have testified against the main figures, who were now found guilty of indirect responsibility for the assassination. But the Court explicitly exonerated them of actually planning the murder. Supposedly their worst crime was to have known of the terrorist inclination of some of the oppositional youth groups called 'the Leningrad Center'. It allegedly operated under the direction of a ' Moscow Center' of Zinovievites, which did not know about the actual assassination plot but only of the 'terrorist state of mind' of the youths, which the leaders 'inflamed'. For this Zinoviev was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment, Kamenev five,…
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 175

KIROV WAS NOT MORE POPULAR THAN STALIN OR QUALIFIED TO REPLACE HIM

CHUEV: And Kirov was not forgiven for enjoying greater popularity than Stalin.
MOLOTOV: Absurd! Just look up the stenographic records of the congresses. Who enjoyed greater authority, Kirov or Stalin? Just look at Kirov's speeches and collections of articles–what's there? "It is difficult to imagine a figure as gigantic as Stalin"–I quote from memory what Kirov said. But where are there political signs indicating in him the character of a top leader? He had no such aspirations. He was not that kind of person…. Let them say what they will, but what is valuable in Kirov from a political point of view? Just cite me his ideas that are distinguished by their value or utility–nowhere!
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 219

…if you say that Kirov was better, what do you know about Kirov, what did he accomplish?
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 220

A tenacious legend has been created that Kirov could have replaced Stalin. But where are his theoretical works?… He was capable of work but not in the leading roles. I can tell you bluntly that he would not have been acknowledged as number 1, especially by the senior leaders….
Kirov was a poor organizer, though he could work the masses rather well. We all treated him fondly. Stalin liked him. I would say he was Stalin's favorite. Khrushchev's casting aspersions on Stalin and insinuating that Stalin had Kirov assassinated–that was foul.
I used to be friends with Kirov. I can now recall that only Zhdanov received from Stalin the same kind of treatment that Kirov enjoyed.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 221

CHUEV: Stalin is said to have been afraid that Kirov would replace him.
MOLOTOV: That's absurd! Why should he have been afraid of Kirov?
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 222

[Footnote]: We cannot admit the story, or rather stories, which have circulated ever since the 17th Congress that in the election to the Central Committee Stalin got fewer votes than anyone else. The Socialist Courier, published in Paris by the Mensheviks, reported on February 25 that Stalin got fewer votes than two others, the most votes going to Kalinin. Medvedev reports (page 156) the recollections of a delegate that 270 delegates voted against Stalin, as against only three who crossed out Kirov's name, and that Stalin was elected only because there were as many candidates as members to be elected. But the story is suspect, since the alleged recollections show unfamiliarity with the voting procedures for the Central Committee. The voting was secret, and ever since 1923 the announced results have not included the number of votes received by successful candidates. Only one list was proposed. Delegates could then show their disapproval by crossing out names on the ballot, and the candidate crossed out on at least half of them would fail of election. There were about 1200 people voting, and for anyone to be disqualified his name would have had to be crossed out on some 600 ballots rather than 270. There is every reason to believe that the election of the Central Committee was unanimous. Medvedev's story is weakened further, as he acknowledges, by the fact that the Central Committee members who were elected comprised Stalin's most recent favorites, such as Yezhov. Why should a hitherto obscure choice of the dictator get more votes in the election than he himself? But there are also good reasons why someone would have been interested in spreading rumors of Kirov's popularity with the delegates and dealing a setback to Stalin.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 374

The intention of a group of delegates to replace Stalin by Kirov had been affirmed by certain participants of the 17th Congress and denied by others, while the almost 300 votes reportedly opposed to Stalin's membership in the Central Committee cannot be confirmed by documentary evidence. The re-examination of the ballots showed that only three delegates had opposed Stalin's election. To be sure, it is impossible to establish today if the documents were not falsified. But if they were and if Stalin was eager to eliminate embarrassing witnesses, he did not proceed thoroughly, since at least three members of the electoral commission survived the "Great Purge" to give rather contradictory testimonies of the vote at the beginning of the 1960s.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 6

At the time of the 17th Congress of the Party there was great euphoria because of the First Five-Year Plan. In fact for this reason this Congress was named the 'Congress of the Victories' by the people. Molotov's, Stalin's and, if I am not being immodest, my presentation was also very well received by the participants. Today the critics make an all-out effort to discredit the 17th Congress. They also concocted the story that 300 delegates voted against Stalin. I suppose that this kind of gossip was necessary so that one could say that Stalin later took revenge for this. They also generated the false story that Kaganovich, at the behest of the presidium of the Congress, interfered with work of the Counting Committee to misreport the votes against Stalin. THUS SPAKE KAGANOVICH by Feliks Chuyev, 1992

KIROV WAS NOT QUALIFIED TO BE GEN. SEC. OR STALIN'S SUCCESSOR

To speak of Kirov as some kind of deputy or successor to Stalin is entirely absurd to any literate and knowledgeable communist. That choice would have been totally at odds with the nature of the relationship between Stalin and Kirov, and above all with Kirov's own perception of his potential. It so contradicts the realities of that period that only a criminal type such as Khrushchev could go so far as to allege that Stalin had special reason to finish off Kirov.
True, Kirov had told Stalin at the 17th Party Congress that a group of delegates had proposed to nominate him for top office in the party. But Kirov as general secretary? Utterly, simply absurd! Kirov was a highly effective agitator and a good communist. He was not and did not claim to be a theoretician. Never. It goes without saying that he was incapable of ideologically crushing Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev. Others were more capable, feasible, or likely as a potential leader than Kirov! Indeed, far more!
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 327

KIROV'S KILLING CAUSED DISARRAY IN THE PARTY WHICH THOUGHT EVERYONE WAS UNITED

Kirov's assassination took place just as the Party leadership thought that the most difficult struggles were behind them and that Party unity had been re-established. Stalin's first reaction was disorganized and reflected panic. The leadership thought that the assassination of the number two man in the Party meant the beginning of a coup d'Etat. A new decree was immediately published, calling for the use of summary procedures for the arrest and execution of terrorists. This draconian measure was the result of the feeling of mortal danger for the socialist regime. At first, the Party looked for the guilty within traditional enemy circles, the Whites. A few of them were executed.
Then, the police found Nikolayev's journal. In it, there was no reference to an opposition movement that had prepared the attack. The inquiry finally concluded that Zinoviev's group had `influenced' Nikolayev and his friends, but found no evidence of direct implication of Zinoviev, who was sent back to internal exile.
The Party's reaction showed great disarray. The thesis by which Stalin `prepared' the attack to implement his `diabolical plan' to exterminate the opposition is not verified by the facts.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 137 [p. 119 on the NET]

THE PURGE OR PROVERKA WAS NOT A RESULT OF THE KIROV MURDER

But the fact that a verification had been approved before Kirov's death, coupled with the six-month delay between the assassination and the proverka, suggest that the proverka was not a planned escalation of terror hard on the heels of the Kirov murder, or even the direct result of it.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 63

Another lie is that the party card control would have been an act of revenge by the party leadership by which is meant Stalin of course for the assassination of Kirov. Kirov, who was a member of the Central Committee and chairman of the party in Leningrad was assassinated on December 1st 1934 in the party headquarters of the city. (The murderer

Nikolajev entered the party headquarters by using an old, invalid party card.) The allegation of a revenge, which was to have been horrible and bloody with a huge number of executions, originates with the police agent Robert Conquest. Anybody reading his book The Great Terror without being familiar with these historical issues will have difficulties in detecting his lies. But for those who care to seek knowledge about the history, the allegation of a revenge is nothing but non-sensical. The party card control 1935 was just a consequence of the Central Committee decision concerning a new registration of the members in October 1934. As a matter of fact, Kirov took part in this decision, which took place two months prior to his assassination! Would Kirov have decided on an act of revenge for his own assassination, which was to take place two months later?!
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

Conquest mixes up the party card control with the very events connected with the police investigation of the assassination of Kirov. This is a typical Conquest-method of confusing, distorting and falsifying.

…the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial took place between 16th and 23rd January 1935. This was during the new registration of party members which had been decided in October 1934 and which, in January 1935 had almost died out without any result. The party card control, which according to Conquest was a revenge against the opposition, was a result of the earlier control having proved insufficient for the great problems revealed. It started only in June 1935, five months after the termination of the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial and after the prison sentences for the opposition. The party card control could not have influenced the trial, nor could it have been a revenge on the accused. Conquest is aware of the great ignorance about the historical questions of socialism and does not hesitate to use the ignorance of people to divulge his dirty propaganda.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

KIROV WAS NOT LESS REPRESSIVE OR MORE LENIENT THAN STALIN

It is sometimes thought that Kirov was a “moderate” who opposed Stalin’s generally hard-line on various issues. According to much of the literature, Stalin killed Kirov to clear the way for his policy of terror. In fact, it seems more likely that Stalin and Kirov were allies and that Kirov’s death was not the occasion for a change in policy.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 92

The Nicolaevsky scenario suffers from serious flaws. In the first place, virtually no evidence suggests that Kirov favored or advocated any specific policy line other than Stalin’s General Line….

The rumor that Kirov favored lenient treatment for dissidents, for example, is offset by opposite contemporary speculations. Trotsky, writing three years after the assassination, called Kirov “a clever and unscrupulous Leningrad dictator, a typical representative of his corporation,” and maintained that terrorist acts like the killing of Kirov by “despairing individuals” of the “younger generation” “have a very high significance.” Gregory Tokaev, who was on the receiving end of Kirov’s policies toward the opposition, said the Kirov “ruthlessly stamped out” the opposition at this time and was the “first executioner.” A

contemporary article in Nicolaevsky's [Socialist Herald] labeled Kirov a hard-liner. If Kirov was soft on the oppositionists, the opposition certainly did not know it.

Certainly Kirov's public speeches do not reflect a moderate attitude toward members of the opposition. In his speech to the 17th Congress, he ridiculed members of the opposition, questioning their "humanity" and the sincerity of their recantations. He sharply denounced Trotsky's "counter-revolutionary chatter" and applauded the services of the secret police, including their use of forced labor on canal construction projects. It was upon Kirov's motion that Stalin's speech was taken as the basis for the congress's resolution.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 93

Simply reading through the minutes of the 17th Congress is enough to raise doubts over Kirov's role as an opposition leader. Far from making the slightest allusion to any dissident "platform," his speech asked the delegates to adopt "as law" the Central Committee report that Stalin had presented. Instead of proposing "moderate" reforms, the secretary from Leningrad praised the work of the secret police and the concentration camps. We find no trace in his contribution of any softness towards old oppositionists; quite the reverse, he jeers at them and makes fun of their repentance at the Congress.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 6

Kirov was to acquire a posthumous reputation as a political moderate in the Politburo. There is little to sustain this beyond the few gestures in the direction of increasing bread supplies in Leningrad where he was City Party Secretary Kirov did not comport himself as a Leader in the making and gave no sign of this ultimate ambition. It cannot be demonstrated beyond doubt that the Congress vote for the new Central Committee humiliated Stalin.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 314

Kirov has often been depicted as a 'liberal' in contrast to Stalin's despotism, but this is hard to demonstrate. Stalin as much as Kirov appears to have supported the various forms of relaxation that appeared in 1933. In his own right Kirov seems to have been a tough Bolshevik and a staunch supporter of Stalin's policies and emergent cult. The notion that Kirov represented some sort of 'liberal' alternative to Stalin rests in considerable measure on the desire of latter-day anti-Stalinists such as Khrushchev and Roy Medvedev to find such an alternative within the movement.

Wishful thinking of this sort may have informed the report of Medvedev and Antonov-Ovseenko that on the eve of the 17th Party Congress, about January 1934, a small group of leading Bolsheviks proposed to Kirov that he assume the post of General Secretary, which he declined to consider. Neither writer reveals the source of this story, and it is curious that neither Khrushchev nor the official historians of his era made reference to such a meeting, even though one would think that they would have welcomed any evidence of resistance to Stalin by 'good Bolsheviks' during this period.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 170

STALIN AND KIROV WERE ALLIES

If Stalin and Kirov were antagonists, it would be difficult to explain Kirov's continued rise. Stalin chose Kirov for the sensitive Leningrad party leadership position and trusted him with delicate "trouble-shooter" missions to supervise critical harvests (like Kirov's journey to Central Asia in 1934). Kirov was elected to the Secretariat and Politburo in 1934, and Stalin wanted him to move to the Central Committee Secretariat in Moscow as soon as possible. Unless one is prepared to believe that Stalin did not control appointments to the Secretariat and Politburo… one must assume that he and Kirov were allies.

Much more probable than a Kirov-versus-Stalin scenario is one in which Stalin, Kirov, and Zhdanov cooperated.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 94

Stalin was often visited by Kirov who even slept on Stalin's divan.

They took steam baths together. Such companionship and understanding between them, no one else of the Politburo had with Stalin. Stalin was very proud of Kirov as a talented, dedicated Bolshevik. Kirov did masterfully at the last Congress and had the Central Committee in stitches as he devastated the persons of Bukharin, Zinoviev, Kamenev. And about Trotsky, he said the following: May he three times be damned, that his name should be brought up at a sacred Congress such as this one!
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 13

On December 1, Kirov was assassinated. On December 2, Stalin, Molotov, and Voroshilov immediately went to Leningrad. Now, Stalin himself was under threat of assassination, therefore, the division of Dzerzhinsky was guarding our route, including both sides of the highway to Leningrad. Stalin became very sorrowful, his face darkened, blotches became evident on his face. He kissed the dead Kirov on his lips and crying, said:

Goodbye, my dear friend….

After the death of his wife, there was no other such close friend as was Kirov.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 14

His [Kirov] friendship with Stalin, dating from Civil War days, was close, as witnessed by Stalin's inscription in the copy of On Lenin and Leninism that he gave Kirov in 1924: "To my friend and beloved brother, from the author. Stalin."

Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 240

In the late summer of 1934 Kirov was summoned to Sochi where he found Stalin and Zhdanov at work preparing comments on the prospectuses. Stalin wanted him to go to Kazakhstan to supervise the gathering of the harvest.

During the meeting at Sochi, Stalin had a further demand. He wanted Kirov to stay there for a week or so to take part in discussing (as Kirov's post-Stalin biographer puts it) "the thoughts expressed by Stalin" on the prospectuses for history textbooks. Embarrassed, Kirov said: "Iosif Vissarionovich, what kind of historian am I"–to which Stalin replied. "Never mind, sit down and listen!" When the comments thus prepared in 1934 were published in Pravda on 27 January 1936, they bore the signatures of Stalin, Zhdanov, and Kirov. Stalin thus established in advance that he and Kirov were in close collaborative relations during the latter's last months.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 281

Stalin was friends with Kirov. (I have seen only one affectionate inscription in Stalin's hand, and that was in a book presented to Kirov: "To my friend and favorite brother from the author." He wrote to no one else in such terms.)
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 222

[During the Kirov funeral] Maria Svanidze recorded in her diary that on December 5, 1934, "…The sentries were ready to screw down the coffin lid. Joseph [Stalin] went up the steps of the catafalque…his face was sorrowful. He bent down and kissed the dead man's forehead…. It was a heartrending picture for anyone who knew how close they were …. Everyone in the hall was weeping. Through my own sobs I could hear men sobbing loudly. Joseph is suffering terribly. Pavel was with him at the dacha a day or two after Kirov's death. They were sitting in the dining room together. Joseph rested his head on his hand

(I've never seen him do that) and said "now I'm all alone in the world." Pavel says it was so moving that he jumped up and kissed him. Joseph told Pavel that Kirov used to look after him like a child. After Nadya's death Kirov had of course been closer to Joseph than anyone, he could approach him with simple affection and give him the warmth he was missing and peace of mind.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 326

…Kirov (the only man to figure in the whole of Stalin's career as a genuine personal favorite).
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 153

Stalin was shocked white and rigid [at the killing of Kirov],or at least this was how he appeared to others at the time.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 314

Stalin attended Kirov's funeral looking grim and determined. Even his close associates wondered how he was going to deal with the situation; but everyone assumed that severe measures would be applied.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 315

Most biographers date the beginning of the purges from Kirov's death in 1934. Kirov was a close friend of Stalin's and undoubtedly the blow was as emotional as it was political: he showed a rare warmth towards Kirov.

Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 205

NEW EVIDENCE DIRECTLY IMPLICATES ZINOVIEV AND KAMENEV IN KIROV MURDER

But in mid-1936, 18 months after the assassination, the Moscow leadership decided to reopen the Kirov affair. In a July 1936 secret letter to party organizations, Moscow identified certain leaders of the former Left Opposition as traitors and assassins. The letter, probably written by Yezhov, announced that on the basis of "new NKVD materials obtained in 1936," it had become clear that Zinoviev and Kamenev had joined in a conspiracy with Trotsky back in 1932. The goals of the conspiracy were terror and assassination of Soviet leaders, and the group had killed Kirov.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 116

According to the letter, Zinovievist and Kamenevist opposition circles in the USSR had established contact with the emigre Trotskyists four years before (in Berlin in 1932 when defendant Ivan Smirnov contacted Sedov) and had jointly plotted the assassination of Soviet leaders. They had done this because the success of the party in industry and agriculture since 1929 meant that opposition politicians had no chance to take power via a political platform. What could they propose, given the successes of recent years? Thus, the opposition had turned to terror and assassination and had become "the organizing force for remnants of smashed classes" and "leading detachment of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie."
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 122

Kamenev and Zinoviev were originally tried for complicity in Kirov's murder and subsequently sentenced for moral responsibility. The added charges of counter-revolutionary activity and conspiracy with Trotsky for Imperialist intervention were, however, the fundamental charges against them. Kirov was an immensely popular leader and the odium of his assassination, lingering on Kamenev and Zinoviev, increased and illustrated their separation from the masses. Radek's summing up in his own defense is probably the best statement of the position in which the conspirators found themselves after the triumph of the Stalin Line. Divorced from the people and yet hopelessly committed and entangled in Opposition, their choice was admission and immediate disaster or further conspiracy and ultimate disaster.

… The accused were fluent in their confessions, as fluent, for example, as police witnesses speaking with their notes. Does this suggests that their evidence, therefore, is concocted? I have shown in my record of my examination how the preliminary interrogation before the charges are fully formulated discards all that is doubtful and accidental and concentrates on what is positive and fundamental.
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 216

Kirov, one of the most important leaders in the Communist Party in the Soviet Union, was assassinated in December 1934. The actual shots were fired by one Nikolayev, who was an

active member of the Zinoviev organization. As a result of the investigation, a part of the organization is discovered and some of its members are shown to have been in touch with Zinoviev and Kamenev. Zinoviev and Kamenev admit “moral responsibility” for the murder of Kirov in the sense that they had created such a frame of mind amongst their adherents in relation to the Soviet Government as provided a stimulus for such actions as that of Nikolayev.

That was the extent of their admission of guilt and they were sentenced accordingly. When people in Britain declare “It is almost incredible that old Bolsheviks should take to assassination against their opponents in the Party” they are only echoing what was the general opinion in the Soviet Union in January 1935. People were perfectly willing to accept the statements of Zinoviev and Kamenev that while they had sowed hatred against the policy of the Soviet Government they had not directly organized assassination. There were no proofs to the contrary discovered at that moment, and everyone was prepared to give Zinoviev and Kamenev the benefit of the doubt. It was only as a result of the discovery of other terrorist groups that the participation of Zinoviev and Kamenev in the organization of assassination was fully revealed. Zinoviev and Kamenev at each stage only admitted as much as was already known from other sources. The full names of the plot, the full meaning of the plotters’ association with Nazi Germany, they concealed to the end. Such behavior is not consistent with the theory that the OGPU first fabricated a plot and then–for reasons which are perfectly grotesque–forced a number of old revolutionists to confess to it.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 245-246

TOKAEV IN A SECRET MEETING OF ANTI-STALIN MILITARY LEADERS PLANNING KIROV’S MURDER

I returned to Moscow from the Caucasus early in October 1934. Not only was I not rested, I had worn myself out and had grown much thinner. The inward tension and the incessant need for vigilance had exhausted me. Now to my other anxieties was added something I had never anticipated–I found myself at a Conference of the military underground. No special approach was made in advance, I was merely taken on a plausible pretext to a place the existence of which I could never have suspected. The sense of having been observed and chosen, even though it was by people who were prominent in the State and whose views I largely shared, was in itself disturbing. Equally so was the further proof which this meeting afforded of the importance of the opposition and of the fact that we were perhaps on the verge of great events.
The Conference was presided over by an army officer of the highest rank. I found myself among people whom until that instant I had believed to be completely loyal Stalinists. Among them was an exceptionally beautiful young woman to whom her husband’s ADC had presented me at a Party during the last May Day festivities. I had danced with her once or twice and she had then invited me to her house, saying with a laugh: “You needn’t be worried, my husband isn’t jealous.” Now I discovered what this meant–her husband was a key figure at this Military Underground Conference. As I sat next to her, I WAS OVERWHELMED WITH THE REALIZATION OF HOW TRUE IT WAS THAT STALIN, MOLOTOV, AND KIROV COULD TRUST NOBODY.
It occurred to me to wonder at the great distance I myself had traveled from my initial loyalty to the regime. I must indeed have been a long way if these people, to whom I owed no

allegiance, thus trusted me. How confident they already felt of me was revealed later in the evening: publicly, before the whole meeting, with military curtness, they put to me a request to perform a certain action (what, I cannot state here) which was necessary for their anti-Stalin work. Was I ready for such a step?
Never before had I been called upon to make so momentous a decision at such short notice and in so little time. I knew that such a request as theirs would be made only if it was unavoidable. I also realized what my refusal would mean–they would never trust me again; and the proof they had just given me of their confidence was priceless to me. I said I would do what they wanted, whenever they wished. In the name of the assembled men and women, the Chairman thanked me.
What was required of me was quite simple and concrete. The preparations were not my concern and they were to take some time. In October I was told that for an unforeseen reason the event had to be put off till November; then there was another postponement, and then a third.
…THERE WAS INDEED NO DOUBT AS TO THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE EVENT [THE ASSASSINATION OF KIROV], PERHAPS THE MOST SERIOUS SINCE THE SOVIET UNION HAD BEEN FOUNDED. The shot which had killed Kirov was aimed not only at him but at the very heart of the Politburo…. HE WAS PERHAPS THE BEST ORATOR AMONG THE LEADERS AND THE MOST LOYAL, MOST CONSISTENT, AND MOST FANATICAL STALINIST IN THE COUNTRY. He was also a magnificent organizer.
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 239-240

STALIN GETS OFF TRAIN AND STRIKES NKVD LEADER IN LENINGRAD

Two hours later, Stalin, Molotov, Voroshilov, Yezhov, Yagoda, Zhdanov, Agranov, Zakovsky and some others were on their way to Leningrad by special train. On arrival at the station, Stalin lambasted the Leningrad people who met them in obscene language, and struck Medved, the head of the local NKVD,… Stalin himself conducted the first interrogation of Nikolayev in the presence of those who had accompanied him from Moscow.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 207

That same night he [Stalin] set off for eternally rebellious Leningrad, together with faithful Molotov and the high executioners Yezhov and Yagoda. Medved, the head of the security police in Leningrad, met them at the station. Without a word Stalin struck him in the face–as much as to say “You should have looked after Kirov properly.” He then took over the investigation.
…A whole floor of the Smolny and a suite of rooms in the NKVD building were put at his disposal. He conducted the interrogations personally.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 321

AFTER TRIALS FOLLOWING KIROV KILLING EVERYONE SEEMED TO BE GETTING ALONG FINE

After the trials and deportations which followed the assassination of Kirov, the regime seemed to relax once again. In the second half of 1935 in the first half of 1936 the successes of the second five-year plan and the forthcoming constitutional reform had the

main share of public attention. Stalin was more frequently seen in the limelight, all smiles, surrounded by Stakhanovite workers, successful kolkhoz farmers and their womenfolk, who were all busy thanking him for their 'new and joyous life'. He appeared at popular festivals, handed out prizes to successful athletes, accepted bouquets of flowers from children, and postured in all sorts of idyllic scenes for the camera. Everything seemed to promise a long spell of political mildness. Of the former opposition chiefs Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Smirnov were held in the prison of Verkhne-Uralsk; but they hoped to be released once more. Bukharin, Radek, and Sokolnikov continued to rub shoulders with Stalin at the sessions of the constitutional commission. Bukharin was editor of Izvestia and Radek was the chief journalistic interpreter of the Kremlin's foreign policy. Pyatakov was deputy Commissar for Heavy Industry and its real organizer. The former Premier Rykov was Commissar of Posts and Telegraphs; Rakovsky, Krestinsky, Karakhan, Raskolnikov, Antonov-Ovseenko, Rosengoltz, Yureniev, Bogomolov, and many, many others who had long made peace with Stalin were abroad as ambassadors, special envoys, heads of trade missions. Even in Georgia, Stalin's old opponents, who had come out against him in Lenin's lifetime, seemed to have been pardoned. Their chief leader Mdivani was back in office, as vice-Premier of the Georgian Government. The relations between Stalin and the leaders of the army seemed unruffled…. Five of the military chiefs, Tukhachevsky, Yegorov, Blucher, Voroshilov, and Budienny, were appointed Marshals.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 369

YAGODA HELPED KILL KIROV

We can be virtually certain, on the other hand, that Yagoda's responsibility for the murder of Kirov was correctly established….
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 386

In the autumn of that year [1934], Kirov was in Kazakhstan in order to see how the harvest was proceeding and was in strong disagreement with the leadership of the GPU who were extremely harsh against the Kulak families that were sent here for not having complied with taxes and requisitioning of grain. After returning to Moscow, he complained to Yagoda, head of the NKVD and complained bitterly for these uncivilized and unconstitutional actions by state security authorities. This was taken as a personal affront by Yagoda and since then, Yagoda had it in for Kirov. He carried this personal hatred until Kirov was done away with.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 14

I was always stationed at the Smolny at that time. Among the members of the guards, the assassination of Kirov was always on their lips. All of them swore at Nikolayev [the assassin]. But, let us ask the question as to who put that gun in his hands? Unbelievable situation: this armed assassin was twice stopped and held on the approaches to Smolny and also inside the building itself, and twice, he was let go. Zaporozhets gave the order to let him go! During the day of the assassination, Nikolayev was seen all day inside Smolny, loafing here and there, going to the floor which was barred to all strangers, and just waited on the steps without being challenged by the bodyguards assigned to guard Kirov and other state leaders.

There were no guards in the quarters, there was also no guard in front of the door to the office of Kirov. The law required that a guard always be present in the ante-room to Kirov's office, whether Kirov was in the office or not. This was not followed this fateful day. As a specialist in bodyguards duties, I immediately became suspicious of this…. It was obvious that there were traitors here among the bodyguards–behind this traitorous act, there stood a former SR (Socialist-Revolutionary) member, Zaporozhets. While his chief, lurking in the background was Yagoda, who, after his trial began, confessed: "In this way, I categorically am telling you that the assassination of Kirov was accomplished according to the decision of the right wing Trotskyist bloc."
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 15

KIROV DOES HIS BEST TO PROVE YAGODA AND HIS MEN WERE INCOMPETENT OR TROT AGENTS

Encouraged by Stalin to continue the "cleaning-up drive" of the NKVD garrisons, and also of factories and offices, Kirov did his utmost to prove to his Master, that Yagoda's men were "either incapable of dealing with intricate situations, or were saboteurs themselves under the command of Trotsky and his associates." He brought scores of people "to justice."
Fishman and Hutton. The Private Life of Josif Stalin. London: W. H. Allen, 1962, p. 90

ZINOVIEV AND KAMENEV ADMIT ONLY MORAL GUILT AT THE FIRST TRIAL

Speaking of his responsibility for the crime committed on December 1st, 1934, the accused Zinoviev deposed:
"…The objective march of events was such that, with bowed head, I must say: the anti-Party struggle which assumed particularly sharp forms in the past year in Leningrad, could not but help in the degeneration of these scoundrels. This dastardly assassination threw such a sinister light on the past anti-Party struggle that I recognize that the Party is quite right in what it says on the question of political responsibility of the former anti-Party 'Zinoviev' group for the assassination that took place…."
Kamenev made a similar deposition. Thus in January, 1935, they admitted their moral guilt for the murder, but covered up their actual guilt as the organizers of it.
Shepherd, W. G. The Moscow Trial. London: Communist Party of Great Britain, 1936, p. 5

Nikolayev along with a number of his political associates, was tried and sentenced to death. Zinoviev, together with his long-term close associate, Kamenev, was arrested and charged with 'moral complicity' in the assassination. In the hysterical atmosphere that was beginning to develop Zinoviev was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment and Kamenev to 5.

KIROV KILLING WAS THE FIRST KILLING OF COMMUNIST LEADER SINCE ATTEMPT ON LENIN

Six months later, on December 1, 1934, Stalin's best friend, Kirov, member of the Politburo and boss of Leningrad, was shot and killed by a communist assassin–the first assassination

or attempted assassination of a Bolshevik notability since Fannie Kaplan's shooting of Lenin in 1918.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 549

103 PERSONS ALREADY CONVICTED WERE EXECUTED AFTER THE KIROV KILLING

One hundred and three persons were executed, as well as the 13 said to have been Nikolayev's accomplices. It was not pretended that the hundred and three had anything whatever to do with the Kirov case. They were, however, not innocent men and women picked off the streets, as was alleged. All were in prison at the time Kirov was shot; all were accused of some crime or other, from conspiracy to assassinate Stalin to espionage on behalf of foreign powers; all had been convicted of some offense.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 550

LENINGRAD NKVD FACILITATED THE KIROV MURDER

However, Nikolayev could never have obtained permission to the Smolny Institute, the party's Leningrad headquarters, if the usual guards on each floor had not been withdrawn. At the same time, Kirov's personal bodyguard was detained and prevented from accompanying his boss into the building. In the course of the investigation, it emerged that the NKVD were responsible for removing the guards, knew all about Nikolayev and his grudge, had twice arrested him on earlier occasions when he was found in the vicinity of Kirov with a revolver–and had twice released him despite the protests of those on guard duty. It was later revealed that the NKVD were responsible for a faked "accident" in which Borisov, Kirov's bodyguard, was killed while being driven to the Smolny to give evidence to Stalin and the other investigators. Those who were involved in the "accident" were subsequently liquidated.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 466

KIROV WOULD NOT ACCEPT MOSCOW JOB OFFERED BY STALIN

On 10 February 1934, after the congress closed, the new Central Committee met for its first plenum and elected its standing bodies. The next day Pravda reported the results. Stalin, Molotov, Kaganovich, Voroshilov, Kalinin, Ordzhonikidze, Kuibyshev, Kirov, Andreev, and Kosior were listed (in that order) as full members of the Politburo; Mikoyan, Chubar, Petrovsky, Postyshev, and Rudzutak as candidate members. The Secretariat was reduced to four members; Stalin, Kaganovich, Kirov (who remained Secretary of the Leningrad committee), and Zhdanov (relieved of his duties as secretary of the Gorky committee). The Orgburo consisted of Stalin, Kaganovich, Kirov, Zhdanov, Yezhov, Shvernik, Kosarev, Stetsky, Gamarnik, and Kuibyshev, with M.M. Kaganovich (Lazar's plant director brother) and Krinitsky as candidates….

During this postcongress plenum, it was Stalin himself who nominated Kirov to be one of the members of the new smaller Central Committee Secretariat, and he proposed that Kirov move to Moscow to take up his new secretarial duties (and indeed, Kirov could hardly have discharged them in any but a formal sense without moving to Moscow). To the latter proposal Kirov objected strongly, asking to be permitted to stay in Leningrad for another year

or two to help ensure fulfillment of the second Five-Year Plan. Both Ordzhonikidze and Kuibyshev spoke up in favor of this arrangement, and Stalin, infuriated that he was not receiving the usual full support, stalked out of the meeting room in a huff.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 262

NIKOLAEV PUTS THE BLAME FOR KIROV'S DEATH ON THE LENINGRAD SECRET POLICE

The well-informed NKVD defector, Orlov, wrote that Nikolaev pointed at Zaporozhets, Leningrad's deputy NKVD boss, and said, "Why are you asking me? Ask him."
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 149

ORDER TO PARTIES TO EXPLAIN THE KILLINGS AFTER KIROV MURDER

[9 January 1935] Telegram from the Political Commission of the ECCI Political Secretariat to the Communist Parties of other countries on counteracting the anti-Soviet campaign abroad in connection with the executions related to the case of Kirov
"In order to confuse the masses, French reformists are talking about the execution of hundreds of workers. It is necessary to decisively refute this insolent lie. Those executed were accessories to Kirov's murder and were linked to other White Guard terrorists who had infiltrated the Soviet Union from abroad with bombs and explosive charges with the goal of organizing attempts on the lives of the representatives of Soviet power."
Chase, William J., Enemies Within the Gates?, translated by Vadim A. Staklo, New Haven: Yale University Press, c2001, p. 41.

DEPORTATIONS FOLLOWING KIROV KILLING ARE LIMITED

Despite the changes in top-level policy, certain kinds of mass campaigns continued, albeit on a local and sharply reduced scale; the regime could not live without them. Following the assassination of S. M. Kirov in December 1934, several waves of police action deported thousands from Leningrad according to social category. In 1935-36, police troikas conducted sweeps against various categories of criminals and violators of residence restrictions. In early 1935 the Ukrainian NKVD conducted a mass deportation of suspicious populations from border regions. Nevertheless, these operations were seen as exceptions to the general policy, and when they took place, central party and state officials criticized their implementation. The post-Kirov assassination deportations were largely limited to Leningrad and tapered off rather quickly; already in May 1935, Vyshinsky was writing to Stalin complaining about how their wholesale character was producing a mass of procedural complaints. The April 1935 border deportations in Ukraine brought a protest from USSR NKVD chief Yagoda, who criticized his Ukrainian subordinates for the operation. NKVD Ukraine chief Balitskii defended himself by noting that the operation was ordered by regional officials, in this case the Ukrainian party Central Committee.
Getty, J. Arch. "Excesses are not permitted, "Russian Review 61 (January 2002) p. 120-121.

ONE DEFENDANT DENOUNCES ANOTHER

My own deepest impression at the trials I attended was that of the moral disintegration of the defendants and the process by which it had been reached. It had begun far back in honest differences of opinion; it had degenerated into naked lust for power and a hatred that enveloped everything, even the fellow conspirators. “Let him not pretend to be such an innocent,” cried Reingold in court of his co-defendant, Kamenev. “He would have made his way to power over a mountain of corpses.”
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 130

Bakayev, was slated to be chief of the GPU and would use the post to liquidate the agents who had done the actual murders, thus burying all evidence of a higher-ups’ crime. Some of the lesser agents apparently first learned in court the fate that their chiefs had reserved for them, and this greatly added to the venom with which they denounced those chiefs.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 130

After the reading of the indictment, the accused pleaded guilty on all counts, with the exception of Smirnov & Holtzman. Smirnov admitted to having belonged to the “Center” and to having received terrorist instructions from Trotsky, but again denied participation in preparing or executing terrorist acts. Holtzman, too, though admitting having brought terrorist instructions from Trotsky, denied himself participating in terrorism.
…Zinoviev, called on to confirm the story (Smirnov’s direct implication in terrorist activity), added that the murder of Kirov had been a joint enterprise involving both Zinovievites and Trotskyites, including Smirnov. Kamenev also confirmed this. The joint terror network was thus sketched out right at the start of the trial. For good measure, Mrachkovsky also implicated Lominadze (who had committed suicide the previous year), and a Red Army group of assassins headed by Divisional Commander Schmidt….
Mrachkovsky was followed by Evdokimov, who said he had deceived the court in January 1935. He then explained how he, Bakayev, Zinoviev, and Kamenev had organized the Kirov assassination. The plan had been to get Stalin at the same time: “… Bakayev warned Nikolayev and his accomplices that they must wait for Zinoviev’s signal,” said Evdokimov, “that they must fire simultaneously with the shots to be fired in Moscow and Kiev.” (Mrachkovsky had been quoted in the indictment as having said at the preliminary examination that “Stalin was to be killed first,” but in any case Kirov was not supposed to precede the general secretary to the grave). Evdokimov for the first time involved the Old Bolshevik Sokolnikov, former candidate member of the Politburo and still a candidate member of the Central Committee.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 94

But the trial showed that the guilty perpetrators started to point fingers at each other and to tell the truth on each other in order to save their own necks.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 95

KAMENEV ADMITS GUILT

The reason for the conspiracy was given by Kamenev, brother-in-law of Trotsky.
Kamenev said that by 1932 it became clear that Stalin’s policies had been accepted by the people and that all hopes of over-throwing him by political means had failed. “There

remained two roads, either honestly to end the struggle against the government, or to continue it by means of individual terror. We chose the second road.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 130

Next morning, Aug. 20, Kamenev gave his evidence. He spoke at first with a certain dignity, but as the cross-questioning went on, this began to collapse. He made an almost complete confession, repudiating only the idea that the plotters had intended to cover the traces of their crimes by physically exterminating NKVD men and others who might know about them. About Smirnov's denials, he said, "It is ridiculous wriggling, which only creates a comical impression."
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 95

As Kamenev said, "Even with Stalin we, by our policy of double-dealing, had obtained, after all, forgiveness of our mistakes by the Party and had been taken back into its ranks….
No documentary evidence (except Olberg's Honduran passport and Tukhachevsky's visiting card) was produced [at the Aug. 1936 Zinoviev trial].
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 107

Another member of the counter-revolutionary Zinovievite grouping–Kamenev–recounting in detail how the Trotskyite-Zinovievite bloc was organized and giving the practical plans of the center, testified at the July 23, 1936 interrogation:
"…We, i.e., the Zinovievite center of the counter-revolutionary organization whose membership I have given above, and the Trotskyite counter-revolutionary organization consisting of Smirnov, Mrachkovsky, and Ter-Vaganyan, agreed in 1932 to the unification of both, i.e., the Zinovievite and Trotskyite, counter-revolutionary organizations for joint preparation of terrorists acts against the Central Committee leaders, principally against Stalin and Kirov.
The essential thing is that both Zinoviev and we–I, Kamenev, Evdokimov, Bakayev, and the Trotskyite leaders, Smirnov, Mrachkovsky, Ter-Vaganyan, decided in 1932 that the only technique through which we could hope to attain power was to organize terrorist acts against the Communist party leaders, principally against Stalin.
The negotiations between ourselves and the Trotskyites on unification were conducted on precisely the basis of a terrorist struggle against the Communist party leaders."
(Kamenev, Record of Interrogation, July 23-24, 1936)
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 170

When asked if the 1932 negotiations between the Zinoviev-Kamenev and Trotskyite groupings were brought to a conclusion, Kamenev answered as follows during the interrogation:
"We did bring to a conclusion the negotiations with the Trotskyites on uniting the Trotskyites and Zinovievite counter-revolutionary organizations, and between us, that is–the Zinovievite center consisting of Zinoviev, Kamenev, Evdokimov, Bakayev, and Kuklin, and the Trotskyite center consisting of Smirnov, Mrachkovsky, and Ter-Vaganyan–an agreement was reached on a bloc for joint struggle against the Communist Party, using, as I have already testified above, terror against the Communist party leaders."
(Kamenev, Record of Interrogation, July 23-24, 1936)

McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 171

Kamenev, the other leader of the united center, gave the following answer to the investigator's question: did he know of the center's decision to kill comrades Stalin and Kirov:
"Yes, I must admit that even before the meeting in Ilinsk Zinoviev told me about the decisions contemplated by the center of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite bloc with respect to preparing terrorist acts against Stalin and Kirov. At the time he told me that this decision was categorically insisted upon by the Trotskyite representatives in the center–Smirnov, Mrachkovsky, and Ter-Vaganyan–that they had a direct order on this from Trotsky, and that they demanded the de facto adoption of this measure in implementation of the principles on which the bloc was based…."
(Kamenev, Record of Interrogation, July 23-24, 1936)
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 172

Here, for example, is what one of the leaders of the united Trotskyite-Zinovievite bloc, Kamenev, testified at the investigation:
"At the very outset of our investigations with the Trotskyites there were still some pale attempts to discuss the possibility of putting together a positive platform.
However, we soon became convinced that this was a pointless task and that we did not have any ideological platform at all.
Our wager on the insurmountability of the difficulties through which the country was passing, on the critical state of the economy, on the collapse of the economic policy of the party leadership in the second half of 1932, had already clearly been lost.
Under the guidance of the Communist Party Central Committee and overcoming difficulties, the country was successfully following the course of economic growth. This we could not fail to see.
It would have seemed proper for us to end the struggle. However, the logic of the counter-revolutionary struggle, the naked usurpation of power–devoid of any ideas–drove us in the other direction.
The way out of the difficulties, the victory of the policies of the Communist Party Central Committee, aroused in us a new upsurge of bitterness and hatred of the party leadership, in particular, of Stalin."
(Kamenev, Record of Interrogation, July 24, 1936)
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 177

Kamenev at the investigation discussed with unconcealed cynicism the possible alternatives for achieving power.
To the investigator's question–did the Trotskyite-Zinovievite center discuss plans for seizing power?–he answered as follows:
"We discussed this question several times. We had settled upon and worked out two alternative ways for the leaders of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite bloc to attain power:
The first, and seemingly most realistic, alternative was that, after the commission of the terrorist act against Stalin, there would be confusion in the leadership of the party and

government, and this leadership would engage in negotiations with the leaders of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite bloc, and primarily with Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Trotsky.
Zinoviev and I counted on taking the dominant position in the party and country in these negotiations, since by our two-faced policy under Stalin we had, in any case, succeeded in having the party pardon our errors and accept us back into its ranks, whereas our participation, that of myself, Zinoviev, and Trotsky, in terrorist acts, would remain a secret to the party and the country.
The other alternative for seizing power, which seemed to us less reliable, was that the leadership of the party and the country would be disorganized and uncertain of itself after a terrorist act had been committed against Stalin.
The leaders of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite bloc would succeed in exploiting the confusion and in compelling the remaining party leaders to bring us to power, or even in forcing them to yield us their places.
Trotsky's appearance and his participation in the struggle for power were taken as self-evident.
In addition, we considered it as not out of the question that the Rightists–Bukharin, Tomsky, and Rykov–would also participate in reorganizing the new governmental power."
(Kamenev, Record of Interrogation, July 23-24, 1936)
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 179

ZINOVIEV DROPPED BECAUSE HE WOULD NOT TAKE ORDERS

Zinoviev, former chief of the Communist international and later dropped because unwillingness to follow the Stalin policy of non-interference by the Soviet government in other nations internal affairs, said that he had grown so accustomed to giving orders to large groups of people that he could not endure life without it.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 130

PYATAKOV IMPLICATES TROTSKY WITH HESS

Pyatakov, former chief of Soviet state industry, said that he had met Trotsky abroad in 1935 and learned that the latter had made a deal with Rudolph Hess for Nazi support in the overthrow of the Stalin regime.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 132

REPORTERS STATE DEFENDANT'S GUILT

Most of the foreign press at the time denounced the trials as a frame up. Most of foreign observers who sat at the trials found them credible, even if shocking. D. N. Pritt, a British member of Parliament, wrote a pamphlet stating his convictions that the men were guilty as charged. Edward C. Carter, Secretary-General of the Institute of Pacific relations, wrote: "It makes sense and is convincing. The confessions seem both normal and purposeful. The theory that it was a frame up is untenable. It was not a device to secure removal of critics. The Kremlin's case was genuine, terribly genuine."
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 132

In retrospect the portrait of conspiracy spread on the Soviet court record appears to the present writer, as it did at the time, to be closer to reality then any alternative explanation…. The culprits failed in their larger purposes because they became ever more muddled, desperate, and self-defeated with each passing year. They perceived, contrary to their hopes and beliefs, that the Second Five-Year Plan, as it developed under Stalin's leadership, was not failing but was accomplishing its objectives. They also perceived that the Stalinist analysis of the international situation was essentially correct while their own expectations were as false as their plans were fatal. For these reasons they failed. For these reasons also they finally confessed out of a subjective necessity of redeeming themselves in their own eyes by serving anew, even in disgrace and in the face of death, the cause they had served all their lives. In many of its other aspects, however, the purge became "dizzy with success," after the manner of 1930, and produced shocking abuses and injustices. But the denials and counter-accusations of Trotsky and his supporters, despite the doubt they cast on the time or place of certain episodes, do not invalidate the major theses of the Prosecutor and the accused. Neither do they lend credibility to the hypotheses of a "frame up" based on false confessions.
Those who have read the preceding chapters will have no difficulty in understanding how and why Trotsky, for all his denials, came to play the role of Judas.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 264

YAGODA AND OTHER GPU PUNISHED JUSTIFIABLY

In connection with the arrest of Yagoda, other arrests of local G.P.U. officials occurred in many cities, on the charge of "arresting innocent citizens" and "using improper methods to export confessions." They were given the severest sentences, for the crime was considered of the very gravest nature.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial Press, 1941, p. 134

On the terror side, they [Defendants in the Bukharin trial] had been responsible for the assassination of Kirov, which Yagoda had facilitated through Zaporozhets. But in addition, they had caused the deaths of Kuibyshev and of Maxim Gorky, hitherto regarded as natural (and of the former 0GPU chief, Menzhinsky, and of Gorky's son Peshkov into the bargain). This had been done by medical murder. Yagoda was also charged with an attempt to poison Yezhov.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 343

In August 1936 I saw Yagoda…. He looked embarrassed. He said that Stalin was surrounded by rumor-mongers and slanderers, that there were reports which implicated every member of the Government…. He gave me a peculiar look and said, "I have information regarding Mekhlis. It will not be believed if I submit it. It concerns his contacts abroad." I realized he wanted to involve me in some plan of his to compromise his enemies who are close to Stalin.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 236

ZINOVIEV/KAMENEV TRIALS BRIEFLY OUTLINED

For the investigations set on foot by the Kirov murder led to the unraveling of a conspiracy the like of which it would be difficult to find anywhere in history. Zinoviev, Kamenev, and 11 others were brought to trial and accused of forming a counter-revolutionary terrorist organization…. They were found guilty of associating with Trotsky and with foreign powers, and were sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment. Later, in 1936, when the investigations had gone further, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and 14 others were charged with treason and organized terrorism under Trotsky's leadership. All confessed their guilt and were shot.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 162

…Stalin had re-opened the investigation into the Kirov assassination more than a year after he had pronounced it closed and several months after Yezhov's failed attempt to reopen it in June 1935. Zinoviev and Kamenev, who had been in prison since early 1935, were re-interrogated.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 248

Although Zinoviev and Kamenev did not actually order the killing, according to the official formulation, they had encouraged and misled followers who had carried out the assassination.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 114

THE TRIALS WERE JUSTIFIED, GENUINE AND WHAT HAPPENED AT THEM

Whatever criticism may be made of the mode of operations, of the trials, terror, bureaucracy, fanaticism, and injustices of the period, they must be seen against the background of this fact: that all the trials–Schacti, Menshevik, Industrial Party, Metro Vickers, Tukashevsky–and the terror against the NEP men and kulaks represent in common the struggle between revolution and counter revolution in a country surrounded by hostile governments and beset by perils which would allow no time for pleasantries or refinement of procedure. To ignore this is to distort everything. Civil war is not pleasant. It is waged by masses who are not always discriminating, either in the means they use or in their choice of victims. And the whole period from the Schacti trial to the final bloody purge of the Red Army was one of civil war.
The struggle shocked the world because the world did not think in terms of civil war, but judged the events from the standpoint of a State's relations with its citizens in a period of peace. Journalists, frequently working themselves into a state of hysteria, suggested the most sinister means of extracting confessions from the prisoners in the trials–drugs, false promises of leniency, third degree, all manner of threats–and continually saw, behind the screen of the courts…Joseph Stalin waiting for the right moment to dip his pen in blood and sign another death warrant. On the other hand it should not be overlooked that some lawyers, some journalists, some ambassadors, watching the proceedings with more impartial eyes, had no complaints to make of the proceedings of the courts, and while still amazed with the confessions of the prisoners, believed them to be true.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 163-64

On the other hand, there seems to be little doubt that the accused in these Trials were guilty of treason according to article 58 of the Soviet penal code.
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, Inc., 1941, p. 42

These activities and methods [Fifth Columnists and internal aggression], apparently, existed in Russia, as part of the German plan against the Soviets, as long ago as 1935.
It was in 1936 that Hitler made his now famous Nuremberg speech, in which he clearly indicated his designs upon the Ukraine.
The Soviet government, it now appears, was even then acutely aware of the plans of the German high military and political commands and of the “inside work” being done in Russia, preparatory to German attack upon Russia.
As I ruminated over this situation, I suddenly saw the picture as I should have seen it at the time. The story had been told in the so-called treason or purge trials of 1937 and 1938 which I had attended and listened to. In reexamining the record of these cases and also what I had written at the time from this new angle, I found that practically every device of German Fifth Columnists activity, as we now know it, was disclosed and laid bare by the confessions and testimony elicited at these trials of self confessed “Quislings” in Russia.
It was clear that the Soviet government believed that these activities existed, was thoroughly alarmed, and had proceeded to crush them vigorously. By 1941, when the German invasion came, they had wiped out any Fifth Column which had been organized.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 274

For those who attended the trial, as for those of us who can read the trial proceedings, it is clear that the “show trial” theory, widely diffused by anti-Communists, is unrealistic.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 161 [p. 142 on the NET]

I studied the legal procedure in criminal cases in Soviet Russia somewhat carefully in 1932, and concluded (as published at the time in “Twelve Studies in Soviet Russia”) that the procedure gave the ordinary accused a very fair trial.
Their purpose, it seemed, was merely to seize power for themselves, without any pretense that they had any substantial following in the country and without any real policy or philosophy to replace the existing Soviet Socialism.
Pritt, Denis Nowell. The Moscow Trial was Fair. London: ” Russia To-day,” 1937, p. 5

And the charge against the men was not merely made. It was admitted, admitted by men the majority of whom were shown by their records to be possessed of physical and moral courage well adapted to protect them from confessing under pressure. And at no stage was any suggestion made by any of them that any sort of improper treatment had been used to persuade them to confess.
The first thing that struck me, as an English lawyer, was the almost free-and-easy demeanor of the prisoners. They all looked well; they all got up and spoke, even at length, whenever they wanted to do so (for the matter of that, they strolled out, with a guard, when they wanted to).
The one or two witnesses who were called by the prosecution were cross-examined by the prisoners who were affected by their evidence, with the same freedom as would have been the case in England.

The prisoners voluntarily renounced counsel; they could have had counsel without fee had they wished, but they preferred to dispense with them. And having regard to their pleas of guilty and to their own ability to speak, amounting in most cases to real eloquence, they probably did not suffer by their decision, able as some of my Moscow colleagues are.
The most striking novelty, perhaps, to an English lawyer, was the easy way in which first one and then another prisoner would intervene in the course of the examination of one of their co-defendants, without any objection from the Court or from the prosecutor, so that one got the impression of a quick and vivid debate between four people, the prosecutor and three prisoners, all talking together, if not actually at the same moment–a method which, whilst impossible with a jury, is certainly conducive to clearing up disputes of fact with some rapidity.
Far more important, however, if less striking, were the final speeches.
In accordance with Soviet law, the prisoners had the last word–15 speeches after the last chance of the prosecutor to say anything.
The Public Prosecutor, Vyshinsky, spoke first. He spoke for four or five hours. He looked like a very intelligent and rather mild-mannered English businessmen.
He spoke with vigor and clarity. He seldom raised his voice. He never ranted, or shouted, or thumped the table. He rarely looked at the public or played for effect. He said strong things; he called the defendants bandits, and mad dogs, and suggested that they ought to be exterminated… in many cases less grave many English prosecuting counsel have used much harsher words.
Pritt, Denis Nowell. The Moscow Trial was Fair. London: “Russia To-day,” 1937, p. 6

By the way, there are increasing signs that the Russian trials are not faked, but that there is a plot among those who look upon Stalin as a stupid reactionary who has betrayed the ideas of the Revolution. Though we find it difficult to imagine this kind of internal thing, those who know Russia best are all more or less of the same opinion. I was firmly convinced to begin with that it was a case of a dictator’s despotic acts, based on lies and deception, but this was a delusion.
Born, Max. The Born-Einstein Letters. New York: Walker and Company, 1971, page 130

By PAT SLOAN
(Recently Returned after Five Years in the USSR)
As in all previous big Soviet trials, this one has been declared a “frame up.” But just as Monkhouse’s outburst in court, during the famous Metro-Vickers trial, that the trial was a “frame up,” was never supported by one iota of evidence; so, today, the allegation of “frame up” remains unsupported in the slightest agree.
Pritt, Denis Nowell. The Moscow Trial was Fair. London: ” Russia To-day,” 1937, p. 8

They were granted every possibility of saying whatever they liked. They were granted the right to choose their defending counsel, to call witnesses, to demand examination of the evidence, etc. But they renounced the right of choosing defending counsel, to call any witnesses and to deliver speeches in their defense, for the chain of their crimes was too obvious and indisputably proved. Their crimes were proved before the world in public trial by documents, facts, material evidence.
The criminal conspirators were caught red-handed with weapons in hand, with passports in their possession, which they had received from the agents of Hitler and of the Gestapo, with explosives. Documentary proof was adduced before the court regarding the personal

leadership of the terrorists by Trotsky, who had sent them to the Soviet Union to murder Stalin, to organize terroristic acts against the leaders of the socialist state. Overwhelming proof of the guilt of the Trotsky-Zinoviev terrorists was produced at an open trial. It was proved beyond dispute that Trotsky, Zinoviev and their gang stood on the other side of the barricades, in the same camp as those who are fighting against the Spanish people, sending airplanes, weapons, and munitions to the rebel generals, who are waging a counter-revolutionary civil war in Spain.
Dimitrov. To Defend Assassins is to Help Fascism. NY: Workers Library Pub., 1937, p. 7-8

The Bukharin-Rykov trial was public and was eagerly monitored by the diplomatic corps and the world press. As usual at Soviet trials all the accused were present during the whole trial seated side by side. During the whole trial they were fully free to talk at any time and to comment on the accounts of the others and even to pose questions to the other accused when they deemed it necessary. More than ever it is important today to have knowledge of this trial, the accusations of the attorney and the responses of the accused as well the possibilities to defense and freedom to speak. Knowing the facts is the best way to fight the smear campaign of the right against the Soviet Union and Socialism.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

PYATAKOV SPEAKS AGAINST TROTSKY

Pyatakov said, Trotsky was firmly in favor of the forcible overthrow of the Stalin leadership by methods of terrorism and wrecking.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 223

Pyatakov [said]… “I have waived my right to a speech in my defense because the prosecution is right in its statement of the facts, and in its estimation of my crime. But I cannot reconcile myself to one assertion made by the State Prosecutor, namely, that even now I am a Trotskyite. Yes, I was a Trotskyite for many years; but my only motive for the statements I have made at this trial, was the desire, even now, even when it is too late, to get rid of my loathsome Trotskyite past.”
Nobody acquainted with Pyatakov’s work could seriously doubt that he was speaking the truth.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press, 1956, p. 66

…Orlov declined to become involved. He had already learned the sordid details of the second Moscow show trial, after which Pyatakov and Radek had been shot together with 15 other old Bolsheviks after abjectly confessing yet another Trotskyist plot against Stalin.
Costello, John and Oleg Tsarev. Deadly illusions. New York: Crown, c1993, p. 284

SHESTOV SPEAKS AGAINST SEDOV

Shestov followed Trotsky with fanatical devotion…. Shestov quotes Sedov as saying “the only correct way, the difficult way but a sure one, was forcibly to remove Stalin and leaders of the government by means of terrorism.”
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 225

TROTSKYITES MEET WITH SUBVERSIVE GROUPS

Trotskyite organizers addressed motley secret gatherings of die hard enemies of the Soviet regime — Social Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, leftists, rightists, nationalists, anarchists, and white Russian fascists and Monarchists.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 228

TROTSKYITE MRACHKOVSKY ADVOCATES TERROR AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT

Mrachkovsky one of Trotsky's followers told one of these terrorist groups in Moscow in 1932, "The methods of struggle used until now haven't produced any positive results. There remains only one path of struggle, and that is the removal of the leadership of the party by violence. Stalin and the other leaders must be removed. That is the principal task!"
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 229

NEW EVIDENCE WARRANTS A SECOND TRIAL FOR ZINOVIEV AND KAMENEV

New evidence had been brought to light as the result of the special investigation into Kirov's murder. Kamenev and Zinoviev were to stand trial again.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 285

Once again, innocent people were victimized because of what they might do. [Sounds like the Japanese and McCarthy]
It is clear that early in 1936 Stalin had become suspicious of the former opposition. Investigations and repression against them proceeded by degrees, with delays, indecision, and various twists and turns, zigs and zags. Back in 1935 the opposition had been accused only of moral complicity in indirectly encouraging minor figures in their dangerous opposition and assassination conspiracies. At that time the matter was declared closed. Later, "on the basis of new materials received in 1936," it was said that Zinoviev and Kamenev, at Trotsky's behest, had themselves been assassins, but that Bukharin and the Right had not been involved. Then, at the beginning of 1937–and not without considerable hesitation and ambiguity–the new political line began to implicate the rightists as well, though it was some time yet before this policy took its final shape.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 487

In June Zinoviev, Kamenev, and other members of the old Leningrad Opposition were tried secretly for complicity in the murder of Kirov. There seems to have been a somewhat tenuous link between them and persons with whom the assassin Nikolaev was acquainted, and there were also ugly suggestions of extraneous, that is non-Russian, influences at work. Be that as it may, the accused were all acquitted but not released from custody, and the inquiry continued….
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 212

After their conviction in the January 1935 trial, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and others were sent to the Verkhne-Uralsk political prison. Ciliga, who saw them there, reported later that Zinoviev

arrived with a bunch of books on fascism, a subject in which he was showing special interest, and that during the summer of 1935 he and Kamenev were returned to Moscow where they were put on trial a second time in secret, along with 34 others, on charges of preparing an attempt on the life of Stalin. Although Kamenev's brother, the painter Rosenfeld, was a prosecution witness against him, he categorically denied all charges. As a consequence, the five-year sentence he received in the January 1935 trial was doubled. Ciliga learned about the second trial after Zinoviev and Kamenev were bought back to Verkhne-Uralsk. The decisive period in the trial preparation still lay ahead.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 314

TOMSKY EXPOSES GENERALS AGREEING TO SURRENDER TO GERMANS

Tomsky added that the moment the Nazis attacked Soviet Russia, the military group planned to "open the front to the Germans"–that is, to surrender to the German High Command. This plan had been worked out in detail and agreed-upon by Tukhachevsky, Putna, Gamarnik, and the Germans.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 292

GUNTHER SAYS DEFENDANTS DID NOT WHIMPER BUT ARGUED

As John Gunther later reported in Inside Europe:
"…the impression held widely abroad that the defendants all told the same story, that they were abject and grovelling, that they behaved like sheep in the executioner's pen, isn't quite correct. They argued stubbornly with the prosecutor; in the main they told only what they were forced to tell….
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 297

DAVIES COMPLIMENTS VYSHINSKY'S DEMEANOR AT THE TRIAL

The American ambassador in Moscow, Joseph Davies, was profoundly impressed by the trial. He attended it daily and, assisted by an interpreter, carefully followed the proceedings. A former Corporation lawyer, Davies stated that Vyshinsky…Impressed him as being "calm, dispassionate, intellectual, able, and wise. He conducted the treason trial in a manner that won my respect and admiration as a lawyer."
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 301

The Attorney General is a man of about 60 and is much like Homer Cummings; calm, dispassionate, intellectual, and able and wise. He conducted the treason trial in a manner that won my respect and admiration as a lawyer.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 67

DAVIES SAYS NEARLY ALL OBSERVERS AGREED THERE WAS A PLOT

On February 17, 1937, U.S. Ambassador Davies reported in a confidential dispatch to Secretary of State Hull that almost all the foreign diplomats in Moscow shared his opinion of the justice of the verdict. Davies wrote,
“I talked to many, if not all, of the members of the Diplomatic Corps here and, with possibly one exception, they are all of the opinion that the proceedings established clearly the existence of a political plot and conspiracy to overthrow the government.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 301

But these facts were not made public. Powerful forces conspired to hide the truth about the Fifth Column in Soviet Russia. On March 11, 1937, Ambassador Davies recorded in his Moscow diary:
“Another diplomat, minister made a most illuminating statement to me yesterday. In discussing the trial, he said that the defendants were undoubtedly guilty; that all those who attended the trial had practically agreed-upon that;…
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 301

Ambassador Davies, who attended the proceedings, found the trial “terrific” in legal, human and political drama. He wrote his daughter on March 8,
“All the fundamental weaknesses and vices of human nature–personal ambitions at their wors –are shown up in the proceedings. They disclose the outlines of a plot which came very near to being successful in bringing about the the overthrow of this government.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 309

Three years later, in the summer of 1941, following the Nazi invasion of USSR, ambassador Davies wrote: “In re-examining the record of these cases [the trials of 1937 and 1938, which I had attended and listened to. I found that practically every device of German Fifth Column activity, as we now know it, was disclosed and laid bare by the confessions and the testimony elicited at these trials of self-confessed “Quislings” in Russia….
All of these trials, purges, and liquidations, which seemed so violent at the time and shocked the world, are now quite clearly a part of a vigorous and determined effort of the Stalin government to protect itself from not only revolution from within but from attack from without. They went to work early to cleanup and clean out all the treasonable elements within the country. All doubts were resolved in favor of the government.
There were no Fifth Columnists in Russia in 1941– they shot them. The purge had cleansed the country and rid it of treason. The Axis Fifth Column in Soviet Russia had been smashed.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 311

I cannot forget what a high-placed and saddened Frenchman told me recently in Washington when we were discussing the Purge… But don’t forget, mon ami, that in Russia they shot the Fifth Columnists, and in France we made them Cabinet Ministers. You see both results today… At Vichy, and on the Red war-front.
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1941, p. 135

At the time of the trial of Zinoviev and Kamenev, no one had any knowledge of the existence of the Right-Left coalition. Opinion abroad has varied in regard to the great Moscow trials. At first it was supposed that they were a ‘frame up’, a mere pretext used by Stalin for the physical extermination of all his opponents. Later, when the Soviet Union came into the war and people had personal experience, especially in France, of the activities of the German

‘fifth column’, a very different view was expressed: Stalin, it was said, had been the only clear-sighted leader, and had ruthlessly destroyed the fifth column in the Soviet Union long before the war.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 290

When World War II finally came to the USSR, the rest of the world noted the relative absence of the Hitler Fifth Column, which had overthrown most of the governments of Europe. Howard K. Smith commented: “Had Russia not liquidated a few thousand bureaucrats and officers, there is little doubt that the Red Army would have collapsed in two months.” [The Last Train from Berlin, p. 325]
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 71

BUKHARIN REJECTS PEOPLE DEFENDING HIS CRIMINAL ACTS

Bucharin said, “I may infer a priori that Trotsky and my other allies in crime, as well as the Second International…will endeavor to defend us, and particularly myself. I reject this defense…. I await the verdict.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 310

The third trial was that of Bukharin and Rykov, and also of Yagoda, the former head of the secret police, and of Krestinsky, Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs. Here again the truth of the facts alleged was thoroughly proved.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 294

BEALS RESIGNS FROM COMMISSION DENOUNCING ITS BIAS

The detailed evidence presented against Trotsky at the Moscow trials was, for the most part, completely ignored by the Commission of Inquiry. On April 17 Beals resigned from the commission. Beals issued a public statement which read in part: “… The hushed adoration of the other members of the committee for Mr. Trotsky throughout the hearings has defeated all spirit of honest investigation…. The very first day I was told my questions were improper. The final cross-examination was put in a mold that prevented any search for the truth. I was taken to task for quizzing Trotsky about his archives…. The cross-examination consisted of allowing Trotsky to spout propaganda charges with eloquence and wild denunciations, with only rare efforts to make him prove his assertions…. The commission may pass its bad check on the public if it desires, but I will not lend my name to the possibility of further childishness similar to that already committed.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 313

NO EVIDENCE PROVING STALIN KILLED TROTSKY

On August 21, 1940, Trotsky died in Mexico City…. The assassin (sentenced April 16, 1943, to a 20 year prison term) was at once labeled by all Trotskyites and anti-Soviet groups as a paid killer of the GPU, hired by Stalin to slay his enemies. No evidence has ever been adduced to substantiate this contention. The murderer said, apparently in all sincerity, that he was a Trotskyite who had slain Trotsky for “betraying” Trotskyism.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 268

CONFESSIONS OF PYATAKOV AND MURALOV WERE FREELY GIVEN

But the statements of Pyatakov and Muralov (both shot like the rest of the culprits) were straightforward, clear, and unmistakable, and I think that few of those who heard them, whether Russians or strangers, could doubt that their words were true. A lot of ink has been spilled about political trials in the USSR, and the silliest assertions have been made. Hypnosis, hashish, torture–those are simple allegations, but some ingenious scribes let their imaginations fly still higher–to the mountains of Tibet, that land of mystery and distance. In Tibet, they claimed, there was a drug unknown to Western science whose properties are such that those who have consumed it become as clay in the potter's hands, to be shaped as the potter pleases.
What preposterous nonsense! No one who heard Pyatakov or Muralov could doubt for a moment that what they said was true, and that they were saying it from no outer drag of force. I don't speak of Kamenev or Zinoviev, because their Trial I did not see, but Pyatakov and Muralov I heard and believed. Remember, please, that these were no mediocre citizens of the Soviet Union. Pyatakov had a first-class mind and was a first-class executive; Muralov won Moscow for the Revolution in the hour of crisis, and had proved himself a doughty warrior for the Soviet cause. Their words rang true, and it is absurd to suggest or imagine that men like this could yield to any influence, against their own strong hearts. Why, then, it may be asked, did they confess so freely if, as I say, they were impervious to pressure?
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, Inc., 1941, p. 48-49

WHY DID THEY CONFESS

The answer to that must be found in the difference between Russians and Western races…. Americans and Englishmen have lost lives for proven crime without a word let past their lips. The Russians are different. When confronted with damning facts which they can't deny they seem to find satisfaction in "spilling the beans," a final move towards atonement, a feeling that somehow they can square themselves, not perhaps with their judges, but with their own consciences, by telling all the truth. Why this is so I don't attempt to explain, but that it is so I am convinced.
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, Inc., 1941, p. 50

The conspiracy, however, for the removal of Stalin was steadily continued.
The confessions in the trials were partly due to the fact that Trotsky's supporters now in the dock rebelled against his policy, which had been a burden to them for years….
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 294

It is admitted that the Stalin regime was very much stronger in 1935 than it was in 1931. This improvement in the situation is referred to many times in the course of the testimony of the principal defendants as justification for their change of heart and final reasons for repentance and confession.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 35

The fact that the prisoners confessed, reply the Soviet people, can be explained very simply. It was because they were so irrevocably convicted by witnesses and documents during the preliminary inquiry that denial would have been senseless. The fact that they all confessed also has its explanation. By no means all the Trotskyists who were implicated in the plot were brought up for trial, but only those whose guilt was proved up to the hilt.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 129

Observers sent to the trials by foreign newspapers found difficulty in understanding the "monotonous sequence of confession." Why they confess was the typical journalistic question, and no one, except the Communist papers, supplied the obvious answer: "Because they were guilty." Some newspapers suggested that mysterious "talking drugs" were used: others suggested hypnotism and torture. Since, however, there was nothing in the demeanor of the prisoners to confirm that such influences had been used and since my examination I met no one who had been subjected to physical duress other than actual imprisonment, I consider that one should seek the fundamental reasons for the "guilty" pleas beyond the investigatory period.
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd., 1938, p. 211

SU WAS RIGHT ABOUT THE TRIALS AND HOW THEY PREPARED FOR NAZI INVASION

There's no denying that many of the ablest and best informed foreigners in Moscow were highly skeptical about the Kremlin's claim that a widespread murder and treason plot existed, with ramifications abroad involving the nazi Gestapo, and to a lesser degree the secret services of Britain and Japan. They were no less skeptical, however, three years later about the Kremlin's other claim, that the occupations of East Poland, the Baltic states, Bessarabia, and southern Finland, were in reality measures of precaution against a danger which did in fact materialize, the danger of nazi invasion.
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, Inc., 1941, p. 52

SU WOULD NOT HAVE CONVICTED FRIENDS UNLESS THE EVIDENCE WAS OVERWHELMING

Whatever doubt's there may be about the guilt of other accused in other Trials, it is unthinkable that Stalin and Voroshilov and Budenny and the Court-Martial could have sentenced their friends to death unless the proofs of guilt were overwhelming. Then, too, there are other points, as follows:
(a) The suicide of Gamarnik
(b) The accused all confessed guilty, although their Trial was held so soon after their arrest that they could not have been subjected to the long, gruelling process of imprisonment and examination which later was said to have extracted confessions from civilian prisoners.
(c) The Trial was attended by a hundred or more representative officers of the Red Army summoned from all over the country. For them, too, the accused had been trusted colleagues or leaders. They all accepted the verdict without question.

Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, Inc., 1941, p. 65-66

RUSSIAN MASSES APPLAUDED WHEN THE DEFENDANTS WERE SHOT

The Russians are not like us; I mean they do not care about “rugged individualism.” The mass of the Russian people want things which Americans want, and many Americans have, but they do not like Tsars or landlords or bankers or Kulaks or traitors. If you wish to know the truth, the Russian masses applauded when such folk were shot. That’s dreadful but it’s true.
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1941, p. 162

[In 1937] the overwhelming majority of Soviet citizens indisputably believed that it was a struggle to the death with people who still wanted to restore capitalism.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 280

During the whole period of the trial, from the announcement on February 28, 1938, that it would take place until the actual executions, the papers had, of course, been full of the demands of workers’ meetings that no pity should be shown to the “foul band of murderers and spies.”… The verdict of the court was received with many expressions of public joy.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 396

TOMSKY COMMITTED SUICIDE WHEN BEING ARRESTED TAKING HIS SECRET

It was now proved that before the assassination Tomsky had several times gone secretly to Leningrad [where Kirov’s killing occurred]. At the moment of his arrest he committed suicide, taking his secret with him into the grave.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 290

WHY ZINOVIEV AND KAMENEV CONFESSED

In this trial Zinoviev and Kamenev not only confessed their guilt in everything with which they were charged, but made long speeches of exaggerated penitence, filled with self-denunciation and recantation of all the ideas for which they had stood in the past–an unexampled self-abasement.
While these first trials seemed quite simply inexplicable, those that followed made the self-accusations and self-recriminations rather more intelligible. The confession of guilt is easy to understand. Certain facts had been established by the preliminary interrogation, and nothing could be gained by denying those facts. But at that moment Zinoviev and Kamenev knew that the majority of the conspirators were still at large and their groups and headquarters were still undiscovered; they knew also from the preliminary inquiry that the authorities had as yet found out relatively little. Their volubility in self-abasement was a sort of smoke-screen, a clouding of the issue. They wanted the trial to remain confined to themselves and to bring no fresh revelations; they wanted to create the impression that they were the only persons at work in the conspiracy and that they now saw how hopeless it had been. They saw death approaching, and beyond the cloud of self-abasement they could

already see the avenging hand of their fellow conspirators. With death looming above them, they believed that the others, warned by the trial, would now make haste.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 291

Although in retrospect it seems easy to check the interplay between the trials and events abroad, foreign observers in Moscow were slow or even loath to perceive it at the time. They did not realize that the trials really represented the Kremlin's effort to stamp out Fifth Column activities in the USSR, an effort which was only one of several measures,…taken to prepare the country for the expected Nazi attack. As far as foreigners in Moscow were concerned, the issue was obscured by the extraordinary nature of the first trial. The accused behaved in so hysterical a manner, heaping reproaches, accusations, and tears upon themselves and upon each other, that foreign diplomats and newspapermen who heard them were led to conclude that there was something fishy about the whole affair, that such abject confession and self-denunciation could not be genuine and must have been produced by some form of pressure. Reports were circulated and given considerable credence in America and Britain, that the accused had been hypnotized or tortured or terrorized by threats against their relatives, even dosed with a mysterious "Tibetan drug" which destroyed their will power and made them as wax in the hands of the prosecution. All of which really meant that the Anglo-Saxon mentality simply could not understand the masochistic eagerness of the accused not only to admit their guilt, but to paint it in the blackest terms.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 218

BUKHARIN WAS CLEARLY GUILTY

Some of the charges were repudiated very energetically by the defendants. Bukharin, for instance, admitted complicity in the conspiracy, but put up a determined fight throughout the trial against the charge made by the public prosecutor that he had engaged in espionage. The defendants' attitude is easy to understand. As the trials went on, everything became known to the Soviet authorities, down to the smallest details. There was nothing whatever to gain by denying the facts. Dozens, if not hundreds, of the lesser members of the organization had been able to save themselves by giving full information.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 294

TRIALS OCCURRED AT THE BEST TIME FOR STALIN

The time when the trials took place was, moreover, particularly favorable for Stalin. When the conspiracy was been organized, the opposition was expecting the absolute failure of Stalin's policy. But in the end he had made a success of collectivization and had not brought the country to ruin: the conditions of existence were manifestly improving. There was nothing the defendants could do but admit the error of their policy if they did not want to seem ridiculous.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 295

DEFENDANTS WANTED TO BE DICTATORS THEMSELVES

The defendants [in the Moscow trials] had no desire at all to bring down the dictatorship, but only to become dictators themselves in Stalin's place.

Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 295

ZINOVIEV TRIAL REVEALS THE EXTENT OF TERRORIST PLOTTING

Immediately the accused realized that for once their promises were to have no effect, they frantically tried to purchase their miserable lives by implicating others, revealing in the process a carefully organized plot against the sovereignty of the Soviet State. By these means they succeeded only in hardening the resolution of Stalin, who saw them at last for what they really were.
Armed with the new disclosures, and with Stalin's approval, Yagoda opened the "Trial of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite Terrorist Center," better known to the Western reader from the newspaper headline, "The trial of the 16…."
As the trial progressed, searching cross-examination by Vyshinsky brought to the surface a veritable maze of underground plots. Not only Kirov but also the entire personnel of the Politburo, with the unexplained exception of Molotov, were scheduled for the knife or the bullet of an assassin. Regular channels of communication with the exiled Trotsky, whose advice was to be obtained on all points, were exposed. Letters from the former War Commissar were produced as proof that he had given the actual order to assassinate Stalin….
With deadly insistence, Vyshinsky beat down the feeble protests of the accused. One after another the men who had set personal ambitions above their country and had boldly planned to take the lives of others, confessed their part in the conspiracy and begged the state to spare their lives.
If Stalin needed further proof of the security of his Government, he received it in the universal outcry against the projected attempt on his life. From factories and villages came thousands of resolutions demanding death for the traitors, while hostile crowds besieged the court, screaming insults whenever the accused appeared. One of the principal Opposition leaders, the ex-Trade Union President, Tomsky, was so staggered by the volume of protest and universal condemnation that he committed suicide.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 100

STALIN DETECTED TRAITORS LONG BEFORE THE TRIALS

In a September 9, 1929, letter to Molotov Stalin stated in a P. S. "I almost forgot. The new (new!) statement from Smirnov, Vaganian, Mrachkovski, and others must be rejected not only as unacceptable (and how!) but as a document from impudent counter-revolutionaries who are exploiting Yaroslavski's easygoing nature and the trust he has shown them. Yaroslavski must be forbidden to have anything to do with those upstarts who have exploited his easygoing nature to organize their counter-revolutionary faction on 'new,' "within-the-regulations' principles. We don't need them in the party…."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 178

THE MAJOR TRIALS OUTLINED BRIEFLY

… I sat in the court and watched the tale unfold. Zinoviev and Kamenev, once friends of Lenin and imminent theoreticians, told the judges, the audience, and the whole world that,

having lost power through the rise of Stalin, they had conspired to seize power by assassinating several leaders, presumably including Stalin, through agents who, if caught, would not know the identity of the top conspirators, but would appear to be ordinary agents of the German Gestapo. The chief conspirators, with reputations intact, would then call for "party unity" to meet the emergency. In the confusion they would gain leading posts. One of them, Bakayev, slated to become head of the GPU, would liquidate the actual assassins, thus burying all evidence against the higher ups.

That was the tale I watched unfold in the court day after day. The defendants were vocal; they bore no evidence of torture. Kamenev said that by 1932 it became clear that Stalin's policies were accepted by the people and he could no longer be overthrown by political means but only by "individual terror." "We were guided in this," he said, "by boundless bitterness against the leadership and by a thirst for power to which we had once been near." Zinoviev stated in court that he had become so used to giving orders to large numbers of people that he could not endure life without it. Minor agents gave testimony connecting the group with the Gestapo. One of them, N. Lurye, claimed to have worked "under the guidance of Franz Weitz, personal representative of Himmler." Some of the lesser lights apparently first learned in court of the fate their chiefs had reserved for them; this added to the venom with which they attacked those chiefs.

"Let him not pretend to be such an innocent," cried the defendant Reingold against co-defendant Kamenev. "He would have made his way to power over mountains of corpses."

Was the story credible? Most of the press outside the USSR called it a frame up. Most people who sat in the court-room, including the foreign correspondents, thought the story true. Ambassador Davies says in his book Mission to Moscow, that he believes the defendants guilty as charged. D. N . Pratt, imminent lawyer and British member of Parliament, was similarly convinced. Edward C. Carter, Secretary-General of the Institute of Pacific Relations, wrote: "The Kremlin's case is…terribly genuine. It makes sense…is convincing." Even Khrushchev's comprehensive attack on excesses of this period, does not say that any of the open trials were a fraud.

For me, I listened to the defendants, often from only a few feet away; the process by which once revolutionary leaders became traitors seemed understandable. They began by doubting the Russian people's ability to build socialism without outside help; this was the open discussion in 1924-27. Their doubt deepened through the contrast between Russia's inefficiency–which even brought the land to famine in 1932–and the efficient German organization they had known. Was it hard to believe that Russia might profit by German discipline, impressed by the iron heel? Plenty of irritated people in those days made such remarks. Eventually there would be a German revolution; they themselves might promote it from within. Meantime, they would be rid of the hated Stalin.

If once we admit that these first trials were genuine–and trained foreign observers thought they were–then we have a situation that might well drive a nation off its sane base. Not only were they surrounded by hostile capitalist states; their own revolutionary leadership seemed deeply penetrated by agents, plotting assassination and government overthrow. After the conviction of Zinoviev and Kamenev, arrests and trials spread wider. Tomsky, former chairman of the Central Council of Trade Unions, mentioned in court by one of the defendants, confessed guilt and committed suicide to escape arrest. Regional trials began in the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Far East. In the Far East, the chief of the GPU fled to Japan and many of his subordinates were arrested as Japanese agents.

The army was next involved. The chief of its political commissars, Marshal Gamarnik, committed suicide June 1, 1937. On July 11th, Marshall Tukhachevsky, only recently a

Vice-Commissar of Defense, was court-martialed with seven other top commanders, the first big trial to be held in secret. It was announced that the defendants admitted to being in the pay of Hitler, whom they had promised to help get the Ukraine. They got the death sentence. Some corroboration of their guilt came from abroad. E. R. Gedye, Prague correspondent of the New York Times, cabled June 18 that " two of the highest officials in Prague" told him they had "definite knowledge that secret connections between the German General Staff and certain high Russian generals had existed since the Rapallo Treaty." I myself was later told by Czech officials that their military men had been the first to learn and to inform Moscow that Czech military secrets, known to the Russians through the mutual aid alliance, were being revealed by Tukhachevsky to the German High Command.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 62

Of the endless trials, public and secret, four were of the greatest importance:…. All were charged with attempting to assassinate Stalin and the other members of the Politburo, to restore capitalism, to wreck the country's military and economic power, and to poison or kill in any other way masses of Russian workers. All were charged with working from the earliest days of the revolution for the espionage services of Britain, France, Japan, and Germany, and with having entered into secret agreements with the Nazis by which they were to dismember the Soviet Union and cede vast slices of Soviet territory to Germany and Japan.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 372

Sydney and Beatrice Webb, who made an exhaustive study of life in Communist Russia, came up with this analysis of the confessions in The Treason Trials in Russia, a New Civilization?:
'The confessions of the defendants; the manner in which the several stories corroborated one another; their frank explanations of the way they had yielded to the temptation of giving their general adherence to a treasonable company of which they did not at first understand the scope; and how they had then found themselves unable to escape from the coils in which they had become entangled;–be it added, a certain amount of further corroboration deduced from incautiously public utterances by both German and by Japanese statesmen, convinced the British and American journalists present at the trial in January 1937 that the defendants were really guilty of the treasonable conspiracies with which they were charged.'
Some other foreign observers shared this view. For instance, the American engineer John Littlepage, who had spent 10 years in Russia, and had written about Stalin's Russia for various US publications, was asked by friends whether the accused were guilty. He said without equivocation that most of them were. What surprised Littlepage was that the men in the Kremlin had waited so long to realize that 'other Communists are the most dangerous enemies they have' (in The Saturday Evening Post , 1 January 1938).
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 205

RADEK DENOUNCES TROTSKY

I heard Radek speak about Trotsky in Moscow in 1925 and 1931, before and after his first defection…. Later he declared with the tone and mien that seemed to me somewhat too solemn, almost clerical, that he had searched his heart during his exile, re-examined everything and recognized the absurdity of Trotsky's program.

Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 108

[In a letter to Kaganovich and Yezhov on 19 August 1936 Stalin stated] I read Radek's letter addressed to me about his situation in connection with the Trotskyite trial. Although the letter is not very persuasive, I propose anyway that the question of arresting Radek be dropped for now and that he be allowed to publish an article over his byline against Trotsky in Izvestia. The article will have to be reviewed beforehand.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 328

DEFENDANTS FREELY AND NONCHALANTLY CONFESSED

The principal defendants [in the January 1937 trial] were Pyatakov, Radek, Sokolnikov, Serebryakov, and Muralov…. In detail, calmly and dispassionately, Pyatakov set forth the narrative of his criminal activities. As he proceeded (as was the case with the others), his testimony would be interrupted by the prosecutor who called upon different defendants to corroborate the certain specific instances which he described. In some cases they modified or disputed some fact but in the main would corroborate the fact that the crime was committed. All this was done by these defendants with the greatest degree of nonchalance. I noted particularly that after Serebryakov, who was an old railroad man, was called to his feet to corroborate the fact of a peculiarly horrible crime (which he did laconically), he sat down quite unconcerned and yawned.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 38

Foreign observers at the trial [Shakhty trial], of whom I was one, were somewhat puzzled by the apparent readiness, even willingness, of the accused to admit and sometimes actually to stress their own and each other's sins.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 154

OVERALL IMPRESSIONS OF 1937 DEFENDANTS

Radek, the second defendant to be called,… asked them to remember that he it was who had disclosed the Trotsky conspiracy, with the implication that, but for him, that which the government desired to establish would not have been forthcoming. Serebryakov was as mild-mannered a pirate as ever slit a throat (with a cherubic face), who casually recited horror after horror which he had projected. He seemed more or less resigned in his demeanor. Sokolnikov, former ambassador to London,…delivered himself of what might appear to be a dispassionate lecture upon his participation in the conspiracy, and expounded logically and clearly the reasons which prompted him and his associates to launch upon a plot with Japan in Germany; the basis of which was that there was no possibility of projecting their plans for the betterment of the Russian people internally because the Stalin government was so strong that mass action within could not overthrow it and that historically they had reason to believe that their best chance was to rise to power through a foreign war and to create a smaller state out of the embers, because of the friendly disposition of the victors (Germans), and the probable attitude of other Western powers of Europe in the resultant peace arrangements.

Muralov…told of his reasons for supporting Trotsky as one of his oldest and best friends and a great man, who had been a man “when others were mice,” and again when he spoke of his reasons for refusal to confess, and ultimate recantation. He denied there had been any pressure put upon him; and stated that for eight months he had refused to confess, because he resented his arrest and became angry and stubborn; that at first he thought he would prefer to die as a hero and forward the cause in that way, but that, when he gradually understood the whole plot, he had finally concluded that the Stalin government had made much progress and was doing such great things for the Russian people that he had been mistaken, and that his duty lay in making a clean breast of it. The remainder of the defendants all testified at length with reference to their particular crimes, and were of widely different types.

All defendants [at the Jan. 1937 trial] seemed eager to heap accusation upon accusation upon themselves–mea culpa maxima. They required little cross-examination by the prosecutor. In the case of one defendant a prosecutor even had to admonish him to get down to the case and not embroider his testimony with additional crimes. The attitude of the prosecutor generally was entirely free from browbeating. Apparently, it was not necessary.

At the conclusion of the testimony, the prosecutor made a long address to the court, based in part upon evidence but largely upon extraneous historical matter. It was a scholarly, able presentation.

Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 39-40

SENTENCES OF THE 1937 DEFENDANTS

The defendant Pyatakov asked for no mercy in his final speech, nor did Shestov, who had been the chief agent for the perpetration of some of the most heinous crimes. Shestov, in fact, stated that he deserved death and wanted to die. Radek did not ask for mercy except by implication, nor did Muralov. Sokolnikov did, but in a very dignified way.

The defendants were all adjudged guilty and sentenced according to the degree of crime. Pyatakov and Serebryakov, as members of the anti-Soviet Trotskyite center and as those who had organized treason, espionage, wrecking, and terrorist activities, were sentenced to the supreme penalty–to be shot. Eleven others, including Muralov, as organizers and direct executors of the crimes, were sentenced to the supreme penalty–to be shot. Two, Radek and Sokolnikov, as being members of the anti-Soviet Trotskyite “parallel center” and responsible for its criminal activities–but not directly participating in the organization and execution of the specific crimes–were sentenced to 10 years’ imprisonment. Two others, Arnold and Stroilov, were sentenced to imprisonment for 10 years for the specific crimes with which they were charged…. The clemency shown to Radek and to Sokolnikov occasioned general surprise.

Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 41

WHY HAVE THE PUBLIC 1937 TRIAL SINCE THEY CONFESSED

The most extraordinary part of this trial, from a Western outlook, is that there should have been such a trial at all. The accused had all entered the plea of guilty. There remained nothing for a court to do but to hear possible pleas for clemency and to adjudge the facts

and sentence the accused. But here a…trial was had which lasted for six days and in which presumably all proof was produced that the prosecutor could possibly adduce–from our point of view an entirely useless proceeding. There were probably two purposes for this program on the part of the authorities.
Off the record, one is admitted, to wit: that the occasion was dramatized for propaganda purposes. It was designed: first, as a warning to all existing and potential plotters and conspirators within the Soviet Union; second, to discredit Trotsky abroad; and third, to solidify popular national feeling in support of the government against foreign enemies–Germany and Japan. During the trial every means of propaganda was employed to carry to all parts of the country the horrors of these confessions. The newspapers were filled not only with reports of the testimony but also comments of the most violent and vituperative character as to the accused. The radio also was working overtime.
The other probable purpose was to disclose to the public in open court the bona fides of the confessions of the accused. Had these confessions been made “in chambers,” or produced over the signatures of the accused, their authenticity might have been denied. The fact of the confessions could never be disputed in the face of the oral self-accusations made “in open court.”
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 42

1937 TRIAL LEFT NO DOUBT AS TO THEIR GUILT

From reports of the previous trials the present case differed in the opinion of many observers here in that there was practically unanimity of confessions here, also greater corroboration, and a more general opinion on the part of disinterested observers that an actual conspiracy was shown to exist against the Soviet government.
With an interpreter at my side, I followed the testimony carefully. Naturally I must confess that I was predisposed against the credibility of the testimony of these defendants. The unanimity of their confessions, the fact of their long imprisonment with the possibility of duress and coercion extending to themselves or their families, all gave me grave doubts as to the reliability that could attach to their statements. Viewed objectively, however, and based upon my experience in the trial of cases and the application of the tests of credibility which past experience had afforded me, I arrived at the reluctant conclusion that the state had established its case, at least to the extent of proving the existence of a widespread conspiracy and plot among the political leaders against the Soviet government, and which under their statutes established the crimes set forth in the indictment…. I am still impressed with the many indications of credibility which obtained in the course of the testimony. To have assumed that this proceeding was invented and staged as a project of dramatic political fiction would be to presuppose the creative genius of a Shakespeare and the genius of a Belasco in stage production. The historical background and surrounding circumstances also lend credibility to the testimony. The reasoning which Sokolnikov and Radek applied in justification of their various activities and their hoped-for results were consistent with probability and entirely plausible.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 42

The lesser accused, who were merely tools, amplified in great circumstantial detail their chronicle of crime, and in many instances gave indications that what they were then stating was being uttered for the first time. These and other facts, which I saw, compelled the belief that there may have been much redundant embroidery in the testimony, but that the consistent vein of truth ran through the fabric, establishing a definite political conspiracy to overthrow the present government.
On the face of the record in this case it would be difficult for me to conceive of any court, in any jurisdiction, doing other than adjudging the defendants guilty of violations of the law as set forth in the indictment and as defined by the statutes.
I have talked to many, if not all, of the members of the Diplomatic Corps here and, with possibly one exception, they are all of the opinion that the proceedings established clearly the existence of a political plot and conspiracy to overthrow the government.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 44

In the Diplomatic Corps there is no unanimity of opinion with respect to the testimony with reference to the alleged Trotsky agreement with Japan and Germany. The rationalization of such a plan as calmly discussed and justified by Sokolnikov and also by Radek carried weight with some, who pointed out that it was consistent with Lenin's conduct in acquiring power through the use of the German military in 1917, and the rise of the Social Democrats in Germany out of the embers of war. With others, that part of the testimony was discounted. But all agree that the state established a case of conspiracy against the present government.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 45

Prevailing impressions among the correspondents here is that regardless of motives which may have prompted these extraordinary mass confessions these defendants are, generally speaking, telling the truth at least in part; and that the prosecution has made a strong case establishing the existence of widespread Trotsky conspiracy to destroy the present government….
Personally I have found great interest in following this trial and have attended each of the sessions.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 49

All of these defendants had been kept incommunicado for weeks and months. One by one they arose and told their story quite dispassionately and in the greatest of circumstantial detail, piling self-accusation upon self-accusation. The prevailing opinion is that, objectively viewed in the face of the proceedings, the government established its case at least to the extent of establishing a conspiracy against the present government.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 53

On February 2, 1937, Davies wrote in his diary, "The ———- minister called. He has been in the U.S. and in Washington several times. Opinion regarding the trial–guilty.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 56

On February 6, 1937, Ambassador Davies wrote in his diary, “Called on the Lithuanian minister–a fine old man. We discussed the trial. He stated that there was evidently a widespread plot.”
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 68

On February 18, 1937, Ambassador Davies wrote in his diary, “The———-minister called. Regarding the trial: There was no doubt but that a widespread conspiracy existed and that the defendants were guilty….
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 82

Reasonably neutral observers construct a “theory” about the trials more or less as follows:
1. Every important defendant in the first and second trials was a Zinovievite or a Trotskyist. Radek, Pyatakov, Sokolnikov, Serebryakov, had been Trotskyists for years. Radek joined the Trotsky faction in 1923, went into exile, and only recanted in 1929; he was readmitted to grace in 1930. Their opposition to Stalin was ingrained and inexpungeable; they were Trotskyists to the bone; when they saw things going badly according to their lights, it was perfectly reasonable for them to turn back to their old leader.
2. Moreover, these old revolutionaries, quite apart from the fact that they were Trotskyists and therefore dissidents, were conspirators by nature, conspirators born and bred. From their very earliest days they had breathed the air of plot and counterplot. The day of their eminence passed; Stalin wanted engineers and administrators; they were naturally disgruntled. In a police-run state like Russia, one should remember, discontent can be expressed only by conspiracy. And Radek and company were congenitally incapable of giving conspiracy up.
3. The Trotskyists–outside Russia at least–made no effort to conceal their violent hatred of the Stalinist regime. They were far beyond such “bourgeois” considerations as orthodox patriotism. They were world revolutionaries and they no longer regarded the USSR as a revolutionary or communist state. They had the same aim as pre-1939 Germany and Japan, to overthrow the Stalinist regime. Stalin was as much an enemy to them as Hitler. And they were willing to cooperate even with Hitler, at that time an obvious ally, for their supreme goal–Stalin’s destruction.
4. Radek and the others testified over and over again–the central issue of the trial–that they felt war to be inevitable in 1933 or 1934 and that the Russians would be defeated. They thought that things were going very badly, and that when the crash came the Soviet Union would not survive it. Therefore, as good world revolutionaries, they deemed it their duty to get to work and perfect an underground organization that would survive the war, so that revolutionary communism would not altogether perish. Also, if war came, they might themselves have had a chance at getting power in Russia, and therefore an attempt to buy the Germans off, buy the Japanese off, was natural.
5. So much for Radek and his friends inside. As regards Trotsky outside, an anti-Trotskyist could probably add two more considerations: (a) Trotsky was actively eager for a German war against the USSR, and he hoped that the USSR would lose–therefore he sought to weaken it by sabotage; (b) his ambition and his lust for office were such that he was quite willing to give up the Ukraine and the Maritime Provinces as a price for power. One should not forget that Trotsky fought the Tsar during the Great War much as he fights Stalin now, that Lenin crossed Germany with German aid in a German sealed train, and that Trotsky

signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk giving an immense amount of Russian territory to Germany.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 558-559

The confessions of the defendants; the manner in which their several stories corroborated one another; their frank explanations of the way they had yielded to the temptation of giving their general adhesion to a treasonable conspiracy of which they did not at first understand the…scope; and how they had then found themselves unable to escape from the coils in which they had become entangled;–be it added, a certain amount of further corroboration deduced from incautiously published utterances both by German and by Japanese statesman, convinced the British and American journalists present at the trial in January 1937 that the defendants were really guilty of the treasonable conspiracies with which they were charged. Careful perusal of the full reports of the proceedings and speeches at the public trial leaves upon us the same impression, so far as concerns the actual defendants,
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, p. 927

1937 TRIAL TESTIMONIES WERE VERY CONVINCING

The circumstantial detail, apparently at times surprising even to the prosecutor as well as to other defendants, which was brought out by the various acciused, gave unintended corroboration to the gist of the charges. The manner of testifying of various accused and their bearing on the stand also had weight with me. The dispassionate, logical, detailed statement of Pyatakov and the impression of despairing candor, with which he gave it, carried conviction. So, too, with Sokolnikov. The old general, Muralov, was particularly impressive. He carried himself with a fine dignity and with the forthrightness of an old soldier. In his “last plea” he said:…
“I refuse counsel and I refuse to speak in my defense because I am used to defending myself with good weapons and attacking with good weapons. I have no good weapons with which to defend myself…. I don’t dare blame anyone for this; I, myself, am to blame. This is my difficulty. This is my misfortune….
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 44

ROMM ADMITS HIS GUILT AND DESCRIBES HIS TROTSKYIST ROLE

During the course of the Radek trial, Mr. Walter Duranty of The New York Times came to me with a cable which he had received from a group of journalists in the United States and which read as follows:
“All members of the Washington newspaper corps have read with anxiety of the arrest of our colleague Vladimir Romm of Izvestia. In our dealings with Romm we have found him a true friend and advocate of the USSR. Never once did he even faintly indicate lack of sympathy for or disloyalty toward the existing government…. We hope this testimonial can be strongly certified to his judges….”
Of course my sympathies were enlisted and I watched his testimony with the deepest interest and concern.

Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 46

Romm was placed on the witness stand on the day of the receipt of your message. His testimony was most extraordinary. Without prompting by the prosecutor or use of leading questions, he told a chronological story very clearly and simply. He disclosed that he was an intimate friend of Radek, had received his position from the latter, and in great detail recited the manner in which, upon several occasions, he acted as “go between” for Radek and Trotsky and Trotsk’y son, Sedov, in carrying letters (sewn into the binding of German books) back and forth. He stated that he had been an original Trotsky adherent and that from and after his conversation with Sedov in 1931 or 1932 had become part of the Trotsky organization. These letters, to which Romm and other defendants had testified, were the basis of the conspiracy charge against these defendants. They were relied upon to establish that Trotsky was plotting with those defendants the overthrow of the present Russian government, through sabotage, terrorism, assassination, and for the organization of defeatism among the population and active participation with Japan and Germany through foreign spies in the fomenting of an early war against Russia directed principally by Germany and out of which it was contemplated that the conspirators would rise to power in a new and smaller Soviet Republic, after the dismemberment of the Soviet Union and the cession of the Ukraine to Germany, and the maritime states and Sakhalin oil fields to Japan.
The indictment charges innumerable violations of the existing law of the Soviet Union and a typical counterrevolutionary terrorist conspiracy. Romm also stated that he had used government agencies, i.e., the Tass telegraph agency, to communicate with Trotsky.
The poor devil did not leave himself a leg to stand on. He did state that since 1934 when he went to the United States he had dropped all further participation in the plans.
While his [Romm] appearance on the stand was rather downcast, he looked physically well and as far as I could judge, his testimony bore the earmarks of credibility.
Under these circumstances it made it impossible for anyone to be of aid to him in the trial. I would gladly have done anything I could to have helped the poor chap…. But after all he is a Soviet citizen, knew Soviet law, and entered into the situation with his eyes open….
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 48-49,

THE CHARGES IN THE MARCH 1938 TRIAL

On February 27, 1938, Ambassador Davies wrote in his journal, “Twenty-one prominent men are to be tried for treason, including Bukharin, Rykov, Rakovsky, Grinko, Krestinsky, Rosengoltz, Yagoda, Chernov, and Ivanov, according to an announcement by the State’s Attorney.
Organizing espionage, etc., on behalf of foreign states, to provoke war in order to dismember the union, and deliver up the Ukraine, White Russia, Turkestan, the Caucasus, and the Far Eastern Maritime Province to enemy countries, being in the pay of foreign states, are the principal charges named.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 261

OBSERVERS CAN’T FATHOM THE 1938 DEFENDANTS’ CONFESSIONS UNLESS THEY WERE TRUE

On March 4, 1938, Ambassador Davies wrote in his diary, “Litvinov and his daughter came in for the movies at 5:30.”
He said he was much shocked by Krestinsky’s arrest. He could not understand why men would confess to crimes that they must know were punishable by death unless they were really guilty. He said that Rykov and Bukharin last summer, when haled before the Central Committee of the party and when confronted by Sokolnikov and Radek, faced them down and bitterly protested their innocence even when they broke down in tears; but that apparently they were in fact guilty as subsequently they made complete confessions. He said he could not understand their final confessions, knowing them as he did, on any other theory than that they were actually guilty. “A man could die only once,” said he, and these men knew that they would surely be condemned to death after such solemn admissions of their guilt. It was regrettable but the government had to be certain and could take no chances. It was, he said, fortunate that the country had a leadership strong enough to take the necessary protective measures.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 262

(Sinclair’s comments only)
You speak in your letter of “obviously phony trials.” That is, of course, begging the question. That the trials were “phony” seems obvious to you, but the exact opposite seems obvious to me. Over and over again I ask myself: Is it conceivable that revolutionists, trained in a lifetime of war against the czar, would go into open court and confess to actions which they had not committed? I ask: Is there any torture, any kind of terror, physical, mental, or moral, which would induce them to do such a thing?___
These men had withstood the worst that the Czar’s police could do. Here and there, of course, an individual weakened– that is always to be expected, it is a part of revolutionary history. But that they would all do it, and all join in framing a consistent story–that seems to me a psychological impossibility. You remember how the Czar’s young officers came into the cell of Spiridonova and burned her flesh with their lighted cigarettes; yet she did not betray her comrades. One could find a thousand such stories in the records of the revolutionists, and my belief is that the Bolsheviks would have let the GPU agents tear them to pieces shred by shred before they would have confessed to actions which they had not committed.
Sinclair and Lyons. Terror in Russia?: Two Views. New York : Rand School Press, 1938, p. 60-61

1938 TRIAL DEFENDANTS ARE GUILTY AND WORKING WITH TRAITOROUS GENERALS

On March 8, 1938, Ambassador Davies wrote, “For the last week, I have been attending daily sessions of the Bukharin treason trial…. It is terrific. I have found it of much intellectual interest, because it brings back into play all the old critical faculties involved in assessing the credibility of witnesses and sifting the wheat from the chaff–the truth from the false–which I was called upon to use for so many years in the trial of cases, myself.
All the fundamental weaknesses and vices of human nature–personal ambitions at their worst–are shown up in the proceedings. They disclose the outlines of a plot which came very near to being successful in bringing about the overthrow of this government….

The extraordinary testimony of Krestinsky, Bukharin, and the rest would appear to indicate that the Kremlin's fears were well justified. For it now seems that a plot existed in the beginning of November 1936 to project a coup d'etat, with Tukhachevsky at its head, for May of the following year. Apparently it was touch and go at that time whether it actually would be staged.
But the government acted with great vigor and speed. The Red Army generals were shot and the whole party organization was purged and thoroughly cleansed. Then it came out that quite a few of those at the top were seriously infected with the virus of the conspiracy to overthrow the government, and were actually working with the Secret Service organizations of Germany and Japan.
The situation explains the present official attitude of hostility toward foreigners, the closing of various foreign consulates in this country, and the like. Quite frankly, we can't blame the powers that be much for reacting in this way if they believed what is now being divulged at the trial.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 269

On March 17, 1938, Ambassador Davies wrote, "I have the honor to report that this confirms the cable sent in confidential code with reference to the judgment of the court in the so-called Bukharin mass treason trial.
Paraphrase of the cable is as follows:
On March 13, 1938, at approximately five o'clock in the morning, all the defendants in the trial were adjudged guilty and the sentences were imposed. Three of the defendants were condemned to imprisonment and the remainder to death through shooting. Eight of the most prominent former members of the Soviet government…were among those condemned to be shot. Condemned to imprisonment were a former Ambassador to England and France, a former Counselor of the Soviet Embassy in Berlin, and one famous heart specialist.
…after daily observation of the witnesses, their manner of testifying, the unconscious corroborations which developed, and other facts in the course of the trial, together with others of which a judicial notice could be taken, it is my opinion so far as the political defendants are concerned sufficient crimes under Soviet law, among those charged in the indictment, were established by the proof and beyond a reasonable doubt to justify the verdict of guilty of treason and the adjudication of the punishment provided by Soviet criminal statutes. The opinion of those diplomats who attended the trial most regularly was general that the case had established the fact that there was a formidable political opposition and an exceedingly serious plot, which explained to the diplomats many of the hitherto unexplained developments of the last six months in the Soviet Union. The only difference of opinion that seemed to exist was the degree to which the plot had been implemented by different defendants and the degree to which the conspiracy had become centralized.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 271

CHUEV: But now it is said that the accusations had no basis in fact whatever, apart from the confessions of the accused, which still cannot be taken as proof of guilt.
MOLOTOV: No other evidence was required. We were absolutely certain they were guilty. They were enemies! You just read Bukharin. What an opportunist! And what about the kulak revolts?
CHUEV: Their innocence was out of the question, then?
MOLOTOV: Absolutely. Look, they strained to reduce their testimony to the point of absurdity because they were so terribly embittered by defeat.

Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 267

In order to balance the current denunciations of these trials as frame-ups, we might note the reaction at the time of the U.S. ambassador to the USSR, Joseph Davies, who attended the 1937 and 1938 trials and had himself been a trial lawyer. Davies first attended the trials of the Trotskyite center in January 1937. He reported in a “Strictly Confidential” memo to Cordell Hull, then Secretary of State, that in his opinion, the defendants were guilty as charged. “To have assumed that this proceeding was invented and staged as a project of dramatic political fiction would be to presuppose the creative genius of a Shakespeare and the genius of a Belasco in a stage production.”
Four other ambassadors confided in Davies that they, too, believed the trials to be genuine and the defendants guilty. But what the ambassadors reported back to their governments and what these governments propagated were different things:
“Another diplomat, Minister—–, made a most illuminating ”statement to me yesterday. In discussing the trial he said that the defendants were undoubtedly guilty; that all of us who attended the trial had practically agreed on that; that the outside world, from the press reports, however, seemed to think that the trial was a put-up job (facade, as he called it); that while we knew it was not, it was probably just as well that the outside world should think so.”
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 66

On the Bukharinite trial, Davies wrote at the time in a letter to his daughter:
“All the fundamental weaknesses and vices of human nature–personal ambitions at their worst–are shown up in the proceedings. They disclose the outlines of a plot which came very near to being successful in bringing about the overthrow of this government.”
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 67

And he wrote in a confidential memo to Cordell Hall:
“Notwithstanding a prejudice arising from the confession evidence and a prejudice against a judicial system which affords practically no protection for the accused, after daily observation of the witnesses, their manner of testifying, the unconscious corroborations which developed, and other facts in the course of the trial, together with others of which a judicial notice could be taken, it is my opinion so far as the political defendants are concerned [that] sufficient crimes under Soviet law, among those charged in the indictment, were established by the proof and beyond a reasonable doubt to justify the verdict of guilty of treason.”
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 67

SU SHOT THE FIFTH COLUMNISTS

In the summer of 1941 after the German invasion of Russia Ambassador Davies said,
Passing through Chicago, on my way home from the June commencement of my old University, I was asked to talk to the University Club…. Someone in the audience asked: “What about Fifth Columnists in Russia?” Off the anvil, I said: “There aren’t any–they shot them.”
On the train that day, that thought lingered in my mind. It was rather extraordinary, when one stopped to think of it, that in this last Nazi invasion, not a word had appeared of “inside work” back of the Russian lines. There was no so-called “internal aggression” in Russia cooperating with the German High Command. Hitler’s March into Prague in 1939 was

accompanied by the active military support of Henlein's organizations in Czechoslovakia. The same was true of his invasion of Norway. There were no Sudeten Henleins, no Slovakian Tisos, no Belgian De Grelles, no Norwegian Quislings in the Soviet picture…. None of us in Russia in 1937 and 1938 were thinking in terms of "Fifth Column" activities. The phrase was not current….
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 272-273

Yet the trials were important, and not only because they revealed Russian weakness as so many experts thought. When Hitler marched into Russia there were no Quislings, and no organized Fifth Column. Every European country conquered by Hitler had traitors in high places. In Russia there were none. It is clear now that Stalin had eliminated the potential Lavals.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 30

…Thanks to 1937 there was no fifth column in our country during the war. Even among Bolsheviks, you know, there were some–there still are some–who are loyal and dedicated as long as the nation and the party face no danger. But as soon as something dangerous appears, they first waiver and then switch sides…. The main thing, however, is that at the decisive moment they could not be depended on.
A friend of mine, a professor, comes to see me from time to time. "How shall I explain that period?" he asks. I say, "But what would have happened if the right-wingers had been in charge? Where would the course of history have turned then? If you look closely at the details, you will see the answer."
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 254

In the summer of 1941, after the German imperialist attack on the USSR, Davies commented:
On the train that day, that thought lingered in my mind. It was rather extraordinary, when one stopped to think of it, that in this last Nazi invasion, not a word had appeared of "inside work" back of the Russian lines. There was no so-called "internal aggression" in Russia cooperating with the German High Command. Hitler's march into Prague in 1939 was accompanied by the active military support of Henlein's organizations in Czechoslovakia. The same was true of his invasion of Norway. There were no Sudeten Henleins, no Slovakian Tisos, no Belgian De Grelles, no Norwegian Quisling's in the Soviet picture…. There were no Fifth Columnists in Russia in 1941–they had shot them. The purge had cleansed the country and rid it of treason."
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 67

[From J. S. Fuller, 1939-1945: World War II Foreign Literature Publishing House, Moscow, 1956]
"Even on June 29, the Volkischer Beobachter carried an article saying:…
Before the war with Russia the German intelligence service counted, to a large degree, on the 'fifth column.' But in Russia 'the fifth column' was not existent, although there were dissatisfied people in the country."
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 306

Hitherto German Intelligence had largely relied on the Fifth Column assistance. In Russia, though there were to be found discontented people, there was no Fifth Column.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 411

SOME DID NOT REALIZE THE FIFTH COLUMN WAS A SERIOUS THREAT

All of us there in Moscow at the time paid comparatively little attention to that side of these cases. Some of us seemed to have "missed the boat." I certainly did. There is no doubt but that, generally speaking, we were centering our attention on the dramatic struggle for power between the "ins" and "outs"–between Stalin and Trotsky–and the clash or personalities and policies within the Soviet government, rather than upon any possible German Fifth Column activities, which we were all disposed to discount at the time.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 275

The time all come when everything will be sorted out…. Then they had to be tolerated. Things are no different today. By 1937 they had lost a platform to stand on and the support of the people. They voted for Stalin but were double-dealers. It was shown in court that the right-wingers had Kuibyshev and Gorky poisoned. Yagoda, the former chief of the secret police, was involved in arranging the poisoning of his own predecessor, Menzhinsky.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 264

CHUEV: It really never occurred to Stalin that we could not possibly have so many enemies of the people?… They say the whole thing was fabricated.
MOLOTOV: That's out of the question. They could by no means be fabricated. Pyatakov kept Trotsky informed….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 278

Each of our leaders would like to create Lenin in his own image. Lenin is now being falsified and exploited.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 337

The final doubt which one may have is concerning the charge against Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Smirnov that they conspired with the Gestapo and the German General Staff. Could Old Bolsheviks conspire with Nazi police and generals? The precedent of Lenin's arrangement with the German General Staff during the Great War, permitting him to travel through Germany to Leningrad, is a sufficiently distinguished precedent of indifference to means for ends. And if Zinoviev, Kamenev, and the other Trotskyists considered that an Imperialist war against the USSR involving a collapse of both Germany and Russia and a new proletarian revolution, was a worthy end, is it any wonder that they should conspire with Nazis or that the Soviet people, becoming aware of it, should defend itself against these Old Bolsheviks? The technique of Fascist penetration by spies, terrorists, saboteurs, and diversionists has been demonstrated in Spain and Austria by its success. Is there reason to believe that Hitler reserves more delicate treatment for the Ukraine than he did for Catalonia? Those who doubt the wisdom of the GPU in its sifting of Fascist agents or of its drastic treatment of Generals Tukhachevsky and Putna, should consider the example of Spain and Austria, whose political police lacked the vigilance or sincerity of the GPU. The movement of world

events will, I feel, prove that the GPU did not and does not chase shadows in its watchfulness. In the years which have passed since my release, the bursting into flame of the Spanish-Fascist rebellion, the risings and intervention of the Nazis in Austria and the promise of intervention in Czechoslovakia have convinced me that whatever bewilderment is felt outside the Soviet Union at the unearthing there of Fascist conspirators, Fascist conspiracy in conjunction with Trotskyist conspiracy does exist and that its extirpation, so far from endangering the USSR, marks another peril avoided.
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 217

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN TRIALS

The story which was unfolded in these trials [the January 1937 treason trials] disclosed a record of Fifth Columnist and subversive activities in Russia under a conspiracy agreement with the German and Japanese governments that were amazing. The gist of the testimony, which the record of these cases discloses, is as follows:
The principal defendants had entered into a conspiracy among themselves, and into an agreement with Germany and Japan to aid these governments in a military attack upon the Soviet Union. They agreed to and actually did cooperate in plans to assassinate Stalin and Molotov, and to project a military uprising against the Kremlin which was to be led by Gen. Tukhachevsky, the second in command of the Red Army. In preparation for war they agreed to and actually did plan and direct the sabotaging of industries, the blowing up of chemical plants, the destruction of coal mines, the wrecking of transportation facilities, and other subversive activities. They agreed to perform and did perform all those things which the German General Staff required should be done by them pursuant to instructions which they received from such General Staff. They agreed to and in fact did conspire and co-operate with the German and Japanese Military Intelligence services. They agreed to and in fact did co-operate with German diplomatic consular representatives in connection with espionage and sabotage. They agreed to and actually did transmit to Germany and Japan information vital to the defense of the Soviet Union. They agreed among themselves and with the German and Japanese governments to co-operate with them in war upon the Soviet government and to form an independent smaller Soviet state which would yield up large sections of the Soviet Union, the Ukraine, and White Russia in the west to Germany and the Maritime Provinces in the east to Japan.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 276

They agreed after the German conquest of Russia that German firms were to have concessions and receive favors in connection with the development of iron ore, manganese, oil, coal, timber, and the other great resources of the Soviet Union.
To appreciate fully the character and significance of this testimony, which I personally listened to, it should be borne in mind that the facts as to this conspiracy were testified to by two cabinet members of the first order, the Commissar for the Treasury and the Commissar for Foreign Trade, by a former Premier of the government, by two Soviet Ambassadors who had served in London, Paris, and Japan; by a former Undersecretary of State and by the acting Secretary of State of the government, as well as by two of the foremost publicists and editors of the two leading papers of the Soviet Union.
To appreciate its significance, it was as though the Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau, Secretary of Commerce Jones, Undersecretary of State Wells, Ambassador Bullitt,

Ambassador Kennedy, and Secretary to the President Early, in this country, confessed to a conspiracy with Germany to co-operate in an invasion of the United States.
Here are a few excerpts of the testimony in open court:
Krestinsky, Undersecretary of State, said:
We came to an agreement with Gen. Seeckt and Hess to the effect that we would help the Reichswehr create a number of espionage bases in the territory of the USSR…. In return for this, the Reichswehr undertook to pay us 250,000 marks annually as a subsidy.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 277

Grinko, Secretary of the Treasury, said:
I knew and was connected with people both in the Ukrainian organization as well as in the Red Army who were preparing to open the frontier to the enemy. I operated particularly in the Ukraine, that is to say, at the main gates through which Germany is preparing its blow against the USSR.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 277

Rosengoltz, Secretary of Commerce, stated:
I handed various secret information to the Commander-in-Chief of the Reichswehr…. Subsequently, direct connections were established by the Ambassador in the USSR to whom I periodically gave information of an espionage character.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 277

Sokolnikov, former Ambassador to Great Britain, stated:
Japan, in the event of her taking part in the war, would receive territorial concessions in the Far East in the Amur region and the Maritime Provinces; as respects Germany, it was contemplated to satisfy the national interests of the Ukraine.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 277

The testimony of many of the minor defendants went to establish the fact that upon orders of the principal defendants, they had direct connection with the German and Japanese Intelligence Services and co-operated with them in systematic espionage and sabotage; and either committed or aided and abetted in numerous crimes. For instance, Rataichak stated that he had organized and was responsible for two explosions at the Gorlovka nitrogen fertilizer plants which entailed enormous property losses as well as the loss of human life. Pushkin contributed or assumed responsibility for the disaster to the chemical plants of the Voskressensk Chemical Works and the Nevsky plant. Knyazev told how he had planned and executed the wrecking of troop trains, entailing great loss of life, upon the express directions or instructions from foreign Intelligence Services. He also testified as to how he had received instructions from these foreign Intelligence Services “to organize incendiarism in military stores, canteens, and army shipments,” and the necessity of using “bacteriological means in time of war with the object of contaminating troop trains, canteens, and army camps with virulent bacilli.”
The testimony in these cases involved and incriminated Gen. Tukhachevsky and many high leaders in the army and in the navy. Shortly after the Bukharin trial these men were arrested. Under the leadership of Tukhachevsky these men were charged with having entered into an agreement to co-operate with the German High Command in an attack upon the Soviet state. Numerous subversive activities conducted in the army were disclosed by the testimony. Many of the highest officers in the army, according to the testimony, had either

been corrupted or otherwise induced to enter into this conspiracy. According to the testimony, complete co-operation had been established in each branch of the service, the political revolutionary group, the military group, and the High Commands of Germany and Japan.
Such was the story, as it was brought out in these trials, as to what had actually occurred. There can be no doubt but what the Kremlin authorities were greatly alarmed by these disclosures and the confessions of these defendants. The speed with which the government acted and the thoroughness with which they proceeded indicated that they believed them to be true. They proceeded to clean house and acted with the greatest of energy and precision. Voroshilov, Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army, said:
It is easier for a burglar to break into the house if he has an accomplice to let him in. We have taken care of the accomplices….
There were no Fifth Columnists in Russia in 1941–they had shot them. The purge had cleansed the country and rid it of treason.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 277

As we look over the history of the 1920s and 1930s in the USSR, one of these reasons [for changes in the legal system] quickly becomes apparent, namely massive sabotage–in the mines, on the railways, in factories, in agriculture, in economic planning, in government. A picture of the extent of this sabotage emerged only in the trials of the various opposition leaders between 1936 and 1938, which also revealed that sabotage was linked with plans for the destruction of the Soviet Union in war. These public trials of the “opposition” leaders, however, had revealed only the tip of the iceberg. They indicated the existence of followers everywhere–wrecking machinery, making the wrong parts, sending materials to the wrong places, poisoning farm animals, starting pit fires in mines, planning railway sabotage to build up to the immobilization of the railways in the coming war. Nor was the sabotage only physical. Economic plans were deliberately distorted, government documents lost, statistics faked–actions which could cause widespread disruption in a planned economy. Furthermore, this sabotage, which appears to have been the most massive in history, was coordinated with Nazi and Japanese war plans and with terrorism. Kirov, the popular head of the Party in Leningrad, was assassinated, and terrorist plans seem to have been afoot to assassinate the whole top Party leadership.
To assert, then, that most of those arrested were innocent “victims” is patently absurd. If the leaders were guilty–and the evidence, as we have seen, indicates that they were–, their followers on the whole must have been guilty also. When the workers began to realize the nature of the situation–the assassination of Kirov in particular evoked angry demonstrations and petitions–they demanded action. The Party, which until then had actually been lagging behind events, began wide investigations and amended the penal code in order to move forward swiftly in a situation of threatening war.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 129

DEFENDANTS IN THE TRIALS HAD HIGH POSITIONS DESPITE LONG HISTORY OF OPPOSING STALIN

In 1938 the last major treason trial occurred. Defendants included Bukharin, ex-editor of Pravda; Rykov; former under Secretary of State Krestinsky; former Commissar of Trade Rosengoltz; former Secretary of the Treasury Grinko; Yagoda, former head of the GPU and

the Kremlin physician Dr. Levin. Although most of these men had been involved in opposition politics for nearly two decades, the positions which they held indicates the leniency which existed and the opportunities they were given to make good–or commit sabotage.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 30

Almost all those in the group now coming to trial had held, until shortly before their arrests, posts as People's Commissars, Assistant People's Commissars, leaders of industrial complexes, engineers, and so forth.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 141

A group of the most senior officials of the Stalinist state who had for many years served it uncritically formed the bulk of the accused: Rosengoltz, Ivanov, Chernov, and Grinko–all People's Commissar's until the previous year; Zelensky, Head of the Cooperatives; and Sharangovich, First Secretary in Byelorussia.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 342

Shestov: head of Schachtstoj in the Kustnesk tank;
Livshitz: head of the railway line in Ukraine;
Kartsev: chief engineer of the Kemerovo-Combine;
Drobnis: deputy head of the construction work at the Kemerovo-combine,
Kolegayev: head of Uralsredmed the copper works of mid Urals;
Rataitjak: head of the Glavhimprom the main board of the chemical industry;
Maryasin: head of construction of the railways in Urals, and others.
The purges of the CPSU and the political trials. Mario Sousa, 2001.

Pyatakov, who was expelled from the party at its Fifteenth Congress, then "exiled" to the Soviet Foreign Trade Office in Paris after capitulating to Stalin,…
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 289

Sokolnikov, who had announced his break with the united opposition at the Fifteenth Party Congress and had been chosen a member of the Central Committee (at the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Congresses he was chosen a candidate member of the Central Committee), and Pyatakov, who had been elected a member of the Central Committee at the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Congresses.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 68

After he was removed from the Politburo in 1926, Kamenev was posted by Stalin to various outposts of "socialist construction": People's Commissar for Trade, envoy to Japan, then to Italy, and then member of the board of the Lenin Institute. He was the first person to see Lenin's personal archive, which formed the nucleus of the Lenin Institute's collection, and his appointment as director was a sensible one. As editor of the first edition of Lenin's works, he had already "weeded" a good deal of material that did not accord with the canon of Leninism, in effect establishing the Bolshevik tradition of showing only what portrayed Lenin in a positive light. In 1934 he was appointed Director of the Institute of Literature, where it seemed he might finally be able to accomplish something. It appears from indirect evidence that he wished to embark on reminiscences of Lenin, since he was more familiar than anyone else with the late leader's literary heritage.

Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 284

Lenin and Stalin were opposed by Pyatakov, who, together with Bukharin, had already during the war taken up a national-chauvinist stand on the national question. Pyatakov and Bukharin were opposed to the right of nations to self-determination.
Commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.), Ed. History of the CPSU (Bolsheviks): Short Course. Moscow: FLPH, 1939, p. 190

It was on the 15th of August that a press-release from the Procuracy announced charges against 16 people,… They had all been leaders and well-known personalities from the Left Opposition in the 1920s, and were accused of taking part in a terrorist conspiracy.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 78

CONFESSIONS WERE GENUINE AND NO COERCION WAS INVOLVED

There have been many in the West who hint at something sinister about the confessions. Normally, people don't confess, it is said. They charge that either the defendants were tortured or they confessed hoping to save their lives or those of their families.
The evidence is all against either hypothesis. The accused were tried in open court with representatives of the whole world listening in. There was not then and is not now a scintilla of evidence that any of them had been tortured. They knew they were facing death, and yet did not protest innocence, although the world would have been prone to believe them. The defendants were ex-revolutionists who had never confessed under the Tsar's regime to save their lives or their families. Further, both Mr. Pritt from England and Ambassador Davies from the United States say that it would have been absolutely impossible for the defendants to prepare fake confessions which would square with the rest of the evidence and all other testimony. They claim that 14 defendants could not rehearse their parts in advance and stick to their roles in the rapid give-and-take of Russian trial procedure, even if they had decided, for some unknown reason, to take part in such a farce.
Again it is said, why should guilt make people confess? It so happens that I was chairman of the Legislative Commission on Jails in the state of Connecticut for many years. I have seen hundreds of criminals who confessed when confronted with overwhelming proof of their guilt. Confession is by no means a "Russian trait." I attended the Kharkov trial of Nazis in Russia in 1944. German officers and men confessed in open court to the most heinous crimes. They were hanged. During the 1920's British engineers confessed to acts of sabotage in the Metro-Vickers trial in Moscow.
The fact is that all the allegedly sinister reasons for confessions do not agree with the evidence.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 31

…No one, however, who watched the bearing and heard the statements of such men as Pyatakov, former Vice Commissar of heavy industry, and Muralov, who had led the Reds to triumph in Moscow at the time of the revolution, could think for a moment that they were either terrorized or drugged. Pyatakov showed the utmost self-possession throughout, and spoke with the calm clarity and dispassionate logic of a college professor addressing a class

of students. He gave no sign of weakness or hesitation, either in tone or appearance, and his whole attitude was that of one who had abandoned hope of life but wished, it might be said, to discharge a load from his conscience, to get the record clear, before the end. It seemed absurd, too, that Muralov, a big two-fisted soldier with a 20 years' career of desperate hazards and hairbreath escapes as an underground revolutionary, should cringe at the thought of death or yield to any pressure. Even more striking was the conduct of Bukharin, once Lenin's closest friend and the chief exponent of Bolshevik doctrine. Bukharin's "last words," as the final statements of the accused were ominously termed, proved a masterpiece of eloquence. In a clear, unfaltering voice he reviewed the series of ideological errors and divergencies which gradually led him to the evil fullness of treason and conspiracy. Firmly he repudiated the suggestion that his attitude or confession had been influenced in any way by drugs or threats or torture, either physical or moral. He went so far as to disavow another suggestion which had been put forward by foreigners familiar with the works of Dostoyevsky, that there was a peculiar characteristic of the "Russian soul" which inclined Russians to the depths of self-abnegation, a sort of martyr complex, when they knew that all was lost. Like Pyatakov, Bukharin gave the impression of a man who had made his peace with the world and wished only to cleanse and satisfy his own conscience by revealing all the motives of his thought and action.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 219

In the Moscow [1936] trial the accused were offered the right to a defense counsel, and refused. They themselves pleaded guilty, and explained their crimes, because they had no better way of conducting themselves.
Pritt, Denis Nowell. The Moscow Trial was Fair. London: " Russia To-day," 1937, p. 14

The confessions to monstrous crimes were so unbelievable that they fostered many versions about the reasons behind them. One of these was the version according to which "doubles" to the defendants–actors wearing makeup–sat in the courtroom. We can read about this, for example, in the memoirs of A. Larina, N. Joffe, and K. Ikramov. Legends and apocryphal stories of this type made their rounds for decades among circles of the Soviet intelligentsia.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 164

Returning to the events of the 1930s, let us name one more attempt at an explanation– the version of trial "rehearsals," at which the defendants supposedly denied the charges made against 'them, but then became convinced of the uselessness of the gesture, since the hall was filled exclusively with NKVD operatives. This version, which served as the basis for the poorly concocted film, "Enemy of the People Bukharin," which appeared during the years of "perestroika," has no foundation in fact. The defendants at the show trials couldn't help but see in the courtroom well-known political figures, journalists, writers, and so forth, as well as famous foreign diplomats and journalists. Thus, they could be certain that if they told the truth, it could not fail to penetrate the walls of the courtroom.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 169

However, he [Trotsky] had at his disposal no direct evidence that "measures of physical coercion" have been applied to the victims of the Moscow trials.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 176

Eventually Rights and Lefts were mingled in the dock as conspiring together against Stalin. Nearly all of them admitted having done so, and on this point it is not necessary that we should doubt them, in whatever way their evidence was originally obtained. The bulky verbatim reports were in any case impressive. The most illuminating feature was the discrimination made by some of the more independent of the accused, as, for instance, the famous Bukharin, author of the ABC of communism: “I did this, but I would never have done that” (he admitted plotting against Stalin’s life, which was after all the main point), or again Radek: “I did so at that time, but I did the opposite at this.”
… It seems that there was really a plot to eliminate, and of course to kill, Stalin: after all, Stalin was killing his enemies….
Pares, Bernard. Russia. Washington, New York: Infantry Journal, Penguin books, 1944, p. 203

The 16 accused men had all confessed their guilt, and the Prosecution was in possession of signed confessions when the hearing was commenced. It has been stated, without a tittle of evidence, that these confessions had been obtained by methods of terror, or alternatively by a promise that sentence of death would not be carried out if they confessed. But anyone who reads the detailed report of the trial will see that the confessions arose from the weight of evidence, and that even to the last several of the accused were trying to evade full responsibility. Smirnov, for example, repeatedly denied that he had personally conveyed Trotsky’s instructions to murder Stalin and other Soviet leaders to the ” Moscow Center.” It was only after evidence had been given by other accused that Smirnov was at last compelled to admit that he had been personally responsible for transmitting Trotsky’s instructions.
Shepherd, W. G. The Moscow Trial. London: Communist Party of Great Britain, 1936, p. 6

Now to get back to the Russian conspirators who have, during the decade 1927-1937, been convicted on their own confessions of attempts to create a counter-evolution. Are not such attempts at a counter-revolution exactly what was to be expected? Has there ever been a great and successful revolution without attempts at a counter-revolution? The Stalin group, who now constitute the government, have had immense difficulties to face in their fight against famine, and in their effort to raise to a higher level of efficiency and civilization what is reputed to have been the worst peasantry in the world.
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, p. 929

…It was hard to believe that old revolutionaries, who had proved their courage and devotion to a lifetime of work in struggle, could have become traitors. But it was even harder to believe that the same persons would not proclaim their innocence before all the world, given a chance to do so in a public trial. I read the verbatim transcripts of their trials; their confessions were very characteristic personal statements….
Blumenfeld, Hans. Life Begins at 65. Montreal, Canada: Harvest House, c1987, p. 174

RADEK SAYS ZINOVIEV TOLD THE TROTS SMIRNOV WAS PROPOSING AN ANTI-STALIN GROUP

Radek states in his Jan. 1933 letter to Rudzutak, “In 1927, sometime during the summer, Zinoviev notified those who were then the leaders of the Trotskyist opposition of a proposal made to him–Zinoviev–by Smirnov for the formation of a bloc against Comrade Stalin.”
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 98

ZINOVIEV GROUP WAS THE FIRST TO WORK SECRETLY AGAINST THE PARTY

[Jan. 18, 1935, secret Central Committee letter on the Kirov assassination]
I. THE FACTS
It is necessary, first and foremost, to make note of the following indisputable facts as established by the investigation and by the trial:
1) The villainous murder was committed by the Leningrad group of Zinoviev followers calling themselves the Leningrad Center.
II. POLITICAL ASSESSMENT
It ought to be born in mind that the Zinoviev counter-revolutionary group, in the form in which it has been revealed as a result of the investigation and of the trial, represents something entirely new for which there is no precedent in the history of our party. There have been not a few factional groups in the history of our party. These groups usually made an effort to oppose their views to the party line and to defend them openly before the party. But our party has not known of a single group throughout its history which has made it its task to conceal its views and to hide its political face and which has hypocritically declared its loyalty to the party line while simultaneously preparing a terroristic attempt on the life of representatives of our party. Zinoviev’s group has turned out to be the only group in the history of our party that has made double dealing its commandment and has thereby slid down into the mire of counterrevolutionary terrorism, all the while masking its dark deeds with repeated declarations of devotion to the party in the press and at the party congress. It was difficult for the party to suppose that party veterans like Zinoviev, Kamenev, Yevdokimov, or Bakaev could fall so low and in the end get mixed up with the White Guard gang.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 148

…still the Zinoviev opposition had really fought Stalin by all the means at its disposal, in a political fight in which almost all the present Committee had been on Stalin’s side. They had compromised themselves by lying their way back into the Party, as was quite evident. And it was at least possible that the assassination of Kirov was “objectively” Zinoviev’s responsibility.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 165

EARLY ON YAGODA TRIES TO EXONERATE TROTSKY FROM ANY GUILT

…At one point, Yagoda had called the evidence that Trotsky was ordering terrorism in the USSR “trifles” and “nonsense”.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 248

After all, the NKVD was responsible for finding enemies, but in fact Yezhov did more to undercover them in his capacity as director of the party purges. Yagoda was also reportedly

sympathetic to former oppositionists, something Molotov believed into the 1980s. Although Yagoda participated in preparing political trials through August 1936, he may also have tried to limit the damage among the former party critics. On the investigation records of some prisoners, he wrote comments like “nonsense” or “impossible” next to several of the more lurid assertions. Such remarks may well have made Stalin suspicious of him.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 34

Nevertheless, it does seem that Yagoda may have made some attempt to temper the wind to the oppositionists. He was to be similarly accused of ordering that Uglanov’s testimony be kept “within certain limits.” And there are other reports of underground obstruction within the NKVD which took the form of framing questions in such a way as to protect those interrogated….
For the moment, Bukharin and Rykov were safe. The former continued to hold his position as editor of Izvestia, and both remained candidate members of the Central Committee.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 138

Yagoda, however, felt that their testimony was a complete fabrication. On the record of Dreitzer’s interrogations, which contained passages speaking of receiving terrorist directives from Trotsky, Yagoda wrote: “untrue,” “nonsense,” “rubbish,” and “this cannot be.”
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 5

NO PROOF EXISTS TO PROVE ZINOVIEV AND KAMENEV CONFESSED TO AVOID EXECUTION

…There are persistent rumors that Zinoviev and Kamenev agreed to confess to the scenario in return for promises that their lives would be spared, but no documentary evidence or firsthand testimony has been found to support this.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 249

MRACHKOVSKY SAYS TROTSKY AGREED TO UNITY IF KILLING STALIN WAS THE GOAL

Regarding Trotsky’s attitude to the creation of a united Trotskyist-Zinovievist bloc and regarding the conditions of unification, the notorious Trotskyist, Mrachkovsky, one of Trotsky’s closest comrades-in-arms, testified at the investigation as follows:
“In the middle of 1932, Smirnov placed on the agenda of our ruling troika the necessity of unifying our organization with the Zinoviev-Kamenev and Shatskin-Lominadze groups. It was then that it was decided to inquire of Trotsky concerning this matter and to receive new instructions from him. Trotsky agreed to the creation of a bloc, on the condition that the united bloc consider the necessity of a violent removal [from power] of the leaders of the All-Union Communist Party and, first and foremost, of Stalin.”
[Mrachkovsky. Minutes to the interrogation of July 19-20, 1936)
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 252

Thus Zinoviev and Kamenev United with Trotsky, considered that the essential element was unanimous recognition of the new factor, which distinguished their newly created bloc from

the preceding one. This new factor, from the testimony of the Zinovievites–Kamenev, Reingold, Pikel, Bakayev–and Trotskyites– Mrachkovsky, Dreitzer and others–was recognition of the advisability of the active use of terror against the party and governmental leadership.
Trotsky not only agreed with this attitude of Zinoviev and Kamenev, but he in turn considered the basic condition for unifying the Trotskyites and the Zinovievites to be recognition by both groupings of the advisability of using terror against the leaders of our party and government.
On Trotsky's attitude toward creating a unified Trotskyite-Zinovievite bloc and the conditions of unification, Mrachkovsky–a well-known Trotskyite and one of Trotsky's closest comrades-in-arms–testified as follows at the investigation:
"In the middle of 1932 Smirnov raised in our guiding triumvirate the question of the necessity of unifying our organization and the Zinoviev-Kamenev and the Shatskin-Lominadze groups. At that time it was decided to make inquiries of Trotsky and obtain new instructions from him. Trotsky answered by agreeing to the bloc, on the condition that the groups entering into the bloc accept the necessity of the forcible elimination of the Communist party leaders, and in the first place, Stalin."
[Mrachkovsky, Record of Interrogation, July 19-20, 1936)
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 171

All of the other prominent Trotskyites and Zinovievites arrested, such as Bakayev, Reingold, Safronov, Pikel, Dreitzer, and others also testified that the principal task of the Trotskyites and Zinovievites was to conduct a terrorist struggle against the leaders of the Communist Party and the government.
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 171

DREITZER SAYS TROTSKY DIRECTED HIM TO KILL STALIN AND VOROSHILOV

The decision to murder Comrade Stalin was taken simultaneously with the decision to murder Comrade Kirov. With this aim in mind, the center organized a number of strictly conspiratorial, terroristic groups in Moscow. In order to unify the activities of these groups, the All-Union Trotskyist-Zinovievist center created the Moscow center comprising Bakaev, Reingold, and Pikel (Zinovievist) and Mrachkovsky and Dreitzer (Trotskyist). The immediate organization of the murder of Comrade Stalin was entrusted to Bakaev. At the investigation, Bakaev confessed his role as the direct organizer of terroristic acts….
From abroad, Trotsky who was directing the activities of the All-Union united Trotskyist-Zinovievist center, has used every means at his disposal, especially after the arrest of Kamenev and Zinoviev, to speed up the murder of comrades Stalin and Voroshilov. He has been systematically sending directives and practical instructions through his agents concerning the organizing of the murder.
Dreitzer, a man close to Trotsky, formerly serving as his bodyguard, a member of the Trotskyist-Zinovievist bloc, confessed at his investigation that in 1934 he had received a written directive from Trotsky regarding the preparation of a terroristic act against Comrades Stalin and Voroshilov.
He reported the following:

“I received this directive through Stalovitskaya, my sister, a permanent resident of Warsaw, who traveled to Moscow at the end of September 1934.
“The contents of Trotsky’s letter were brief. It began with the following words:
“My dear friend! Please pass on the information that the following main tasks are on the next day’s agenda:
“First task: the removal of Stalin and Voroshilov.
Second task: the organization of cells in the Army.
Third task: in case of war, to make use of confusion and failure of every sort in order to seize power.”
(Dreitzer. Minutes of the interrogation of July 23rd, 1936)
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 253

Trotsky, being abroad, pressed in every way for the killing of comrades Stalin and Voroshilov, especially after the arrest of Kamenev and Zinoviev, and directed the activities of the all-union united Trotskyite-Zinovievite center. Through his agents he systematically sent directives and practical instructions for organizing the killing.
Dreitzer, a participant in the Trotskyite-Zinovievite bloc who was close to Trotsky and was at one time his personal guard, admitted during the investigation that in 1934 he received a written directive from Trotsky to prepare a terrorist act against comrades Stalin and Voroshilov.
He stated:
“I received this directive through my sister, Stalovitsksaia, who resides permanently in Warsaw and came to Moscow in the end of September, 1934.
“The content of Trotsky’s letter was brief. It started with the following words:
“Dear friend! Pass on that today we face the following basic tasks: first–to get rid of Stalin and Voroshilov, second–to work on organizing cells in the army, third–in case of war to exploit any setbacks and confusion to seize the leadership.”
(Dreitzer, Record of Interrogation, July 23, 1936)

The content of this directive was confirmed by yet another prominent Trotskyite, Mrachkovsky, who testified as follows:
“Esterman handed me an envelope from Dreitzer. Opening it in Esterman’s presence, I saw a letter written by Trotsky to Dreitzer. In this letter Trotsky gave instructions to kill Stalin and Voroshilov.”
(Mrachkovsky, Record of Interrogation, July 4, 1936)
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 173-174

ZINOVIEV SAYS HE ACCEPTS M. LURYE’S TERRORIST GROUP WORKING WITH THE FASCISTS

5. Setting out on the path of individual White Guard terror, the Trotskyist-Zinovievist bloc lost all feeling of squeamishness and in order to carry out its criminal designs began to make use of the services not only of the crushed remnants of the belated followers of the White Guard oppositionism but also of the services of foreign intelligence services, foreign secret police operators, spies, and provocateurs.

For example, the terroristic group headed by M. Lure, who arrived here from Germany, was in fact organized by Franz Weitz, an active German fascist and Himmler's representative (at the time leader of the fascist storm troop detachments in Berlin, currently leader of the Gestapo, the German secret police).
When visiting Zinoviev, M. Lure informed him that the members of his terroristic group were organizationally connected with the fascist Franz Weitz and the German secret police, the Gestapo, and asked Zinoviev for his attitude to this.
Zinoviev replied:
"What you find so disturbing in this? After all, Moisey Ilich, you are a historian. You know the case of Lassalle and Bismarck. When Lasalle wanted to exploit Bismarck in the interests of revolution."
(M. Lure. Minutes of the interrogation of July 21st, 1936)

Konstant, a member of the terroristic group organized by M. Lure, in speaking of the motivations for his connections with Franz Weitz, the representative of the German secret police, testified as follows at the investigation:
"Being extremely embittered at the policies of the All-Union Communist Party and being personally bitter at Stalin, I gave in with relative ease to the political working over directed at me by Franz Weitz. In his conversations with me, Franz Weitz pointed out that the differences in our political positions (I am a Trotskyite, he a fascist) may not exclude and, on the contrary, ought to presuppose united action by Trotskyists and national Socialists in their struggle against Stalin and his supporters. After many doubts and hesitations, I agreed with Franz Weitz's conclusions and remained the whole time in constant contact with him."
[Konstant. Minutes of the interrogation of July first, 1936]
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 253-254

After the killing of Comrade Kirov and the consequent smashing of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite center, Trotsky took upon himself complete guidance of terrorist activity in the USSR. To restore the terrorist groups in the USSR and activate them Trotsky dispatched his trusted agents across the border with forged documents. Among such agents sent by him at various times from Berlin to Moscow were Berman-Yurin, Olberg, Fritz David, Gorovich, Gurevich, Bykhovsky, and others. They were all assigned the task of killing Comrades Stalin, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, and other party leaders, whatever the cost.
5. Having set out on the path of individual, White-Guard terror, the Trotskyite-Zinovievite bloc lost all scruples and, to carry out their criminal designs, began to use the services not only of the defeated remnants of the White Guards but also the services of foreign intelligence agencies, foreign secret police, spies, and provocateurs.
Thus, for example, the terrorist group headed by M. Lurye, who came over from Germany, was actually organized by the active German Fascist, Franz Weiss, Himmler's representative (at that time the head of the Fascist storm-trooper detachments in Berlin and now head of the German secret police–the GESTAPO).
While visiting Zinoviev, M. Lurye told him that the members of his terrorist group had organizational ties with the Fascist, Franz Weiss, and with the German secret police–the GESTAPO, and asked Zinoviev what were his relations with the latter.
To this Zinoviev answered:
"What bothers you in this? You are an historian. You know the story of Lassalle and Bismarck, when Lasalle wanted to utilize Bismarck in the interests of the revolution."

(M. Lurye, Record of Interrogation, July 21, 1936)
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 174

THE TROT-ZINOVIEVIST CENTER STOLE GOVERNMENT MONEY

6. In order to acquire the necessary financial resources associated with the preparation of terroristic acts, the Trotskyist-Zinovievist counter-revolutionary bloc has resorted to the theft of state funds and to direct plundering of money belonging to the people.
It was established at the investigation that at one of the sessions of the united Trotskyist-Zinovievist center it was proposed to certain active Zinovievists to make contact with secret Zinovievists working in the economic sphere in order to obtain funds. In particular, Reingold was entrusted with such a task. In accordance with a commission by Kamenev, Reingold was supposed to make contact with Arkus, a secret double-dealer, who held the post of deputy chairman of the State Bank of the USSR (Gosbank)….
CONCLUSIONS
The facts show that the Trotskyist-Zinovievist counter-revolutionary center and its leaders–Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev–have slid definitively into the mire of White Guard oppositionism, have merged with the most embittered, inveterate enemies of Soviet power, and have become transformed into an organizing force of the remnants of classes crushed in the USSR, which in their desperation are resorting to the basest tool of the struggle against the Soviet government–namely, the use of terror….
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 254

6. To obtain the funds needed to prepare terrorist acts, the Trotskyite-Zinovievite counter-revolutionary bloc resorted to theft of state funds and to outright robbery of the people's money.
The investigation has established that at one of the meetings of the united Trotskyite-Zinovievite center certain active Trotskyites and Zinovievites were ordered to enter into connections, for the sake of obtaining funds, with concealed Trotskyites and Zinovievites in economic work. Specifically, such an assignment was given to Reingold. By Kamenev's orders he was to make contact with the secret double dealer, Arkus, who was deputy-chairman of the USSR State Bank.
According to Reingold's testimony, Arkus gave systematic material support to the Trotskyite-Zinovievite center. In particular, Reingold testified at the investigation that in July or August 1933 Arkus withdrew 30,000 rubles from Gosbank for the needs of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite center. He transferred 15,000 to the Cartographic Trust which at the time was headed by the active Zinovievite, Fedorov, and 15,000 to the Economic Trust which was headed by the not unknown Evdokimov. The money was transferred in the form of sums to pay for work on economic statistics, which is not regulated by the state.
In a number of cases terrorist groups of Trotskyites and Zinovievites prepared to commit outright robberies in order to secure funds and weapons for the perpetration of terrorist acts. Thus, for example, a group of terrorists in Gorky, headed by the Trotskyite, Popov, attempted to carry out a series of robberies to obtain funds and weapons.
The Trotskyite, Lavrentev, who was an active member of this group, testified as follows at the investigation:

“The plan of the terrorist counter-revolutionary Trotskyite group for perpetrating a terrorist act against Comrade Stalin consisted of the following component parts: (1) the obtaining of funds for the terrorist group by committing ‘expropriation’s’ of state institutions and banks; (2) the acquiring of weapons for members of the terrorist group; (3) the direct preparation and perpetration of a terrorist act against Stalin. At one meeting of the terrorist group it was decided that Popov, Khramov, Pugachev, and I–Lavrentev–must devote ourselves entirely to terrorist activity and resign our jobs. On Popov’s orders Khramov was the first to resign his job, and on Popov’s instructions Khramov moved to Ardatovsky raion to prepare an ‘expropriation.’ It was proposed to start by seizing the treasury of a village soviet at a time when tax payments were at their maximum. Shortly after Khramov’s departure, Popov and Pugachev also resigned their jobs. I myself was on leave. All three of us, and Pelevina with us, went out to the village of Khokhlovo in Ardatovsky raion to carry out an ‘expropriation’ of the village soviet’s treasury. After we had reached the village of Khokhlovo, Khramov told us that he had not succeeded in preparing the ‘expropriation.’ For two days Popov also tried to prepare an ‘expropriation,’ but he was not successful. In this connection we–members of the terrorist group Popov, I (Lavrentev), Pugachev, and Pelevina –went out to Arzamas. On Popov’s prroposal we began to prepare to rob the cashiers who were receiving large sums into the bank. Three persons were appointed for the robbery. The robbery did not take place because the conditions were not suitable.”
(Lavrentev, Record of Interrogation, Nov. 9, 1935)
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 175

CONCLUSIONS:
Confronted with the indisputable triumphs of socialist construction, they first hoped that our party would be unable to cope with its difficulties, as a result of which would be created the possible conditions for their emergence into the open and their attainment of power. But, seeing that the party is successfully overcoming its difficulties, they are wagering on the defeat of the Soviet power in the forthcoming war, as a result of which they dream of attaining power.
And, finally, seeing no prospects at all, in desperation they seize upon the ultimate instrument of struggle–terror.
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 176

TROTS AND ZINOVIEVISTS WORMED THEIR WAY INTO GOVT FOR THEIR OWN AIMS

It is only the absence of proper Bolshevik vigilance that can explain the fact that in certain district party committees in Leningrad, Trotskyists and Zinovievists, expelled from the All-Union Communist Party, had already succeeded in 1935 in being restored into the party, and in certain cases they succeeded in making their way into the party apparat and exploiting it for their own vile terroristic aims.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 255

AFTER ZINOVIEV TRIAL TROTS ARE DEEMED NOT JUST POLITICAL OPPONENTS BUT SPIES

At the end of September 1936 the Politburo made a firm statement on the matter. Trotskyists were no longer to be considered political opponents on the left; now, as a category, they were defined as fascist spies and saboteurs.

[From September 29th, 1936 Protocol #43 of the Politburo]
The following directive concerning our stance toward counter-revolutionary, Trotskyist-Zinovievist elements is to be adopted:
a) Until very recently, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party considered the Trotskyist-Zinovievist scoundrels as the leading political and organizational detachment of the international bourgeoisie.
The latest facts tell us that these gentlemen have slid even deeper into the mire. They must therefore now be considered foreign agents, spies, subversives, and wreckers representing the fascist bourgeoisie of Europe.
b) In connection with this, it is necessary for us to make short work of these Trotskyist-Zinovievist scoundrels. This is to include not only those who have been arrested and whose investigation has already been completed, and not only those like Muralov, Pyatakov, Beloborodov, and others, who are currently under investigation, but also those who had been exiled earlier.

[Footnote: Draft by Yezhov and later signed by Stalin, the politburo resolution was approved by polling the members. Yezhov's draft originally included a third point–removed by Stalin–calling for the summary shooting of several thousand Trotskyists and the exile of thousands of others to Yakutia.]
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 272-273

PYATAKOV'S TESTIMONY AS TO SABOTAGE AND TERRORISM

In August, Yezhov interviewed him [Pyatakov]…. Pyatakov protested his innocence, claiming that his only sin was in not seeing the counter-revolutionary activities of his wife. He offered to testify against Zinoviev and Kamenev and even volunteered to execute them (and his ex-wife) personally. (Yezhov declined the offer as "absurd.") Pyatakov wrote to both Stalin and Ordjonikidze, protesting his innocence and referring to Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Trotsky as "rotten" and "base."
As Ordzhonikidze's deputy at heavy industry, Pyatakov was an important official with overall supervision over mining, chemicals, and other industrial operations. His arrest for sabotage and "terrorism" sent shock waves through the industrial establishment. Ordjonikidze…tried to intercede with Stalin to secure Pyatakov's freedom. But Stalin and Yezhov forwarded to him transcripts of interrogations in which Pyatakov gradually confessed to economic "wrecking," sabotage, and collaboration with Zinoviev and Trotsky in a monstrous plot to overthrow the Bolshevik regime. According to Bukharin, who was present, Ordjonikidze was invited to a "confrontation" with the arrested Pyatakov, where he asked his deputy if his confessions were coerced or voluntary. Pyatakov answered that they were completely voluntary.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 283

[February 5th, 1937 speech by Ordjonikidze at a meeting of the heads of the chief directorates of the Commissariat for Heavy Industry]
You think that a saboteur is someone who walks around with a revolver in his pocket, someone who hides in some dark corner somewhere, waiting for his victim? Who could imagine that Pyatakov could be a saboteur, and yet he turned out to be a saboteur, and, more still, a fine talker. He told [the investigators] how he did it.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 292

And his [Pyatakov] services to Stalin's Government were extremely valuable. His energy and intelligence, probably unrivaled in the whole leadership, had been channeled into carrying out Stalin's industrialization plans.
What was there to be said against him? [JUST READ WHAT HE SAYS ABOUT HIMSELF] He had loyally accepted the Stalin leadership, but he would have accepted an alternative leadership if Stalin could have been overthrown; he supported him with reservations. He had been a major critic of Stalin's in the 1920s. He had made it clear that he regarded his rise to power as unfortunate.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 140

YEZHOV SAYS ZINOVIEV SAID THERE WAS A BACKUP GROUP

[December 4th, 1936 speech by Yezhov to the Central Committee plenum]
You know that already at the August trial Zinoviev testified that apart from the main center of the Zinovievist-Trotskyist bloc, there existed also a backup center. Zinoviev gave four surnames as members of the backup center: Pyatakov, Sokolnikov, Radek, and Serebryakov. All of this has now been fully confirmed by the testimony of the defendants themselves, who are now under arrest: Pyatakov, Sokolnikov, Radek, and Serebryakov. All four members of the backup center have testified that they were members of this center….
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 304

At another plenary session, called in December 1936, Yezhov once again held center stage, launching a new series of dramatic charges that involved more former opposition leaders. At the August trial, Zinoviev and Kamenev had mentioned a "reserve center" of terrorists that existed in addition to the "basic center" of the Zinovievite-Trotskyite block. In the reserve group were Pyatakov; Radek, Sokolnikov, a former candidate member of the Politburo; and Serebryakov, a former secretary of the Central Committee. All had once been Trotsky's followers. Yezhov informed the Center Committee that these men, now under arrest, had confirmed the information given earlier by Zinoviev and Kamenev. The job of the reserves had been to supply replacements for the basic center if its members were discovered. But Pyatakov had begun his wrecking work even before Zinoviev and Kamenev were arrested. He carried out his task more effectively than the Zinovievite center had, because he enjoyed more trust from the government and possessed more links with the periphery. Here Beria interjected, "And foreign connections, too."
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 36

HYPOCRITICAL, DECEPTIVE BUKHARIN DENOUNCES SABOTAGE & OTHER ACTS OF SWINE

[December 4th, 1936 speech of Bukharin to a plenum of the Central Committee]
Comrades, it is very difficult for me to speak here today, because this may well be the last time that I speak before you. I know that it is especially difficult for me to speak now, because, in point of fact, it is necessary for all members of the party from top to bottom to exercise extreme vigilance and to help the appropriate [NKVD] organs utterly destroy those swine who are engaged in acts of sabotage and so on.
It follows quite naturally from all this–and should serve as our point of departure–that this is the main directive, that this is the main task before our party. I am happy that this entire business has been brought to light before war breaks out and that our [NKVD] organs have been in a position to expose all of this rot before the war so that we can come out of war victorious. Because if all of this had not been revealed before the war but during it, it would have brought about absolutely extraordinary and grievous defeats for the cause of socialism.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 309

BUKHARIN SAYS: KAMENEV AND ZINOVIEV LUSTED FOR POWER

Bukharin says: Kamenev and Zinoviev lusted for power, they were reaching for power.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 310

BUKHARIN SAYS PYATAKOV DOES NOT KNOW WHEN HE IS SPEAKING THE TRUTH

Bukharin says: let me appeal to Comrade Ordzhonikidze…. I was at his apartment when he asked me: “What is your opinion of Pyatakov?” This is literally what I told him: “My impression of him is that he is the sort of person who is so thoroughly ruined by his tactical approach to things that he doesn’t know when he is speaking the truth and when he is speaking from tactical considerations.”
Ordzhonikidze: That’s true.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 311

STALIN DENOUNCES BUKHARIN FOR DECEIVING WHEN HE SAID HE HAD CHANGED HIS VIEWS

[December 1936 speech by Stalin to the Central Committee plenum]
STALIN:…If a person says openly that he adheres to the party line, then, in accordance with the established, widely known traditions of Lenin’s party, the party considers that this person values his ideas and that he has genuinely renounced his former errors and has adopted the positions of the party. We believed in you and we were mistaken. We were mistaken, Comrade Bukharin.
BUKHARIN: Yes, yes.
STALIN:…We believed in you, we decorated you with the Order of Lenin, we moved you up the ladder and we were mistaken. Is it true, Comrade Bukharin?
BUKHARIN: It’s true, it’s true, I have said the same myself.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 321

STALIN DEFENDS & DRAGS HIS FEET AGAINST THOSE WHO WANT BUKHARIN'S HEAD

The stenographic notwithstanding, it is difficult to know exactly what happened politically at the December 1936 plenum. No one spoke up to defend Bukharin and Rykov. Nevertheless, the plenum did not expel Bukharin and Rykov from the party, nor did it order their arrest, despite specific proposals to that effect from some of the Central Committee members. This inconclusive result was not for want of trying on Yezhov's part. His speech was direct and unambiguously accusatory repeating the charges he had been making against Bukharin for three months. Even while the plenum was meeting, he was sending to Stalin, Molotov, and Kaganovich records of the interrogation of rightist Kulikov, who testified that Bukharin had told him in 1932 of "directives" to kill Stalin….

Then Stalin did a strange thing. Despite Yezhov's strong report, the lack of any support for Bukharin and Rykov from the plenum, and the damning testimony of Kulikov and others, Stalin moved "to consider the matter of Bukharin and Rykov unfinished" and suggested postponing a decision until the next plenum. Once again Yezhov's proposals were not adopted.

We do not know the reasons for Stalin's procrastination with Bukharin. This was the second time (the first was during the Zinoviev trial) that Stalin had ordered proceedings against Bukharin quashed, suspended, or delayed. It is tempting to imagine the existence of some group within the Central Committee that was resisting the move against the rightists, forcing Stalin to retreat and prepare his position again. But there is absolutely no evidence to support this. Unlike the case of valuable Pyatakov, neither Ordzhonikidze nor any other leader interceded for Bukharin. As far as we can tell from the documents, Bukharin and Rykov were met only with unrelenting hostility and even rude insults from those present at the plenum, many of whom were prepared to order his arrest on the spot. The only person dragging his feet was Stalin. As we shall see, this was not the last time Stalin resisted or delayed a move against Bukharin. Even in 1937, after the death of Ordzhonikidze, Stalin showed little enthusiasm for a quick and final liquidation of the leading rightists.

Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 324

Although Ordjonikidze may have slowed down the attack on industrial leaders, nobody seems to have opposed the crushing of Bukharin and it is difficult to credit the delays to anyone but Stalin.

Bukharin had come under official suspicion in August 1936, when Yezhov initiated the process in a letter to Stalin suggesting that former Rightists were implicated in the Zinovievist-Trotskyist "plot." Yezhov asked Stalin's permission to reinterrogate Uglanov, Ryutin, and other Rightists already sentenced on other charges. Stalin agreed. During August and September, Yezhov worked diligently to assemble "evidence" against Bukharin by pressuring former Rightists Uglanov, Ryutin, Rovinsky, and Kotov. The culmination of his effort was a dramatic confrontation between Bukharin and the already arrested Sokolnikov on Sept. 8 in the presence of Kaganovich, Vyshinsky, and Yezhov. The attempt failed, because at the meeting Sokolnikov denied personal knowledge of Bukharin's participation in the treasonous Opposition "bloc." The record of the confrontation was sent to Stalin and two days later Vyshinsky announced that there was insufficient evidence to proceed legally against Bukharin. Only Stalin could have decided this, and we have no evidence that anyone was defending Bukharin.

Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 56

Before, during, and after the December 1936 plenum, Bukharin denied his guilt. Stalin debated Bukharin at the plenum, demanded explanations and recantations from him, and even told the Central Committee members, “You can shoot [him] if you want, it’s up to you.” None of the other speakers questioned the case against Bukharin, and every single speaker accused him. Nevertheless, Stalin ended the meeting by “abruptly” suggesting only to continue “verification” and to postpone any decision on Bukharin.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 57

A subcommission, shared by Mikoyan, was formed at the February 1937 plenum to decide the fate of Bukharin. According to folklore, all the committee’s participants voted to “arrest, try, and shoot” Bukharin and Rykov. Again, the lore is wrong; documents show that the event went quite differently and showed continued indecision and confusion, even on Stalin’s part. The final protocol of the committee meeting shows that everyone indeed voted to expel Bukharin and Rykov from the party. Yezhov, Budenny, Manuilsky, Shvernik, Kosarev, and Iakir were for shooting them outright. Postyshev, Shkiryatov, Kossior, Petrovsky, and Litvinov were for sending them to trial but forbidding a death sentence. The rest voted “for the suggestion of Comrade Stalin,” which in the final text is given as: “to expel from the party, not to send them to trial, and to refer the matter to the in NKVD for further investigation.”
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 58

At the November 7th ‘demonstration’–the 19th anniversary of the Revolution in 1936–a soldier came up to Bukharin in one of the minor stands. Bukharin expected arrest, but it was instead an invitation from Stalin to come up and join him at the main stand. Later NKVD officers arrived to search Bukharin’s flat. Stalin ‘chanced’ to telephone, and on hearing of it ordered the NKVD men to leave at once.
In December 1936 the Central Committee, at its plenum, heard a series of violent attacks by Yezhov and others against Bukharin and his rightist plotters. Stalin intervened and suggested that the question should be postponed until the next plenum.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 197

Many of the major Bolsheviks opposed Stalin, but never quite at the same time. At a Party meeting in the late 1920s, Stalin said, “You demand the blood of Bukharin? Well, you shall not get it.” Then, in 1935, Stalin once more pledged his friendship to Bukharin at a banquet. Raising a glass, he said, “Let’s all drink to Nikolai Ivanovitch [Bukharin].”
“It was strange,” Anna Larina said, “As late as 1936, it looked as if Bukharin’s position was more stable. He was appointed editor of Izvestia, he was on the constitutional commission, and it looked as if there could be a democratization process going on in the country.
Remnick, David. Lenin’s Tomb. New York: Random House, c1993, p. 65

ASTROV EXPOSES BUKHARIN IN FRONT OF STALIN AND THE POLITBURO

Although there was a critical but generally conciliatory attitude toward the regional secretaries at the February-March 1937 plenum, the official rhetoric on former oppositionists was increasingly severe. Two months earlier, at Stalin's suggestion, the previous plenum had not condemned Bukharin and Rykov and had postponed consideration to the next meeting. In the interim, Yezhov had been busy. He continued to interrogate former oppositionists in order to get "evidence" incriminating the rightist leaders. On Jan. 13, 1937, Bukharin participated in a "confrontation" with Astrov, a former pupil of Bukharin's now arrested for treason. In the presence of Stalin and other Politburo members, Astrov angrily accused Bukharin of active participation in subversive conspiracies. Astrov alleged that Bukharin had used his former students in the Institute of Red Professors (The " Bukharin School) as the basis for an underground organization. Bukharin denied everything.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 364

On January 13, 1937, Bukharin and Rykov were brought face-to-face with Astrov, with Stalin and other members of the Politburo….
At the confrontation, Astrov said that in the spring of 1932 the "center" of the illegal organization of Rightists decided to adopt the tactic of terror. He confirmed Kulikov's testimony that the Ryutin platform had been written by Bukharin, Rykov, Tomsky, and Uglanov, and claimed that "Bukharin and Rykov continued to belong to the center of Rightists, remaining at their earlier positions.
In preparing Astrov for the face-to-face encounter, the investigators were particularly stubborn in extracting testimony from him about an illegal conference of "Rightists" which occurred in August-September 1932. Such a conference actually did take place at that time, but Astrov could say very little about it insofar as he participated in only one meeting of former Bukharin supporters in 1932, a meeting which occurred at his apartment. There, in response to a statement by several of his comrades that Stalin should be "removed by force," Astrov declared that he had no intention of participating in any struggle against Stalin. Once they became convinced that this was indeed Astrov's position, the oppositionally inclined "Young Rightists" apparently decided to not include him anymore in such discussions which continued at other locations.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 180

Astrov played a provocative role in the fate of Bukharin. In one confrontation he affirmed his deposition on the terrorism of the "right." Later he declared that in the spring of 1932 "the center of the right resolved to turn to the tactics of terror," that Bukharin had allegedly talked about "the necessity to kill Stalin," and that the principal authors of the so-called Ryutin platform were Bukharin, Rykov, Tomsky, and Uglanov. He asserted that it was also personally known to him that "Bukharin and Rykov continue to compose the center of the right, having remained in their previous positions."
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 327

STALIN TOLD BUKHARIN PEOPLE SAID TESTIMONIES AGAINST HIM WERE FREELY GIVEN

STALIN: You [Bukharin] were at the face-to-face confrontations on the premises of the Orgburo, and so were we, members of the Politburo. Astrov was there and some of the others who were arrested. Pyatakov was there, so were Radek and Sosnovsky and Kulikov

and others. When I or someone else asked each of these: “Tell me honestly, have you given your testimony freely or was it squeezed out of you?” Radek even burst out in tears when asked this question: “Squeezed out of me? Are you kidding! Freely, completely freely.”
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 370

RYKOV TELLS CC THAT HE CAN’T BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR TRAITORS ADMIRING HIM

[February 24th, 1937 speech of Rykov to the February-March 1937 plenum of the Central Committee]
Can a political leader disavow responsibility for the fact that many traitors, criminals, and wreckers model themselves on him and think that he is their instigator? I do not disavow responsibility for this. I had also made other mistakes….
And there is no disgrace greater than the fact that many people perpetrated these revolting deeds by modeling themselves on me–this is a horrible thing.
But it does not at all follow from this, it seems to me, that on the basis of this one ought to accuse me of knowing that Trotskyists talk to Hess, that they conceded the Ukraine to Germany, that they handed over the Baltic region [Rykov apparently means Primorsky Krai on the Pacific Ocean] to the Japanese, that they systematically practiced spying and sabotage on the widest possible scale.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 374

VOROSHILOV DENOUNCES BUKHARIN AS A DECEPTIVE, VILE HYPOCRITE

[February 24th, 1937 speech by Voroshilov to the February-March 1937 Plenum of the Central Committee]
…This is Bukharin’s method. This method has been known to us for a long time. Bukharin is a very peculiar person. He is capable of many things. Vile, you know, as a mischievous cat and at once he starts covering his tracks, he starts confusing things, he starts carrying out all kinds of pranks, in order to come out of this filthy business clean, and he has succeeded in this often thanks to the kindness of the Central Committee. He has often succeeded in extricating himself with relative success from very unpleasant incidents. And he’s trying to do the same thing this time around.
I believe that the guilt of this group, of Bukharin, of Rykov, and especially of Tomsky, has been completely proven.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 376

ANDREEV SAYS TROTS AND RIGHTISTS ARE THE SAME & STALIN WAS EXTREMELY PATIENT

[February 25th, 1937 speech by Andreev to the February-March 1937 Plenum of the Central Committee]
…Meanwhile, what do the investigative materials afforded to plenum members speak of? It seems to me that, first of all, they decisively unmask the rightists, they unmask them in the sense that there was never any–now it is clear–there was never any difference between the Trotskyists and rightists. Such a difference never existed.

Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 377

[Andreev continues] All comparisons of the basic facts, of the testimony and of their [Bukharin's and Rykov's] personal conduct has led me to the firm conviction that Bukharin and Rykov knew of the treasonous work by the Trotskyists.
They knew about it. They were linked with them. My conviction is that Bukharin and Rykov not only knew of the activities of rightist elements, but rather they continued, very cautiously and subtly, to serve as leaders of these rightist elements; to the very last moment they served as their leaders and maintained their link with them. They encouraged them in their anti-Soviet activities and abetted their crimes, goaded these people to commit their crimes–I am convinced of this, no matter how much Bukharin and Rykov might deny it. What, we may wonder, is the value of statements and intimations by Bukharin and Rykov–namely, "that we are not allowed to prove our innocence, that they do not believe our vows and so on"?
…the Party and the Central Committee have given you [Bukharin and Rykov] sufficient time, more than enough time and means to disarm yourselves and prove yourselves innocent. No one else from the ranks of the oppositionists and enemies has been afforded such a period of time, the party has not afforded such a period of time to anyone other than you. The party did the maximum to keep you in its ranks. How much effort has been expended, how much patience has been shown to you by the party and especially, I must say, by Comrade Stalin
Yes, precisely, by Comrade Stalin, who always urged us, who constantly warned us, whenever comrades here or there, whenever local organizations here or there raised the issue "point-blank," as it is said, in reference to the rightists, and whenever the question would arise in the Central Committee, Comrade Stalin would caution them against excessive haste; he always warned us. Nevertheless, you abused the party's trust.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 378

KABAKOV DENOUNCES BUKHARIN

[From Kabakov's speech to the February-March 1937 Plenum of the Central Committee on February 25th 1937]
…yet every terroristic group created under your [Bukharin] leadership was familiar with and felt your daily influence and said that "we were preparing to carry out terror, we were engaged in sabotage, we were fulfilling the will of Rykov, Bukharin, and Tomsky."
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 379

MAKAROV SAYS MANY PERSONS TESTIFIED TO THE TROT-RIGHTIST-ZINOVIEV UNITY

[From Makarov's speech to the February-March 1937 Plenum of the Central Committee on February 25th 1937]
The materials reported by Yezhov are characterized by the fact that not only do numerous persons corroborate the fact that the leaders of the rightist opposition knew about the existence of a Trotskyite-Zinovievist center, the fact that they themselves had direct contact with it, but also that they took part in it. What characterizes the numerous persons who testified is the fact that, while residing all over our Union, they each gave his or her own distinct testimony, yet the essence of their testimony remains the same, their reply to these two questions is in the affirmative, that they knew of the existence of a Trotskyist-Zinovievist

center and that they themselves were directly involved in all the counter-revolutionary activities which had been carried out both by so-called leftists and rightists and by the Trotskyist-Zinovievist center.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 379

KOSAREV DENOUNCES BUKHARIN AS A CRIMINAL CAUGHT RED-HANDED

[From Kosarev's speech to the February-March 1937 Plenum of the Central Committee on February 25th 1937]
…We cannot even call Bukharin's speech an ambiguous one. This is the speech of an embittered enemy, who, being surrounded on all sides by the incontrovertible facts of his vile crimes, will stop and nothing, will, as a last resort, slander the investigation and our investigative organs. Bukharin wants to create the impression that the Central Committee seeks his innocent blood and that he is prepared to give it. Only an enemy could speak like this–an enemy, moreover, caught red-handed and refusing to acknowledge is crimes….
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 380

MOLOTOV READS VOROSHILOV'S ATTACK ON BUKHARIN

[Molotov's speech to the February-March 1937 Plenum of the Central Committee on February 25th 1937]
Already at the last plenum we had sufficient evidence, and yet we postponed this case once again. We decided to give this man [Bukharin] the opportunity to extricate himself if he is in trouble. If he is guilty, we will give him time to admit his mistakes, to turn aside from it, to repent of it, to put an end to it. We have sought to bring this about in every way possible….
STALIN: What was Voroshilov's reply?
MOLOTOV: Voroshilov's reply was a good one. I must read Voroshilov's reply to you:
"To Comrade Bukharin: I am returning your letter, in which you have permitted yourself to make vile attacks on our party leadership. If your wish was to convince me by this letter of your complete innocence, then you have succeeded in convincing me of only one thing–namely, that in the future I should place an even greater distance between us, regardless of the results of the investigation into your case. And if you do not recant your vile epithets against the party leadership, then I shall consider you, in addition, a scoundrel."
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 382

KALININ ATTACKS BUKHARIN'S DEFENSE

[Kalinin's speech to the February-March 1937 Plenum of the Central Committee on February 25th 1937]
And when some people shouted at Bukharin during his speech that, namely, you are acting like a lawyer, Bukharin replied: "Well, what of it? My situation is such that I must defend myself." I think, and those comrades who shouted at him also probably think, when they speak of "acting like a lawyer," that it doesn't mean that Bukharin should not defend himself. That's not the point. What it means, instead, is that, in defending himself, he is employing the methods of a lawyer who wants, at whatever cost, to defend the accused, even when the latter's case is completely hopeless.

Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 383

UGAROV DENOUNCES BUKHARIN AND RYKOV AS LEADERS OF COUNTER-REV RIGHTISTS

[From Ugarov's speech to the February-March 1937 Plenum of the Central Committee on February 25th 1937]
…The main thing is obvious: The cadres of terrorists and wreckers from the ranks of the rightists looked upon Bukharin as their leader–directing all of the center's work…. One thing is absolutely clear, namely, that Bukharin, Rykov, Tomsky, Uglanov, and Schmidt formed the leading group of rightists, a real center, which directed all the counter-revolutionary activity of the rightists,… It is obvious to all of us that Bukharin and Rykov are waging a struggle against the party, against the Soviet state, that they have gone over to the camp of our worst enemies, that they have broken off completely with the party. They are the instigators of the counter-revolutionary activity of the rightists, of acts of terror and sabotage unmasked by the organs of the NKVD.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 386

ZHUKOV SAYS THE RIGHTIST LEADERS LIKE BUKHARIN SHOULD BE SHOT

[Zhukov's speech to the February-March 1937 Plenum of the Central Committee on February 25th, 1937]
…In vain do we bother with this counter-revolutionary gang. In vain do we try to persuade them. It's hopeless. You'll never succeed in persuading them. They will be able to [repudiate it] not only here but in any place, wherever they will be given opportunity to speak. They will repudiate it a hundred times. Lying and swindling has entered their blood and accompanies them at every step. They carried out their counter-revolutionary acts to the best of their ability. For this reason I am not sure there is any need for us to go on debating this matter. In my opinion, the matter is so clear after all of these incredible, murderous testimonies against them….
I end this by saying that these people need to be judged in accordance with all the principles of our legality. These people must be shot just as [other] scoundrels were shot.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 387

MEZHLAUK SAID THEY WOULD HAVE TORN BUKHARIN APART WITHOUT STALIN'S PATIENCE

[Mezhlauk's speech to the February-March 1937 Plenum of the Central Committee on February 25th 1937]
You have been tormenting the party over many, many years, and IT IS ONLY THANKS TO THE ANGELIC PATIENCE OF COMRADE STALIN THAT WE HAVE NOT TORN YOU POLITICALLY TO PIECES FOR YOUR VILE, TERRORISTIC WORK. We would have done this long ago, two months ago, were it not for Comrade Stalin, were it not that policy dictated by the interests of the working-class predominates in Stalin over his just sense of indignation, were it not that he can see farther and better than any of us….
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 387

KAGANOVICH GETS KULIKOV TO ADMIT HE WAS TRYING TO KILL STALIN AND HIMSELF

[Kaganovich's speech to the February-March 1937 Plenum of the Central Committee on February 25th 1937]
I asked Kulikov [when the latter was under arrest]: "You were at my place in 1932 and apologized then. Does that mean that you were already engaging in duplicity then?" "Yes, I was, I was even guilty of duplicity in my relations with you," said Kulikov. Voroshilov then asked him: "And why did you want to kill Kaganovich?" Kulikov replied: "[We] wanted to kill him for the same reason we wanted to kill Stalin–namely, in order to decapitate the leadership."
…We never imagined before 1936 to what depths Zinoviev and Kamenev, who we had expelled several times from the party, could have sunk, nor to what depths Pyatakov, Livshits, and others could sink. To what depths they are capable of sinking–we see this in 1936 in a different light. This is why we must no longer, in my opinion, continue this magnanimous [policy] of ours. Our party must be purged of these people.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 388

OSINSKY SAYS THE GUILT OF BUKHARIN AND RYKOV IS OBVIOUS

[Osinsky's speech to the February-March 1937 Plenum of the Central Committee on February 26, 1937]
…Bukharin and Rykov refute essentially secondary points. They do not refute the essentials, and the basic accusations against them still stand…. On the whole, all of their defense is completely inconsistent, poorly constructed, and spineless. And it is spineless not because Bukharin and Rykov lack capability but because on all main points they have nothing to say. In sum, it behooves us to establish the fact that the situation is extremely clear. The conclusions are also very clear. Like many other comrades who feel this, I too am baffled why we, in fact, are continuing this discussion.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 390

YAROSLAVSKY SAYS PROOF OF THE GUILT OF BUKHARIN AND RYKOV IS CLEAR

[Yaroslavsky's speech to the February-March 1937 Plenum of the Central Committee on February 26, 1937]
Comrades, let's hope that this is the last time that we'll discuss the question of treasonable members and candidates of the Central Committee in the Central Committee of our Party. The charge that Bukharin and Rykov have betrayed our Bolshevik Party is, in my opinion, totally proven. It has been proven by the investigative materials….
…Any further postponement of this case can only cause us great harm because, otherwise, the younger members of the party will begin wondering whether we have solid facts against Bukharin and Rykov. And we do have very solid facts, incontrovertible facts, proving their guilt. We should keep in mind the upbringing of our younger generation.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 391

BUKHARIN & RYKOV WERE FAIRLY ALLOWED TO SPEAK 2ND TIME IN THEIR DEFENSE

Allowing those accused of party crimes to speak a second time in rebuttal was a fairly unusual procedure and was cited by some speakers as proof that the Central Committee was willing to give the two accused [Bukharin and Rykov] every fair chance to defend themselves.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 392

BUKHARIN CONFESSES HE COMMITTED MANY POLITICAL SINS AND CRIMES

My [Bukharin] sins before the party have been very grave. My sins were especially grave during the period of the decisive onslaught of socialism, when, in fact, our group, serving as an enormous break to the Socialist offensive, caused it great harm. I've confessed to the sins. I confessed that from 1930 to 1932 I committed many political sins.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 399

Arrested in March 1937 for espionage and wrecking, for three months Bukharin refused to provide the evidence needed to prove the existence of a conspiracy. Finally, in June, he was forced to make the following statement:
"After prolonged hesitation I have come to the conclusion that I must fully confess my guilt before the Party, the working-class, and the country and finish once and for all with my counter-revolutionary past. I confess that until recently I took part in an organization of Rights and was, with Rykov and Tomsky, a member of the organization's center, that this organization aimed at the violent overthrow of the Soviet regime (by coup d'etat, uprising, terror), and that it was part of a bloc with the Trotskyite-Zinovievite organization. I will give details about this."

He began with theoretical confessions, which ought to have shown him that his fate, like that of millions, was not an accident, but was profoundly systematic, and prompted by Marxism-Leninism, which grounded his crimes in theory. Bukharin's "personal evidence" makes astonishing reading as a human document. He was prepared to confess to anything under the interrogation of State Security Captain Kogan. As the Chekists were themselves incapable of penetrating Bukharin's theoretical "errors," they told him to write them down himself. He did so in the form of a philosophical treatise: "1. My general theoretical anti-Leninist views; 2. The theory of the state and the theory of the dictatorship; 3. The theory of class struggle in conditions of the proletarian dictatorship; 4. The theory of organized capitalism…." Only at the end of this "treatise," composed in an NKVD prison, did he speak of political issues: his struggle against the Party, the origins of his "school" with its counter-revolutionary aims and so on.
Bukharin's voluminous "theoretical evidence," is perhaps unique as an occasion when an accused man assisted his interrogators by writing in his own hand a deposition that sought to trace the sins of his own theoretical views. "As is known," he began, "Lenin's "testament" indicates that I did not understand dialectics and had never studied it seriously. This was entirely true…. [My] abstract schematism strove to keep up with the "latest generalizations," detaching them from multi-form, rapidly moving life, and in this moribund approach to the

processes of history and historical life lies the root of my huge political mistakes, becoming under certain circumstances political crimes." Bukharin confessed to being not merely "scholastic," but also anti-Leninist. "As is known, Lenin accused me of concentrating all my attention on the destruction of the bourgeois state, on the one hand, and on the classless society, on the other…. It was precisely here that lay one of the roots of the recent ideology of the Rights…. The might of the state apparatus of the nascent and strengthening dictatorship of the proletariat was underrated.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 292

He [Bukharin] had been true to himself then, as he wrote to Stalin from prison on 15 April 1937: "I sincerely thought that Brest [would cause] the greatest harm. I sincerely thought that your policy of '28-'29 was dangerous in the extreme. I proceeded from the policy to the person, not the other way round. But what did I do wrong, what let me down? Anti-dialectical thinking, schematism, striving for literary effect, abstraction, bookishness."
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 294

The finale of the Bukharin drama was his letter, dated 13 March 1938 and addressed to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, from "Bukharin, sentenced to death." It was a plea for clemency:
"I regard the sentence of the court as just retribution for the heavy crimes I have committed against the Socialist motherland, her people, Party and government. There is not a single word of protest in my soul. I should be shot 10 times over for my crimes…."
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 302

RYKOV DECIDES HE WILL BE TREATED BETTER IF HE CONFESSES

[Rykov's second speech to the February-March 1937 Plenum of the Central Committee on February 26, 1937]
It is now absolutely clear to me that I will be better treated if I confess. This is absolutely clear to me–and many of my torments will also come to an end, at whatever price, just so long as it comes to some end.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 401

SUMMARY OF FACTS PROVING BUKHARIN AND RYKOV DESERVED TO BE TRIED

[Resolution of the February-March 1937 Central Committee Plenum on the affair of Bukharin and Rykov]
1. On the basis of investigative materials furnished by the NKVD, on the basis of the face-to-face confrontation between Comrade Bukharin & Radek, Pyatakov, Sosnovsky, and Sokolnikov, as well as on the basis of a thorough and detailed discussion of the matter at the Plenum, the Plenum of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party has established that, at a minimum, Comrades Bukharin and Rykov knew of the criminal, terrorist, espionage, and sabotage-wrecking activities of the Trotskyist center, and that they not only did not combat these activities but in fact helped these activities along by concealing them from the party and not reporting them to the Central Committee.

2. On the basis of investigative materials furnished by the NKVD, on the basis of Comrade Bukharin's face-to-face confrontation with the rightists–with Kulikov and Astrov –in the presence of members of the Politburo of the Central Committee and Comrade Rykov's face-to-face confrontation with Kotov, Schmidt, Nesterov, and Radin, as well as on the basis of a detailed and thorough discussion of the matter at the Plenum of the Central Committee, the Plenum of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party has established that comrades Bukharin and Rykov, at a minimum, knew from their followers and supporters, that is, from Slepkov, Tsetlin, Astrov, Maretsky, Nesterov, Radin, Kulikov, Kotov, Uglanov, Zaitsev, Kuzmin, Sapozhnikov, and others, that criminal terrorist groups had been organized, and they not only did not resist them but in fact encouraged them.
Bearing in mind the above and taking into account the fact that even while Lenin was alive Comrade Bukharin waged a campaign against the party and against Lenin himself both before the October Revolution (concerning the dictatorship of the proletariat) and after the October Revolution (concerning the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty, the party's program, the nationalities question, and the role of the trade unions) and the fact that Comrade Rykov also waged a campaign against the party and against Lenin himself both before the October Revolution and at the time of the October uprising (he was against the October Revolution), as well as after the October coup d'etat (he demanded a coalition with the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, and, as a sign of protest, he quit his post of commissar for foreign affairs, for which he received from Lenin the nickname of "strikebreaker"), and that all this speaks indubitably of the fact that the political fall of comrades Bukharin and Rykov is not merely fortuitous or unexpected–taking into account all this, the Plenum of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party considers that Comrades Bukharin and Rykov deserve to be immediately expelled from the party and brought to trial before the military tribunal.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 408

[Stalin said in a June 1937 speech], Rykov. We have no proof that he himself gave secrets to the Germans, but he instigated and got that information through his own people, while others gave the secrets to the Germans. Enukidze and Karakhan worked with him very closely–both became spies; Karakhan from 1927, as also Enukidze from the same year. We know through whom these messages and secrets were given, through whom they exported their messages and by what routes –this was through a person working in the German Embassy in Moscow. We know. Rykov knew that also. We have no proof that he himself was a spy, but he was the courier, tied in to German fascists.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 109

STALIN LISTS OPTIONS OF WHAT TO DO WITH BUKHARIN AND RYKOV

[Stalin's February 27th 1937 report to the February-March 1937 Central Committee Plenum on the commission on the affair of Bukharin and Rykov]
Comrades, the commission of the Central Committee plenum has entrusted me with the task of reporting to you the results of its work. Permit me to read you the report. The members of the commission were all in accord that, at a minimum, Bukharin and Rykov should be punished by being expelled from the list of candidate members of the Central Committee and from the ranks of the All-Union Communist Party. There was not a single person on the

commission who expressed himself against this proposal. There were differences of opinion as to whether they should be handed over for trial or not handed over for trial, and if not, then as to what we should confine ourselves to. Part of the commission expressed itself in favor of handing them over to a military tribunal and having them executed. Another part of the commission expressed itself in favor of handing them over for trial and having them receive a sentence of ten years in prison. A third part expressed itself in favor of having them handed over for trial without a preliminary decision as to what should be their sentence. And, finally, a fourth part of the commission expressed itself in favor of not handing them over for trial but instead referring the matter of Bukharin and Rykov to the NKVD. The last named proposal won out….
If we look at the Trotskyists and Zinovievists, we see that they were expelled from the party, then restored, then expelled again. If we look at Bukharin and Rykov, we see that they had never been expelled. We should not equate the Trotskyists and Zinovievists, who once, as you well know, staged an anti-Soviet demonstration 1927, with Rykov and Bukharin. There are no such sins in their past.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 409-410

FOUR OPTIONS AND THE DECISION AS TO WHAT TO DO WITH BUKHARIN AND RYKOV

[Protocol of the February 27th, 1937 meeting of the Commission of the Central Committee on the matter of Bukharin and Rykov]
Discussion: of the suggestions of members of the commission.
1. Yezhov– to expel Bukharin and Rykov as candidate members of the Central Committee and members of the All-Union Communist Party and to transfer them to the military tribunal with application of the highest measure of punishment–shooting.
2. Postyshev, Shkiriatov, Antipov, Khrushchev, Nikolaeva, Kosior, Petrovsky, Litvinov, –to expel from the ranks of candidate members of the Central Committee and as members of the All-Union Communist Party, to transfer them to court without application of the death penalty.
3. Budenny, Manuilsky, Shvernik, Kosarev, Yakir –to expel from the ranks of candidate members of the Central Committee and as members of the All-Union Communist Party, to transfer them to court with application of the death penalty.
4. Stalin, Ulianova, Krupskaya, Vareikis, Molotov, Voroshilov –to expel from the ranks of candidate members of the Central Committee and as members of the All-Union Communist Party, not to send them to court but rather transfer their case to the NKVD.
DECISION:
1. To expel from the ranks of candidate members of the Central Committee and as members of the All-Union Communist Party, not to send them to court but rather transfer the case of Bukharin and Rykov to the NKVD (adopted unanimously).
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 412

The plenum appointed a commission of 36 members, with Mikoyan in the chair (and not voting), to report on the question. Twenty spoke. Yezhov, supported by five others, proposed the expulsion of Bukharin and Rykov from the Central Committee and the Party, trial before the Military Collegium, and execution. Postyshev, supported by seven others, including

Petrovsky and Kossior, proposed the same, without the application of execution. Stalin, supported by five others, proposed merely sending them to the NKVD for further investigation. Stalin's proposal was eventually accepted unanimously.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 174

STALIN WAS LEADING THE LENIENT GROUP

Following Bukharin's exoneration in September 1936 and Stalin's move to delay proceedings against him at the December 1936 plenum, this was the third time that Stalin had personally intervened to avoid unambiguously condemning Bukharin….
We can now finally rule out the notion, so often found in the literature, that Stalin in the period was backing down before an anti-terror "liberal" coalition of senior Bolsheviks. Of those often mentioned in such a role (Kuibyshev, Kirov, Ordjonikidze, and others), none were alive at the time of the plenum. On the contrary; according to the documents, once again only Stalin was resisting application of either a prison or death sentence.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1999, p. 416

…Even after Bukharin began to "confess" to the charges against him (later in June 1937), it would be half a year before Stalin brought him to the dock.
…certainly treatment of no other repressed oppositionist was moderated so many times at Stalin's initiative. Even after Bukharin's arrest, his wife was allowed to live in her apartment in the Kremlin for several months. Stalin personally intervened to prevent her eviction. About the time Bukharin began to confess in the summer of 1937, his wife was given the option to live in any of five cities outside Moscow; she picked Astrakhan. Although Yezhov wanted to have her shot along with other "wives of enemies of the people" (according to Beria), Stalin refused.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 418

Stalin's position also maintained maximum flexibility. He had not publicly or wholeheartedly associated himself with Yezhov's charges and had taken an almost neutral stance at the plenum; he gave Bukharin and Rykov unprecedented time to answer the charges and in comparison with the other speakers his demeanor seemed balanced and evenhanded.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 418

BUKHARIN DEFENDS HIMSELF POORLY

His [Bukharin] attempt at defense [at the December 1936 plenum of the Central Committee] could not have helped him much and probably strengthened Stalin's hand vis-a-vis the great majority of the Central Committee members. Bukharin had offered nothing concrete in his favor except his denunciation of Yakovlev –but that could have been interpreted as a smokescreen. The point about speaking to Pavlov and Rolland [in which he allegedly defended the government's policies] was worthless. All that Bukharin really counted on was his long service in the party and his personal honor; he asked people to take his word about his honesty over the testimony of numerous others. And he himself said that he had struggled in the late 1920s against pressure on the peasants. But by 1936 it appeared, correctly or not, that that policy, culminating in collectivization, had enabled industrialization to take off.

More important for understanding his [Bukharin] fate and the course of the Terror was his admission that some sort of "conference" of his young followers had occurred in 1932. Apparently one of them had said in Bukharin's presence that he wished to kill Stalin. Bukharin now acknowledged that he had been "two-faced" about his followers and had not informed the authorities of their discussions. He had believed at the time, he claimed, that he could lead them back to the party. As for the accusations that he was linked to foreign espionage services and had fostered terrorism, all that was false. But by this time Bukharin had lied repeatedly to Stalin and the whole Central Committee.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 41-42

[Yevdokimov's report to the Azov-Black Sea Territorial Party Committee on the February-March 1937 Central Committee Plenum]
Bukharin addressed the Central Committee and the members of the plenum. He called his speech "Against the slanderers" and accused all of his friends and all of his underlings of slander. Moreover, he analyzed his case in a manner that made it appear that all of this had been contrived by the NKVD, and he attacked the Central Committee. The following legitimate question was posed to him: "All Right. You have been slandered, but why then has the man closest to you, Tseitlin, your secretary, slandered you; why have your followers, whom you have trained and brought up, why have they slandered you?" Bukharin explained that he had had a quarrel with Tseitlin. But what about the others? The others–he doesn't know why. If they had slandered you, then why are they slandering themselves by confessing to their own counter-revolutionary actions, such as preparations for terror, etc.? Why? He is at a loss.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 440

BUKHARIN TELLS STALIN HE WILL NOT TAKE BACK ANY OF HIS CONFESSION

[Dec. 10, 1937 letter of Bukharin to Stalin]
…In order to avoid any misunderstandings, I will say to you from the outset that, as far as the world at large (society) is concerned: a) I have no intention of recanting anything I've written down [confessed];
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 556

[Bukharin continues] My head is giddy with confusion, and I feel like yelling at the top of my voice. I feel like pounding my head against the wall….
I bear not one iota of malice toward anyone, nor am I bitter. I'm not a Christian. But I do have my quirks….
When I was hallucinating, I saw you several times and once I saw Nadezhda Sergeevna [Stalin's late wife]. She approached me and said: "What have they done with you, Nikolai? I'll tell Joseph to bail you out." This was so real that I was about to jump and write a letter to you and ask you to…bail me out! Reality had become totally mixed up in my mind with delusion….
…I have done all this in advance, since I have no idea at all what condition I shall be in tomorrow and the day after tomorrow, etc.. Being a neurasthenic, I shall perhaps feel such universal apathy that I won't be able even so much as to move my finger.

Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 558

…Yezhov admitted to nothing in connection with the charges against him. In his statement, however, Bukharin admitted to a bit more than he had at the February 1937 Central Committee plenum. There he had denied any knowledge of the activities, conspiratorial or otherwise, of his former followers after 1930. In this letter, however, he admitted to knowing that they were up to something as late as 1932 and not telling Stalin about it out of pity or a belief that he could reform them: "I once heard someone say that someone had yelled out something…or something of the sort. And, yes, I concealed this fact, feeling pity for the 'gang.'… I was also guilty of engaging in duplicity in 1932 in my relations with my 'followers,' believing sincerely that I would thereby win them back wholly to the party."
It is difficult to see how such an admission could have done anything other than destroy any credibility Bukharin may have still had. Along with his testimony at the last two plena he attended, it represented another in a series of incremental concessions, each more damning than the last. Stalin might thus have legitimately wondered at what point Bukharin was telling (or would tell) the whole truth about his connections and knowledge of others' activities.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 563

EXCEPT FOR THE MILITARY TRIAL THE TRIALS WERE OPEN AND PUBLIC

But in our country everything was made public with the exception of two military tribunals. For reasons of military secrecy these were closed trials. The enemies of Soviet power have always been good at concocting ingenious stories. The open trial lasted for 12 days, with the world press attending and with 21 individuals, all well known to the public, sitting in the dock…. Our enemies also attended the trials.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 267

The Trial of the Sixteen was supposed to be conducted in accordance with the law of December 1, 1934, which established extraordinary procedures for reviewing all cases involving terror: these cases were to be held behind closed doors and the defendants were to be deprived of the right to appeal for clemency. However, as an exception to this law, the court session lasting from Aug. 19 to 24 was open, and besides "representatives at Soviet society," foreign journalists and diplomats were in the courtroom.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 36

THERE WAS NO SCRIPT FOR THE TRIALS

Those who allege that the trials were badly scripted are, in their obtuseness, simply allied with the White Guards. No GPU or any other security service could have fabricated the trials that way. Three major trials were held: in 1936, 1937, and 1938, with much material released to the public….
To say that people like Krestinsky and Rosengoltz, people like Yagoda, like Bukharin and Pyatakov all followed some kind of script is absurd!
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 268

THE TALENTED PEOPLE KILLED WERE TALENTED THE WRONG WAY

CHUEV: You are reproached inasmuch as Stalin allegedly killed off the most talented people in the country.
MOLOTOV: The most talented being Trotsky, Zinoviev, that ilk? With such talented people we would have crept backward. There is talent and there is talent….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 269

DEFENDANTS WERE NOT PROMISED THEIR LIVES IF THEY CONFESSED

CHUEV: A new version has developed with regard to the open trials of the 1930s. It is said that the defendants were promised life in exchange for exhaustive confessions–something on that order.
MOLOTOV: That's a White Guard version. It's their fabrication. Such notions appeared earlier, too. Are they complete fools, or what?
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 269

RUDZUTAK WAS A RIGHTIST WORKING WITH RYKOV AND TOMSKY

…The trials fully exposed him [Rudzutak] as an active accomplice of the rightists. He actually had personal associations with Rykov and Tomsky.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 275

DUBCEK AND BUKHARIN ARE SIMILAR RIGHTISTS

CHUEV: Bukharin and Dubcek are now counterposed to Stalin.
MOLOTOV: They are both right-wingers, kulaks who escaped. Bukharin & Dubcek have a lot in common, by the way.
A struggle still lies ahead for the party. Khrushchev was no accident. We are primarily a peasant country, and the right-wing is powerful. Where's the guarantee to prevent them from gaining the upper hand? The anti-Stalinists in all probability will come to power in the near future, and they are most likely to be Bukharinists. [8-14-73, 3-8-74]
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 373

PURGE GOT RID OF THE FIFTH COLUMNISTS

Nevertheless, with all its abuses, sorrows, and injury to national morale and industrial production, the Purge had a certain value. It eliminated completely Nazi plans for a Fifth Column in the USSR, and not only eradicated the "doubtful elements" with whom Nazi agents had tried to cooperate, but destroyed in toto their espionage and information services.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 230

The actual purge was decided upon after the revelation of the Tukhachevsky military conspiracy. The discovery of such a plot at the head of the Red Army, a plot that had links with opportunist factions within the Party, provoked a complete panic.

The Bolshevik Party's strategy assumed that war with fascism was inevitable. Given that some of the most important figures in the Red Army and some of the leading figures in the Party were secretly collaborating on plans for a coup d'Etat showed how important the interior danger and its links with the external menace were. Stalin was extremely lucid and perfectly conscious that the confrontation between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union would cost millions of Soviet lives. The decision to physically eliminate the Fifth Column was not the sign of a "dictator's paranoia." as Nazi propaganda claimed. Rather, it showed the determination of Stalin and the Bolshevik Party to confront fascism in a struggle to the end. By exterminating the Fifth Column, Stalin thought about saving several million Soviet lives, which would be the extra cost to pay should external aggression be able to profit from sabotage, provocation or internal treason.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 184 [p. 163 on the NET]

EVIDENCE OF THE DEFENDANTS' GUILT IN THE TRIALS IS OVERWHELMING & NOT FRAUDULENT

The theory that the trials were entirely or mainly fraudulent falls apart in the face of testimony such as Bukharin's and a mass of interlocking evidence given by some 30 witnesses. That evidence, in turn, was supported in the main by the testimony of witnesses at the previous state trials. Even if, as ambassador Davies suggested, the Soviet prosecutors had had a script writer of Shakespearean genius, they could not have constructed out of whole cloth such a set of complexly integrated events…. The indication, as Davies argues, is that the defendants were, on the whole, guilty as charged. In these trials and others, there was evidence of massive and diverse sabotage–in the coal mines, chemical plants, tractor stations, collective farms, the railways. Combined with deliberate economic misplanning and financial fraud, it constituted a concerted effort to destroy the growing socialist state.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 70

That the myth persists of these trials as an elaborate charade created by inhuman monsters is, in essence, further evidence of the extraordinary scope and depth of anti-Stalin, anti-Soviet defamation. The myth is made to appear believable by appeal to two facts: the defendants confessed their guilt and most of them were executed. There is, however, no evidence that the confessions were exacted by torture or drugs; such a claim was denied by Bukharin and others. The indication is that the defendants confessed because the evidence against them was overwhelming; also, as Bukharin notes, some of them at least had, in spite of their actions, a "duality of mind," a feeling that regardless of their motives, their deeds were morally wrong and would harm their country. Davies certainly had no trouble in believing that the confessions were genuine.
Whether it was necessary to execute most of the defendants or whether imprisonment for all would have served is a question that has to be answered in the light of the then-existing conditions. In a situation of gathering war, with the Italian fascists in Ethiopia, the Japanese militarists invading China, and Hitler supporting Franco and straining for war, the Soviet government obviously decided that a severe counterblow must be struck to stop all efforts to weaken the Soviet state from within. Whatever the decision, however, responsibility for it cannot have been Stalin's alone or even primarily his. The charge that it was stems from the view of Stalin as absolute dictator. But the trials were conducted by the judicial system and

although Stalin as Party leader had considerable influence upon that system, he by no means ran it. The trials, we must also remember, came after the new constitution of 1936 with its mass-democratic structures. Furthermore, there was a national outpouring of rage at the time against those who were perceived (correctly) as traitors and saboteurs. The argument that this indignation, which included mass demonstrations, was “rigged” again reflects the automaton picture of Soviet society. No doubt, the Party participated in and helped to organize such demonstrations and other expressions of popular outrage, but it could not have done so had not the feeling itself existed.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 71

If murder and sabotage took place, what implicates the defendants in the three trials? There is firstly their admission before the examining authority, repeated by them in court, and there is the corroborating evidence.
There were 54 defendants in all, some of them old revolutionists; some of them, like Mrachkovsky and Muralov, were men of outstanding physical courage. Yet the people who reject the genuineness of the plea of guilty, tell us that all these people sat in court for a week or more, and admitted crimes (punishable by death) that they had never committed. The trials took place in a large hall packed by foreign journalists, and yet out of 54 people, from whom (according to the hypothesis) a spurious confession had been extracted, not one was prepared to denounce the methods by which the confession was extracted. We are told that the leading group of those 54 were people who were opposing Stalin from the “Left,” that they wanted an attack on bureaucracy, and a break with the policy of alliance with bourgeois States. Yet these men were seen talking freely in court for a week. Not only do they not give the listening world an account of the alleged political program for which (according to the hypothesis) they are about to die, but Zinoviev, Pyatakov, Radek, Bukharin and the others give an account of their adherence to a quite different programme–a program of capitalist restoration.
These men had a certain revolutionary reputation in the past. Their names were household words with millions of workers in the capitalist world. They had the opportunity to tell these workers that they had carried on a struggle against Stalin because he was “betraying the revolution”; and yet instead of doing this, they exposed themselves as people who had themselves betrayed the revolution.
And we are actually told by some critics, as we will see, that they did this in order to oblige Stalin.
Is not the assertion that these men were guilty a thousand times more credible than the fantastic hypotheses that are brought forward to explain away their admissions?
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 243-244

Yet in a summary published in England under the sponsorship of the Anglo-Russian Parliamentary Committee, a preface by the Moscow correspondent of the Daily Herald, R.T. Miller, could say “They confessed because the State’s collection of evidence forced them to. No other explanation fits the facts.” Neil Maclean, Labor Member of Parliament for Govan and Chairman of this committee noted in a foreword: “Practically every foreign correspondent present at the [Pyatakov] Trial–with the exception of course of the Japanese and German–have expressed themselves as very much impressed by the weight of evidence presented by the Prosecution and the sincerity of the confessions of the accused.”
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 167

By a coincidence I had found independent evidence for the existence of a conspiracy. My friend Gregersen, on the eve of going on vacation to Copenhagen, was asked by an acquaintance by the name of Grasche to take a book to a friend of his in Denmark. When Gregersen asked why he did not send it by mail, which functioned quite normally, the answer was that it was a particularly valuable book, a luxury edition of Arabian Nights issued by the Academy of Art. Gregersen did not get around to picking up the book and did not see the intended recipient, a former Communist of Trotskyist bent who had turned against the Soviet Union. Soon after this, Grasche was arrested and sentenced as a spy in a public trial. No mention was made of a book; but in a different trial the very same edition was identified as having been used as a secret code. This cannot well be a coincidence.
Blumenfeld, Hans. Life Begins at 65. Montreal, Canada: Harvest House, c1987, p. 174

BUKHARIN IS ALERT AND LUCID AT HIS TRIAL AND DENIES SOME ACCUSATIONS

During the trial's dozens of hours, Bukharin was perfectly lucid and alert, discussing, contesting, sometimes humorous, vehemently denying certain accusations.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 161 [p. 142 on the NET]

1936 TRIAL WAS NO FRAME-UP

And now as to the "frame up." The actual question is: Why did 16 accused men all confess guilt, participate in a lively way in the court proceedings, and show all their old capacity for public speaking and repartee, and yet plead "Guilty"?

It is not because they had been rotting in dungeons or anything of that kind. Actually, the most recently arrested of the accused were at liberty in the USSR until May of this year. And anyway, if they had been maltreated in prison, surely some signs of this would have been visible to the public, or at least one of them would have made some sort of a statement on the matter!

No–the fact is this: The prisoners had four alternatives. First, to plead innocent. Second, to plead guilty–making political speeches against the Soviet government, the "Stalinist bureaucracy," and justifying their crime. Third, to plead guilty and say no more. Fourthly, to confess, and give a full account of their activities. Besides these possibilities, there was no other way open to them–except suicide, the way chosen by Tomsky alone.

To plead innocent was impossible because the proofs were overwhelming, and all these people knew this. They knew what additional evidence could be brought against them if they tried to prove their innocence.

To attack the Soviet government and the "Stalinist bureaucracy" was impossible–because for nearly 10 years now these people have had absolutely no political policy to oppose to that of Stalin. The fact is that Stalin's policy is a success, and this has robbed his opponents of every excuse of a political attack. This fact is openly admitted by the accused.

And so, before all the men, against whom the proofs were overwhelming, who had no policy, there was the one possibility of pleading Guilty–with, or without, details of their crime.
Pritt, Denis Nowell. The Moscow Trial was Fair. London: ” Russia To-day,” 1937, p. 11-12

The newspaper, the “Observer” of August 23, no lover of the Bolsheviks, “old guard” or new, was bound to conclude:–

“Stalin is now the acknowledged leader of the unified party, whose prestige in the country is now unquestioned.

“The defendants admitted frankly that they resorted to individual terror as a last resort, fully knowing that disaffection in the country now is not sufficiently strong to bring them into power by any other way….

“It is futile to think the trial was staged and the charges trumped up. The Government’s case against the defendants is genuine.”
Pritt, Denis Nowell. The Moscow Trial was Fair. London: ” Russia To-day,” 1937, p. 13

CASE WAS BEING BUILT AGAINST YAGODA WHILE HE STILL WORKED FOR THE SECRET POLICE

… For instance, we knew beyond question that the dossier against Yagoda was being built up while he was still Stalin’s trusted tool.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 17

[Tovstukha said]… “Comrade Yagoda has just phoned. He wants to see you urgently”

“Yagoda? What the devil for?” my uncle answered irritability. “He just left here!”

“He says something new has developed in–about–about the case,” Tovstukha said.

“…tell Yagoda if he doesn’t stop splitting hairs [in the Zinoviev-Kamenev business] I’ll break him! If he thinks he can play a double game, he’s all wrong. The opposition has become criminal. It will be broken, crushed! And anyone who tries to protect it, directly or indirectly, will be crushed too! Tell Yagoda that!”
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 117

Speaking of Yagoda, Koba said, “I know he is a scoundrel. But we dare not risk smashing the fragile apparatus of the GPU by removing Yagoda and his associates. This would be exploited by class enemies at home and abroad. We shall settle out accounts with Yagoda at the right moment.” He added, “If you want to understand revolutionary tactics, read Schiller’s Fiasco’s Conspiracy. Revolutions always require Moors, but they go when they have served their purpose–they are sent to the gallows. Only you must not miss the right moment, or else they will send you to the gallows. I know precisely who is a friend and who is a foe. You, Papasha, grumble frequently, but I know that you will never be guilty of a stab in the back. I respect you and shall stand up for you. But we shall wage a life and death struggle with

double-crossers. We carry an historic responsibility for the destiny of the country and of the revolution…."
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 56

Berzin had proved before the war that Yagoda was neither a Latvian nor a communist.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 205

REAL DESTRUCTION OF ZINOVIEV AND KAMENEV OCCURRED IN MAY 1935

In fact, May 25, 1935, was a more significant date in the destruction of the old leaders than January 16th, when the press had announced the startling news that the first group of leaders on trial, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Evdokimov and others, had 'confessed that they were guilty of terrorist activities'. Only sentences of terms of imprisonment had followed, despite the law of December 1st, 1934, providing for the immediate death of terrorists.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 19

The investigation did not establish facts that would provide a basis for describing the crimes of the Zinovievites as instigation of the assassination of Kirov. Therefore Zinoviev's sentence was "only" 10 years in prison, and Kamenev's 5.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 347

REMOVAL OF YAGODA COSTS THE OPPOSITION DEARLY

… the first step was taken to bring about the downfall of Yagoda. He was removed from the NKVD and we lost a strong link in our opposition intelligence service.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 63

DESCRIPTIONS OF ALL THE DEFENDANTS AT THE FOUR MAJOR TRIALS

A mixed Trotskyite and Zinovievite group, exposed at the first Moscow trial in August 1936, consisted of:

Zinoviev and Kamenev

They were the leaders of the former Leningrad opposition.

Other Zinovievites were:

Bakayev, who was in charge of the day-to-day organization of terrorist attacks against the leaders of the Party and government.

Reingold, who was the most active member of the Zinovievite underground counter-revolutionary reorganization and who was at all times in direct contact with Zinoviev and Kamenev and took part in all the secret conferences of the Zinovievites.

Yevdokimov

Pickel, who was one of Zinoviev's most trusted men and was for many years in charge of his secretariat. He was an active member of the Moscow terrorist center.

The Trotskyites were:

Smirnov, who was a firm supporter of Trotsky during the Party debate of 1923-27, Trotsky's deputy in the USSR, and the actual organizer and leader of the underground Trotskyite counter-revolutionary activities in the USSR. He maintained personal connections with Trotsky and Trotskyite organizations abroad.

Dreitzer, who was responsible for the day-to-day organizational work of this group. Trotsky described Dreitzer has "an officer of the Red Army. During and after my expulsion he had, together with 10 or 12 of the officers, organized a guard around my home." Together with Trotsky he had organized the counter-revolutionary demonstration of November 7, 1927. When Trotsky was in exile in Alma-Ata, Dreitzer organized the communications between Trotsky and the Moscow Trotskyite center.

Mrachkovsky, who was the man most in Trotsky's confidence and personally closest to him. He had at one time occupied an important position in the army.

Holtzman, who was an active member of the Trotskyite counter-revolutionary organization, personally connected with Smirnov on whose instructions he maintained contact with the Trotskyite center abroad. In 1932 he personally received from Trotsky instructions regarding preparations for terroristic acts against the leaders of the CPSU.

Ter-Vaganyan, who admitted in court that he was one of the organizers of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite center and that this center was organized on the basis of Trotsky's instructions on terrorism.

Olberg, "that peculiar citizen of the Republic of Honduras", was a paid agent of Trotsky and simultaneously of the German secret police, the Gestapo. He was a member of the German Trotskyite organization since 1927-28 and was sent to the USSR by Trotsky with a commission to carry out terrorist acts.

M. Lurye, who left Berlin for Moscow on March 4, 1933 having received Trotsky's instructions to speed up terroristic acts against the leaders of the CPSU and the Soviet government.

N. Lurye, who arrived in the USSR in April 1932 from Berlin on a special mission of the Trotskyite organization for the purpose of committing terroristic acts.

Berman-Yurin

Fritz David, who was also sent to the USSR by Trotsky with instructions to make an attempt on the life of Comrade Stalin. He received these instructions in Copenhagen personally from Trotsky.

A parallel center of Trotskyites. This center was exposed at the second Moscow trial in January 1937. It consisted of:

Pyatakov, the Vice-Commissar of Heavy Industry, who as a result of occupying this very important post was able to place other members and supporters of the center into key positions. He was one of the leaders of the so-called parallel center.

Radek, who adhered to the Trotskyite theory of the impossibility of building socialism in the USSR and who jeered at the theory of building socialism in the USSR as the theory of building socialism in one street. He was one of the leaders of the center.

Sokolnikov, the Assistant People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs and one-time People's Commissar of Finance, who in 1925 slandered the Soviet state by his assertion that the internal trading establishments of the USSR were state capitalist enterprises.

Serebryakov, who was another of the leaders of the so-called parallel Trotskyite center and who had opposed Lenin in the discussion on the trade unions. He held a liquidationist position with regard to the Party.

Muralov, who was a Trotskyite 'soldier', one of Trotsky's most loyal and steadfast aides. He too confessed that he was a wrecker and a diversionist.

Livshitz, who was an ex-Assistant People's Commissar of Railways and simultaneously Pyatakov's assistant in criminal affairs on the railways.

Drobnis, who was an old professional Trotskyite who exterminated workers in accordance with the formula 'the more victims the better'.

Boguslavsky, a Trotskyite.

Knyazev, who was a Japanese spy who wrecked dozens of trains.

Rataichak, who occupied the key post of Chief of the Central Administration of Chemical Industry. In this responsible post 'this super-wrecker, develops his chemical talents,… causes explosions, destroys the fruits of the labor of the people, kills people" (Vyshinsky).

Norkin

Shestov

Stroilov

Turok

Hrasche, whom Vyshinsky described as "a man not only of three dimensions, but at least of three citizenships, who himself described his principal occupation by the eloquent, but not very pleasant word, spy."

Pushin

Arnold, who was described as “this international tramp”, and was a man of many names, a hardened scoundrel and a trusted Trotskyite agent.

As can be seen this group held very important positions in the Soviet government and industry, much more so than those held by the first-mentioned group.

The Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites. This Bloc was exposed at the third Moscow trial in March 1938. Predominant in the Bloc were the foremost Right-wing leaders:

Bukharin, who for years occupied many important positions in the Party, though he was known for his vacillations in politics and for his opposition to Lenin and the line of the Party.

Rykov, who was an ex-Prime Minister of the USSR.

Yagoda, who was head of the political police, the OGPU, until 1936.

Trotskyites in the Bloc.

Krestinsky, who was an ex-ambassador to Berlin, an ex-People’s Commissar of Finance and an ex-Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU.

Rakovsky, who was an ex-ambassador to London and Paris, was an agent of the British intelligence service since 1924 and a Japanese spy since 1934.

Rosengoltz, who was the People’s Commissar of Foreign Trade of the USSR, began espionage work for the German general staff in 1923 and for the British intelligence service in 1926.

Bessonov

Nationalist allies of the Rights and Trotskyites were:

Grinko, who was People’s Commissar of Finance of the USSR and a Ukrainian nationalist. He was a German and Polish spy from 1932.

Ikramov, who was one of the leaders of the bourgeois nationalist organization in Uzbekistan, and in the 1930s the Secretary of the Central Asiatic Bureau of the Central Committee of the CPSU.

Khodjayev, who was also one of the leaders of the bourgeois nationalist organization in Uzbekistan.

Sharangovich, who was one of the leaders of the Byelorussian national fascist organization which had set itself the aim of undermining Soviet power and of severing Byelorussia from the USSR and placing it under the rule of Polish capitalist and landlords. He was recruited

and sent by the Polish intelligence service to carry on espionage work in the USSR in 1921. He remained a Polish spy until the day of his arrest.

Chernov, the People's Commissar of Agriculture of the USSR, who was an ex-Menshevik who maintained connections with the Menshevik organizations in foreign countries. He joined the CPSU at the time of the NEP. He began espionage work for Germany in 1928, having formed connections with the German intelligence service with the aid of the notorious Menshevik and emigre, Dan.

Levin, who, like Pletnev and Kazakov, was one of a group of doctors under the influence of Yagoda.

Pletnev

Kazakov

Zelensky, who was a former head of the All Union Administration of Co-operatives.

Other's of less political importance, who were merely tools of the leadership group, were:

Ivanov

Zubarev, who was one of the organizers and leaders of the counter-revolutionary underground organization of the Rights in the Urals.

Bulanov, who was former Secretary of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs.

Kryuchkov, who was the former secretary of Gorky.

Maximov-Dikovsky, who was a former secretary of Kuibyshev, the Vice-Chairman of the Council of People's Commissar's of the USSR who was murdered by the Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites.

The military group included:

Tukhachevsky

Yakov

Uborevitch

Kork

Eidemann

Feldman

Primakov

Putna
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 209

BOURGEOIS VERSION OF THE TRIALS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH REALITY

It is not surprising, therefore, that the world bourgeoisie should have come out as the foremost vilifier of Soviet revolutionary justice. In these circumstances the Moscow trials were a heaven-sent opportunity for the imperialists and the bourgeois intelligentsia, Trotskyites included, to exploit to the utmost the fertility of their imagination for the purpose of misrepresenting these trials. They turned them into a Hollywood melodrama, so much so that anyone who has read the verbatim reports of these trials could not but begin to wonder, should he read the bourgeois version of the trials, if he is reading about the same ones. The bourgeois version has no connection whatsoever with the real Moscow trials, so for this reason the bourgeois criticisms of the trials are not scientific criticisms, but the criticisms of a dying and decadent class and its ideological flunkeys who are paid inflated salaries for doing this dirty work in defense of the tottering and moribund imperialist bourgeois class rule.
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 294

BOURGEOIS EXPLANATION OF THE CONFESSIONS MAKES NO SENSE

On the one hand the Trotskyites and other bourgeois critics of the trials continue to assert that the accused at the trials were Bolsheviks and old revolutionaries who were fighting against the “Stalinist bureaucracy”, “the ruling caste,” and found themselves in the dock because Stalin wanted to get rid of them. On the other hand we are told by the same gentry that the accused accepted false accusations, made false confessions that they knew would cost them their lives, out of party duty and to please Stalin! In other words, they took upon themselves false confessions all for the love of the “bureaucracy,” the “ruling caste,” and the “chief bureaucrat,” Stalin, i.e., for the love of, and out of duty to, the same Party which they had hitherto regarded as bureaucratic and had devoted themselves wholeheartedly to fight against.
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 307

STALIN TELLS BUKHARIN THAT TROTSKY, ZINOVIEV & KAMENEV ARE WORKING WITH HITLER

[Excerpt from Bukharin speech to the Central Committee Plenum of Feb. 23, 1937, in response to charges made by Yezhov]

STALIN (to Bukharin): You must come around to our position. Trotsky with his disciples, Zinoviev and Kamenev, at one time worked with Lenin, now these people have negotiated an agreement with Hitler. After this, can we label such things as shocking! Absolutely not. After everything that has happened to these gentlemen, former comrades, who have negotiated an agreement with Hitler, a sellout of the USSR, there is nothing surprising in human affairs. Everything has to be proven and not replied to using exclamation points and question marks.

Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 105

VYSHINSKY WAS VERY INTELLIGENT

Vyshinsky, the former Public Prosecutor, at that time a Deputy Foreign Minister,… Of all the officials we dealt with, he was unquestionably the brightest and most intelligent. As a former teacher of Latin, and with a legal career behind him, he had many intellectual advantages over his colleagues.

Birse, Arthur Herbert. Memoirs of an Interpreter. New York: Coward-McCann, 1967, p. 139

VYSHINSKY DEFENDS HIMSELF IN THE TRIALS

Then we somehow got onto the theme of his having been Public Prosecutor during the Great Purge shortly before the war. I felt this was delicate ground and I should have to be careful what I said, but he came out with the following: “I know what you people abroad have been saying–that I was responsible for the death and exile of many innocent people. But do you realize that I saved the lives of thousands who might have been engulfed in the plot to undermine the safety of our State?”
Birse, Arthur Herbert. Memoirs of an Interpreter. New York: Coward-McCann, 1967, p. 185

DEFENDANTS AT THE ZINOVIEV TRIAL IMPLICATED MANY OTHERS NOT YET ARRESTED

Some of the defendants in the trial of the ” Trotskyite-Zinovievite Center,” unexpectedly adding to their pretrial depositions, began to talk about their “criminal” connections with Bukharin Rykov, and Tomsky., and also with Radek, Pyatakov, Sokolnikov, Serebryakov, Uglanov, Shliapnikov, and other ex-oppositionists who had not yet been arrested. 0n Aug. 21, 1936, the newspapers carried an order from Vyshinsky starting a new investigation into the counter-revolutionary conspiracy of the people mentioned. In offices and factories throughout the country meetings demanded a full investigation of “the connections of Bukharin, Rykov, Tomsky, and others with the despicable terrorists.” The same issue of Izvestia that included this demand in its lead article listed Bukharin as its editor-in-chief on the last page.

On September 10, 1936, Vyshinsky published a report: “The investigation has not established a juridical basis for legal proceedings against Bukharin and Rykov, as a result of which the present case is discontinued.” Thus Bukharin, Rykov, and the majority of the former “right” oppositionists remained free.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 356-357

RADEK AND OTHERS INCRIMINATE BUKHARIN AFTER THE ZINOVIEV TRIAL

Explicit accusations were made against Bukharin and Rykov. Radek, for example, said that friendship had long prevented him from implicating Bukharin. He had very much wanted to

give his friend the chance to disarm himself by volunteering honest testimony. But now, Radek said, he had decided that he could not enter the court hiding another terrorist organization. He and others offered detailed stories about their counter-revolutionary "connections" with the Bukharin-Rykov group. Radek and other members of the " Parallel Center" thus decided the fate of the former right deviation. On Jan. 17, 1937, Izvestia appeared without the signature of its editor-in-chief, Bukharin. Rykov, too, was removed from his post. But Stalin still put off arresting these now universally proclaimed "enemies of the people."

…According to Anna Larina, on Nov. 7, 1936, Bukharin decided to celebrate the holiday at Red Square–not, as usual, on the top of Lenin's tomb, but in the stands with his wife. But Stalin saw him there and had him invited up.

After the holiday, however, the most painful phase of Bukharin's life began. He was not summoned to the Lubyanka, but personal confrontations between him and arrested "leftists" and members of the "Bukharin school"–that is, his closest disciples–were arranged in the Kremlin itself. After a face-to-face encounter with Radek he had another with Sokolnikov and one with Serebryakov, then one with Tseitlin, one of his closest followers. They all told of their alleged criminal ties with Bukharin, of the existence of another counter-revolutionary terrorist center headed by Bukharin and Yagoda. For example, in Bukharin's presence Tseitlin alleged that Bukharin had given him a revolver and placed him on the corner of a street down which Stalin was supposed to travel that day but that Stalin's car had taken a different route so that the assassination attempt failed.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 362

STALIN CALLS AND TELLS BUKHARIN TO CHASE THE CHEKISTS OUT OF HIS APARTMENT

At the Red Square celebrations [on Nov. 7, 1936] he [Bukharin] and his wife were on one of the minor stands. A soldier came over with Stalin's invitation to join him on the Lenin mausoleum. Soon after, Bukharin was served with an eviction order from his Kremlin apartment. Stalin telephoned, and on being told of this said angrily that the evictors must get out immediately, and they did so.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 144

In early December 1936 a group of chekists came to Bukharin's apartment in the Kremlin and served him notice of his eviction from the apartment. Bukharin panicked. He was especially concerned over the fate of his huge library and archive. Where could they be moved to? Suddenly the internal Kremlin phone rang. It was Stalin.

"How are things with you, Nikolai?" he asked as though everything were perfectly normal. Bukharin lost his presence of mind; still, he did manage to say that he was being served an eviction notice. Without asking anything further, Stalin roared, "Chase them the hell out of there!" The uninvited guests left immediately.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 363

Unlike Rykov, who at the end of 1936 had been moved out of the Kremlin, Bukharin and his family continued to live in their Kremlin apartment. A few days before the plenum was to begin, three Chekists appeared at this apartment with an order to evict Bukharin. Immediately after they arrived, the telephone rang: for the first time in several months, Stalin was calling Bukharin to find out about how he was feeling. Bukharin, who was quite distraught, told Stalin that they were getting ready to evict him. In reply, Stalin advised him to tell his visitors to "go to hell." Understanding from Bukharin's responses who was on the other end of the line, the Chekists immediately disappeared. Bukharin unexpectedly received one more ray of hope.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 184

At the end of November 1936 a group of strangers arrived at his door from the housekeeping department of the Kremlin. Bukharin was sure that they had come to do a search, which in those months would not have been unusual, even in a Kremlin apartment. But in fact it was worse; they had brought Bukharin an order to vacate the Kremlin. He got extremely upset and was at a total loss to know what to do. He immediately started thinking about his enormous collection of books and personal papers. How could he transport them and where? At that moment the internal Kremlin telephone suddenly rang. It was Stalin. "So, how are things with you, Nikolai?" as though everything were perfectly normal. Bukharin did not know how to reply, and after a pause said that he was being served an eviction notice. Without asking anything further, Stalin exclaimed in a loud voice, "Tell them all to go to the devil." Hearing that, the uninvited guests beat a hasty retreat.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 290

Suddenly, while we were sitting together in the study, three men walked in. We had not heard the doorbell; Ivan Gavrilovich [Bukharin's father] had let them in. They abruptly informed "Comrade Bukharin" that he was about to be moved out of the Kremlin. Before Nikolai could react, the telephone rang. Stalin was on the line.

"What's with you there, Nikolai?" asked Koba.

"They've just come to move me out of the Kremlin. I don't care about the Kremlin, but I do want to ask that a place be found to hold my library."

"You just send them to the devil's mother!" said Stalin and hung up.

Standing beside the telephone, the three unknown men heard the Boss clearly. They packed off immediately to "the devil's mother."
Larina, Anna. This I Cannot Forget. New York: W.W. Norton, 1993, p. 325

BUKHARIN IS ATTACKED BY ALL AT THE FEB. 1937 PLENUM

No one opposed the overall policy of Stalin and the NKVD; the condemnation and denunciation of Bukharin and Rykov was unanimous. Everyone demanded that they be called to account.

The atmosphere at the February 1937 plenum was already quite heated when Bukharin was given the floor…. he declared, “I am not Zinoviev or Kamenev, and I will not tell lies against myself.” To this Molotov replied from the floor: “If you don’t confess, that will prove you’re a fascist hireling. Their press is saying that our trials are provocations. We’ll arrest you and you’ll confess!”
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 364-365

STALIN DID NOT WANT TO SHOOT BUKHARIN WHEN THE OTHERS DID

The commission established to decide Bukharin and Rykov fate met under the chairmanship of Mikoyan…. To reach a decision, the vote was taken by alphabetical order. One after another the Central Committee members rose– Andreev, Bubnov, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Molotov–and uttered three words: “Arrest, try, shoot.” When Stalin’s turn came he said: “Let the NKVD handle the case,” and several other people then repeated this formula,….
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 367

KRESTINSKY IS THE ONLY ONE TO DENY GUILT AND CRIMINAL INVOLVEMENT

But when it was Krestinsky’s turn, he unexpectedly answered:

“I do not admit my guilt. I am not a Trotskyite. I never took part in the “Right-Trotskyite Bloc” and wasn’t aware of its existence. I never committed a single one of the crimes imputed to me, and in particular I do not confess myself guilty of contacts with German intelligence.”
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 369

EHRENBURG SAYS IT WAS NOT BOGUS PEOPLE IN THE DOCK AND THERE WAS NO TORTURE

It has been said that Bukharin, Kamenev, Rakovsky, and the others did not really appear in court; skillfully made-up and specially trained NKVD agents supposedly took their place. But some who attended the trials and who knew many of the defendants well, including Ehrenburg, and others whom I personally interviewed in the ’60s denied this supposition.

Ehrenburg expressed his confidence to me in a conversation that it really was Bukharin, Rykov, Krestinsky, Rosengoltz, and Rakovsky who sat on the defendants’ bench…. At the same time they did not give the impression of people who had been recently subjected to prolong torture.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 381

LACK OF WRITTEN DOCUMENTS DOES NOT SHOW THE DEFENDANTS ARE INNOCENT

I referred again to the harmful effect which the all too simple conduct of the Zinoviev trial had had abroad, even amongst the well-wishers. Stalin laughed a little at those who demanded many written documents before they could bring themselves to believe in a conspiracy;

practiced conspirators, he said, were not in the habit of leaving their documents lying around for all to see.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 108

1937 TRIAL TESTIMONY REGARDING TROTSKY IS BELIEVABLE AND VERY UNDERSTANDABLE

And to me also, as long as I was in Western Europe, the indictment in the Zinoviev trial seemed utterly incredible. The hysterical confessions of the accused seemed to have been extorted by some mysterious means and the whole proceedings appeared like a play staged with consummate, strange, and frightful artistry.

But when I attended the second trial in Moscow, when I saw Pyatakov, Radek, and his friends, and heard what they said and how they said it, I was forced to accept the evidence of my senses, and my doubts melted away as naturally as salt dissolves in water. If that was lying or prearranged, then I don't know what truth is.

So I took up the records of the trials, reflected on what I had seen with my own eyes and heard with my own years, and considered once more the pros and cons of the charge.

Fundamentally, the proceedings were directed above all against the great Trotsky, indicted and absent, and the principal objection is the alleged unauthenticity of the charge brought against him. "This man Trotsky," opponents cry, "one of the founders of the Soviet State, Lenin's friend, is supposed himself to have given general instructions to sabotage the building up of the state which he had helped to found, to kindle war against it, and to scheme for its defeat in this war? Is that conceivable? Is that credible?"

That may be, but closer examination reveals that the conduct of which the charge accuses Trotsky, far from being incredible, is the only conduct which can be expected from Trotsky's state of mind.

Imagine this man Trotsky, condemned as he was to inactivity, compelled to look on idly, whilst the noble experiment which Lenin and he had begun was transformed into a sort of gigantic petty bourgeois allotment. For to him, who wanted to steep the terrestrial globe in socialism, the " Stalin State," as he says in word and writing, appeared a ridiculous caricature of his original idea. In addition, there is the deep personal antagonism towards Stalin, the compromiser, who had always bungled his, the creator of the plan's work, and finally expelled him. Trotsky has given expression time and time again to his unbounded hatred and contempt for Stalin. Would he not translate into action what he had expressed in word and writing?

It also seems to me to be conceivable that a man who, blinded by hate, refused to admit to himself the generally acknowledged facts of the accomplished economic construction of the Union and the strength of its army, would be incapable of seeing the uselessness of his expedient and would choose a course which was manifestly wrong. Trotsky is bold and unhesitating, a great gambler. His whole life is a chain of adventures, and foolhardy projects had often turned out very successfully for him. Trotsky, all his life an optimist, had relied on

his being able to utilize evil to attain his ends and finally, if it should become necessary, to cut it out and render it harmless. If Alcibiades went to the Persians, why not Trotsky to the Fascists?

What, then, must have been Trotsky's principal goal during all the years of exile, and what must be his principal goal today? To get back into the country at any price and reassume power.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 113-116last night of peace was quite different.

At 3:30 a.m. the Chief of Staff of the Western District reported a German air raid on towns in Byelorussia. About three minutes later the Chief of Staff of the Kiev District, Purkayev, reported an air strike on Ukrainian towns. At 3:40 a.m. the Commander of the Baltic District, General Kuznetsov, called to report enemy air raids on Kaunas and other towns.

The Commissar for Defense ordered me to phone Stalin. I started calling. No one answers. I keep calling. Finally I hear the sleep-dulled voice of the general on duty of the security section. I ask him to call Stalin to the phone.

IF THE TRIALS WERE STAGED IT WOULD HAVE TAKEN A LONG TIME TO PREPARE THE PLAY

The room in which the trial took place is not large: it holds about 350 people. The judges, the public prosecutor, the accused, the counsel for the defense, and the experts sat on a low platform which had steps leading up to it, and there was no barrier between the court and the public. There was nothing in the nature of a prisoner's dock; the barrier which divided the prisoners from the others reminded one rather of the support round a loge. The prisoners themselves were well-groomed, well-dressed men of a careless, natural bearing. They drank tea, had newspapers in our pockets, and often looked towards the public. The whole thing was less like a criminal trial than a debate carried on in a conversational tone by educated men who were trying to get at the truth and explain why what had happened had happened. Indeed, the impression one received was that the accused, prosecution, and judges had the same, I might almost say sporting, interest in arriving at a satisfactory explanation of what had happened, without omitting anything. If a producer had had to arrange this court scene, years of rehearsal and careful coaching would have been necessary to get the prisoners to correct one another eagerly on small points and to express their emotion with such restraint. In short, the hypnotizers, and poison-mixers, and police officers who prepared the prisoners would, in addition to their normal bewildering qualifications, have had to be first-class stage-managers and psychologists.
Unreal and uncanny were the detachment and bluntness with which these men just before their as good as certain death set forth and explained their conduct and their guilt. It is a pity that the laws of the Soviet Union forbade photographs and gramophone records to be made in court. If one could have reproduced for the whole world not only what the prisoners said, but how they said it, their intonations, their faces, I think there would be very few skeptics left.
They all confessed, but each in a different way; the first with a note of cynicism in his voice; the second with the soldier's uprightness; the third conquering himself, not without an

internal struggle; the fourth like a schoolboy who is sorry; the fifth lecturing. But every one with the tone, the appearance, and gestures of truth.
I shall never forget how Pyatakov stood in front of the microphone, a middle-aged man of average build, rather bald, with a reddish, old-fashioned, sparse, pointed beard, and how he lectured. Calmly and at the same time sedulously, he explained how he had managed to sabotage the industries under him. He expounded, pointed his finger, gave the impression of a school teacher, a historian giving a lecture on the life and deeds of a man who had been dead for many years, named Pyatakov, anxious to make everything clear even to the smallest details so that his listeners and students should understand fully.
Nor shall I easily forget Radek, the writer; how he sat there in his brown suit, his ugly fleshless face framed by a chestnut-colored old-fashioned beard; how he looked over to the public, a great many of whom he knew, or at the other prisoners, often smiling, very composed, often studiedly ironical; how he laid his arm with a light and easy gesture round the shoulders of this or that prisoner as he came in; how, when he spoke, he would pose a little, laugh a little at the other prisoners, show his superiority; arrogant, skeptical, adroit, literary. Somewhat brusquely, he pushed Pyatakov away from the microphone and himself took up his position there….
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow , 1937. New York : The Viking Press, 1937, p. 123-125

During my last year in Russia , I came into Moscow on two or three occasions for brief visits. We were invited to various social gatherings of the American community, and I discovered that Moscow Americans were engaged in a non-stop discussion of the Russian conspiracy trials which had started in August 1936,…
The Moscow Americans were about evenly divided on the question of whether or not the conspiracy trials were pure fakes. I listened to their debates on the subject. Some of them argued that there had been no conspiracy whatever, that the defendants in these had never done anything worse than criticize Stalin and his actions, and that they had been compelled by torture to confess crimes they had never committed.
But most of the Americans who had attended the trials were not so sure that the testimony was false. Especially after the second trial was held, in January, 1937, some of them who had argued the whole thing was a frame-up switched over to the other side and decided there had been a big conspiracy, although they were pretty sure that some of the testimony in these trials was inaccurate.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York : Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 290-291

RADEK SAYS HE TORTURED THE QUESTIONER NOT VICE VERSA

In his concluding words, Radek told how throughout 2 1/2 months, every single word of the confession had had to be forced out of him and how difficult he had made it for the examining magistrate. “It was not I who was tortured by the examining magistrate,” he said, “but the examining magistrate who was tortured by me.”
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow , 1937. New York : The Viking Press, 1937, p. 144

At the prosecutor’s bidding, the defendants denied even the suggestion that they had given their testimony under “external pressure.” Thus, Vyshinsky questioned Norkin in detail about whether the investigators had “pressured” him. Such “pressure,” Vyshinsky said in concretizing his questions, could be expressed in depriving the accused of good food or

sleep: “We know this from the history of capitalist prisons. They might take away cigarettes.” In response to these cynical questions, Norkin meekly replied that “there had been nothing of the sort.”
Radek went even further in his concluding remarks when he himself raised this risky theme: “If the question is posed here, did they torture us during the investigation, then I must say that they did not torture me, but I tortured the investigators by forcing them to perform unnecessary work.”
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park , Michigan : Labor Publications, 1998, p. 124

CRITICS OF THE TRIALS SHOULD NOTICE THE BIG THINGS AND NOT THE MINUTIA

Nevertheless, anyone who underlines the shortcomings and relegates the big things which are to be seen there to footnotes accuses himself more than the Soviet Union . He is like a critic who notices first and foremost in a poet of genius that his commas are not in the right places.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow , 1937. New York : The Viking Press, 1937, p. 147

FOREIGN ENGINEERS & SPECIALISTS CORROBORATE TRIAL TESTIMONY FROM THEIR EXPERIENCES

When I reached Moscow, I reported exactly what I had discovered at Kalata to Serebrovsky….
He started an investigation right away, and in a short time the mine manager and some of the engineers were put on trial for sabotage. The manager got 10 years, the maximum prison sentence in Russia, and the engineers lesser terms. The evidence indicated that they had deliberately removed the former manager in order to wreck the mines.
I was satisfied at the time that there was something bigger in all this than the little group of men at Kalata; but I naturally couldn’t warn Serebrovsky against prominent members of his own Communist party. It has never been my policy to get mixed up in politics but I was so sure that something was wrong high up in the political administration of the Ural Mountains that I agreed to stay on in Russia….
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 98

I studied all the information I could get hold of about the trial of the manager and engineers at Kalata. It seemed clear to me at the time that the selection of this commission [this group of miners] and their conduct at Kalata traced straight back to the Communist high command in Sverdlovsk, whose members must be charged either with criminal negligence or actual participation in the events which had occurred in these mines.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 99

However, the chief secretary of the Communist Party in the Urals, a man named Kabakoff, had occupied this post since 1922, all through the period of great activity in developing the mines and industries of the Urals. For some reason which was never clear to me he had always commanded the complete confidence of the Kremlin, and was considered so powerful that he was privately described as the “Bolshevik Viceroy of the Urals.”

If this man's record was examined, there was nothing to justify the reputation he appeared to have. Under his long rule, the Ural area, which is one of the richest mineral regions in Russia and which was given almost unlimited capital for exploitation, never did produce anything like what it should have done.
This commission at Kalata, whose members later admitted they had come there with wrecking intentions, had been sent directly from this man's headquarters, and yet when this evidence came out at the trial, there was no reflection against Kabakoff. I told some of my Russian acquaintances at the time that it seemed to me there was a lot more going on in the Urals than had yet been revealed, and that it came from somewhere high up.
All these incidents became clearer, so far as I was concerned, after the conspiracy trial in January, 1937, when Pyatakov, together with several of his associates, confessed in open court that they had engaged in organized sabotage of mines, railways, and other industrial enterprises since the beginning of 1931. A few weeks after this trial had ended and Pyatakov had been sentenced to be shot, the chief Party Secretary in the Urals, Kabakoff, who had been a close associate of Pyatakov's, was arrested on charges of complicity in the same conspiracy.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 100

I was particularly interested in that part of Pyatakov's confession which concerned his actions at Berlin in 1931, when he headed the purchasing commission to which I was assigned as technical adviser. It then became clear to me why the Russians around Pyatakov had not been pleased when I discovered that German concerns had substituted cast-iron for light steel in specifications for mine hoists.
Pyatakov testified that anti-Stalin conspirators, headed by Trotsky, the exiled former Commissar of War, needed foreign currency to build up a fund for their work abroad. INSIDE RUSSIA, WITH SO MANY CONSPIRATORS OCCUPYING IMPORTANT POSITIONS, he said it was easy to get funds, but Soviet paper money was no good abroad. Trotsky's son, Sedov, according to Pyatakov, therefore worked out a scheme to get foreign currency without arousing suspicion.
At his trial, Pyatakov testified that he met Sedov in Berlin in 1931 by previous arrangement in a restaurant near the Zoo. He added: "Sedov said that only one thing was required of me, namely, that I should place as many orders as possible with two German firms, and that he, Sedov, would arrange to receive the necessary sums from them, bearing in mind that I would not be particularly exacting as to prices."
Questioned by the prosecutor, Pyatakov added that he was not required to steal or divert Soviet money, but only to place as many orders as possible with the firms mentioned. He said that he made no personal contacts of any kind with these firms, but that the matter was arranged by others without any further action on his part than throwing business to them.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 101

Pyatakov testified: "It was done very simply, particularly since I had very many opportunities, and a fairly large number of orders went to those firms." He added that it was easy to act without arousing suspicion in the case of one firm because the firm itself had a fine reputation, and it was simply a question of paying slightly higher prices than were necessary.
The following testimony then was given at the trial:
PYATAKOV: But as regards the other firm, it was necessary to persuade and exercise pressure in order to have purchases placed with this firm.

PROSECUTOR: Consequently, you also paid this firm excessively at the expense of the Soviet Government?
PYATAKOV: Yes.
Pyatakov then went on to say that Sedov did not tell him exactly what the conditions were, what the technique was for this transfer of money, but assured him that if Pyatakov placed orders with these firms, Sedov would receive money for the special fund.
This passage in Pyatakov's confession is a plausible explanation, in my opinion, of what was going on in Berlin in 1931, when my suspicions were aroused because the Russians working with Pyatakov tried to induce me to approve the purchases of mine hoists which were not only too expensive, but would have been useless in the mines for which they were intended. I had found it hard to believe that these men were ordinary grafters, as they did not seem to be the kind interested in feathering their own nests. But they had been seasoned political conspirators before the Revolution, and had taken risks of the same degree for the sake of their so-called cause.
Of course, I have no way of knowing whether the political conspiracy mentioned in all confessions at this trial was organized as the prisoners said it was. I never attempted to follow the ins and outs of political disputes in Russia, and wouldn't have known what anti-Government conspirators were talking about if they had tried to drag me into their affairs, which none of them ever did.
BUT I AM ABSOLUTELY SURE THAT SOMETHING QUEER WAS TAKING PLACE AT BERLIN IN 1931, DURING THE PERIOD MENTIONED BY PYATAKOV AT HIS TRIAL. I HAVE ALREADY SAID THAT MY EXPERIENCES AT THAT TIME PUZZLED ME FOR YEARS, AND THAT I COULDN'T FIGURE OUT ANY SENSIBLE EXPLANATION UNTIL I READ PYATAKOV'S TESTIMONY IN THE MOSCOW NEWSPAPERS AT THE TIME OF HIS TRIAL.
Another part of this testimony that some Moscow journalists found it hard to believe was that German firms should give commissions to Sedov. But I have already mentioned in an earlier chapter that Russian emigres were in the habit of collecting commissions from German firms for using their alleged influence to throw Soviet business in their direction. The managers of these German firms might consider that Sedov was simply another Russian emigre, and would make the same kind of deal with him that I know they have been making for years with other emigres.
In such cases, it was the usual procedure for German firms merely to figure in the promised commissions into their prices, and if the Russians accepted the prices nothing more was necessary. But in the case of these mine hoists, the commission must have been put so high that the firm had to juggle the specifications in order to clear its profit. When they did this, my attention was attracted and the deal was blocked. Pyatakov testified that he had to exert pressure to have some orders passed, and I have told how pressure was put on me.
The testimony at this trial aroused a great deal of skepticism abroad and among foreign diplomats at Moscow. I talked with some Americans there who believed it was a frame-up from beginning to end. Well, I didn't attend the trial, but I did follow the testimony very closely, and it was printed verbatim in several languages. A GREAT DEAL OF THE TESTIMONY ABOUT INDUSTRIAL SABOTAGE SOUNDED MORE PROBABLE TO ME THAN IT DID TO SOME OF THE MOSCOW DIPLOMATS AND CORRESPONDENTS. I KNOW FROM MY OWN EXPERIENCE THAT A GOOD DEAL OF INDUSTRIAL SABOTAGE WAS GOING ON ALL THE TIME IN SOVIET MINES AND THAT SOME OF IT COULD HARDLY HAVE OCCURRED WITHOUT THE COMPLICITY OF HIGHLY PLACED COMMUNIST MANAGERS.

… Pyatakov's confession cleared up what had happened.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 102
One of my last jobs in Russia, in 1937, was a hurry call to return to the same mines. Once more those fine mines [which Littlepage had straightened out] were close to destruction. Thousands of tons of rich ores had already been lost beyond recovery, and in a few more weeks, if nothing had been done meanwhile, the whole deposit might have been lost.
When I began looking into what had happened, I saw a striking parallel between events here and those at the copper mines at Kalata. The Ridder mines, I discovered, had gone along fairly well for two or three years after I reorganized them in 1932. The two young engineers who had impressed me so favorably had remained in charge, and had carried out the instructions I had left them with noteworthy success. Considering the kind of workmen they had to deal with and all the restrictions which hedged their movements, they have performed marvels.
Then an investigating commission had appeared from Alma-Ata, the capital of Kazakhstan, similar to the one sent to the minds at Kalata. From that time on, although the same engineers had remained in the mines, an entirely different system was introduced throughout those mines which any competent engineer could have foretold would cause the loss of a large part of the ore body in a few months. They had even mined pillars which we had left to protect the main working shafts, so that the ground around had settled.
One of the most flagrant examples of mismanagement concerned a rather elaborate ventilating and dust-collecting system which had been ordered for the lead smelter to prevent the poisoning of workers. This ventilating system, which cost a lot of money and was necessary to protect the health of workers in the smelter, had actually been installed in the filter section of the mill, where there were no harmful gases or dust of any kind. NOW I AM SURE THAT EVERY ENGINEER WILL AGREE THAT SUCH INCIDENTS CANNOT POSSIBLY BE THE RESULT OF MERE STUPIDITY, and I have already pointed out that the two engineers in these mines were unusually capable.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 113

I went through the plant thoroughly, and drew up my report with great care, as I knew it was likely to be damaging to a number of managers and engineers. I WAS COMPELLED TO STATE, HOWEVER, THAT THE EVIDENCE STRONGLY INDICATED A DELIBERATE CHANGE IN THE METHODS OF OPERATING THE MINES FROM THE TIME OF THE INVESTIGATING COMMISSION'S VISIT. It was necessary also to point out that my written instructions, which had been followed with good results for several years, had then apparently been thrown into the stove, and that methods had been introduced which my instructions had warned against.
I have failed to mention that the engineers of whom I have spoken were no longer at work in the mines when I arrived there in 1937, and I understood they had been arrested for alleged complicity in a nationwide conspiracy to sabotage Soviet industries which had been disclosed in a trial of leading conspirators in January.
When I had submitted my report, I was shown the written confessions of the engineers I had befriended in 1932. They admitted that they had been drawn into a conspiracy against the Stalin regime by opposition Communists who convinced them that they were strong enough to overthrow Stalin and his associates and take over control of the Soviet Government. The conspirators proved to them, they said, that they had many supporters among Communists in high places. These engineers, although they themselves were not Communists, decided they would have to back one side or the other, and they picked the losing side.

Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 114

According to their confessions, the “investigating commission” had consisted of conspirators, who traveled around from mine to mine lining up supporters. After they had been persuaded to join the conspiracy, the engineers at Ridder had taken my written instructions as the basis for wrecking the mines. THEY HAD DELIBERATELY INTRODUCED METHODS WHICH I HAD WARNED AGAINST, AND IN THIS WAY HAD BROUGHT THE MINES CLOSE TO DESTRUCTION.
I know that many observers are skeptical about the charges of wrecking conspiracies in Russia; I don’t pretend to know anything about such matters except in those cases in which I have been directly concerned. In this case, I know that methods had been introduced into the Ridder mines which I had warned engineers there would be seriously destructive, if not fatal, to the mines. I know that these methods were introduced by the very engineers who had impressed me as particularly capable, and to whom I had explained in great detail why such methods could not be used. And I have seen confessions, signed by these engineers, which stated they had deliberately introduced these methods in order to wreck the mines as their part in a nationwide conspiracy.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 115

For almost three years, I devoted most of my time to ailing copper, lead, and zinc mines. I had rushed from one group of mines to another, trying to repair the ravages of management which was either incredibly stupid or deliberately hostile to proper operation of the minds.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 116

It was reported at the time that the decision to restore prospectors was reached only after a prolonged debate, covering a period of months and resulting in some bitterness. According to these reports, Stalin himself and his fellow-Georgian Ordjonikidze, the Commissar of Heavy Industries, had swung the decision in favor of prospectors.
…Serebrovsky, being an engineer himself, had selected a managing staff with more attention to their technical training than some of the other Bolshevik executives. He was apparently a better judge of men, too; the number of wreckers in the gold industry was always extremely small compared to other Soviet industries.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 118
…A little later my title was changed to Deputy Chief Engineer of the Gold Trust, in charge of production. In this capacity I was the trouble-shooter for all the mines in the USSR.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 120

My own views on this subject are based largely upon my personal experiences. I have told how I encountered large-scale sabotage in the copper-lead minds and mills in the Urals and Kazakhstan, and how the atmosphere I encountered in the Copper-Lead Trust from the moment I first worked for this Trust in 1931 made me uncomfortable and suspicious….
After I had left Russia, a third great conspiracy trial was held in March, 1938. The testimony in this trial did much to confirm my previous impressions that a tremendous anti-Stalin conspiracy had been organized in Russia in 1931 or earlier, and that it had included some of the most important men and women in the country–Communist managers who had been given the most responsible positions in industry as well as in politics, and who could easily cause catastrophic damage to any large industry if they were so minded.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 292

I have made it clear in this book that I believe some Communist industrial managers were guilty of sabotage, judging solely by my own first-hand observations of what happened in enterprises under their control.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 308

(Sinclair's comments only)
I know just as well that there are German and Japanese agents in Russia today posing as being ultra-left-wingers, as I know that there are spies in the American labor movement, posing as being Communists and doing everything they can to lead the movement into violence and disorder so that it may be discredited.
I knew this must be so; and then one day in the Saturday Evening Post I came upon the articles of Mr. Littlepage, an American engineer who is without any trace of radicalism; and he tells how during his 10 years of service in the mining industry of the Soviet Union he witnessed the wholesale sabotage and speculated as to its causes.
He tells about one of the high-up officials [Pyatakov] whose acts of sabotage in the purchase of machinery he witnessed in Berlin; and it so happens that this individual was one of the men who confessed to those very same acts in the public proceedings which you describe as "obscene show trials."
Sinclair and Lyons. Terror in Russia?: Two Views. New York : Rand School Press, 1938, p. 27

QUESTION: During 1928-32 many scientists and technicians were falsely charged with sabotage and arrested or imprisoned merely as scapegoats for inevitable shortcomings of the Five-Year Plan.

ANSWER: Every American specialist who worked in Soviet industry during those years knows that there was much sabotage. Ball, in the Stalingrad Tractor Plant, told me: "At first there were two gangs in this plant; one was making tractors, the other was preventing them. I've seen sabotage in the States when firms were at war. Think I didn't know it here? The plant was lousy with it, but oh, boy, they took them out of here!"
Other Americans told me of an agronomical expert who organized the plowing of a 200,000 acre farm to increase erosion, of a factory manager who sent false reports on American machines being bribed by a rival German firm. I myself heard a dozen Russian employees of the British firm Metro-Vickers tell in open court of the destruction they did in power plants.
Strong, Anna Louise. "Searching Out the Soviets." New Republic: August 7, 1935, p. 357

IN DEC. 1936 YEZHOV PROVIDES EVIDENCE AGAINST PYATAKOV, BUKHARIN & THE TROT BLOC

Pyatakov "admitted" that in the spring of 1931 he had met in Germany with Trotsky's son Sedov, who passed him a directive on terror in the Soviet Union. According to Yezhov, Pyatakov told the police after his arrest that "I, unfortunately, gave my agreement." Here the stenographic record notes "noise, movement in the hall." Beria once more interrupted: "Bastard!" Yezhov responded, "Worse than a bastard."
Pyatakov, he continued, then set up terrorist organizations through his Trotskyite friends but did not yet give them the order to act. That came only in 1935-36, "more accurately at the

beginning of 1936," after which these groups tried to assassinate Molotov, Ordjonikidze, and Kaganovich. There was also a plan to poison all the leaders of the government at a Kremlin banquet. "You understand, comrades," Yezhov went on, "that I am speaking here only of those facts in the direct testimony [of the arrestees] and of confirmed facts." Ominously, he announced that "I assume that we have many, many undiscovered cases."

He then read a number of excerpts from prisoners statements, in which they admitted causing accidents in military factories and on railroads. One direct link had been found between Trotskyites and a White Guard organization working in biology. Sokolnikov had confessed that for all these "little groups," the Ryutin memorandum was "in essence the acceptable program." Sokolnikov had linked all the terrorist activity to Radek and Tomsky, a former Politburo member and union chief.

At this point a connection to Bukharin began to surface. Tomsky had been one of his partners in the "Right Opposition" of 1928-29, which opposed forced collectivization. Zinoviev, Yezhov stated, had also pointed to the Right in his pretrial testimony; Kamenev had done so in the trial itself. Four rightist leaders, Rykov, Tomsky, Bukharin, and Uglanov, knew of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite bloc and "completely shared its aims," Yezhov announced. At that, Bukharin, present as a candidate member of the Central Committee, asked to speak; he was ignored.

Yezhov continued that other sources had confirmed the testimony about knowledge by the Right of terrorist plans. In particular Sosnovsky, a follower of Trotsky in the 1920s and later a journalist under Bukharin at Izvestia, had told the NKVD that his boss had accepted the Ryutin platform. Three other former oppositionists had testified that a Right Center of Bukharin, Rykov, Tomsky, and two other men had decided to turn to terror. Yezhov and the Politburo member Kaganovich had then brought Rykov and Bukharin face-to-face with other Rightists; the two Stalinist henchmen had "had no doubt" that the two under suspicion "were informed of the Trotskyites' decision to turn to terrorism and sympathized with it." This remark was obviously not evidence of all, but it fit the mood of the session.

To come to the decision that Yezhov was lying, those present at the December 1936 plenum had to make several mental calculations. They had to conclude that the testimony gathered by the police was false, which could only mean that those arrested, who had all served in high positions in the party for years, had been tortured. Such a possibility was as yet unthinkable; no precedent existed for torturing party members who had been in good standing until their arrests. If torture had occurred, then Stalin must have known about it. But why would he have authorized physical methods and arranged "confessions"? The usual theory says that he wanted to cement his position completely; the Central Committee records, however, give no indication that serious resistance to him existed within it or within the party as a whole, except among former oppositionists. This sentiment, such as it was, had last appeared three years earlier, At the Seventeenth Party Congress. So anyone deciding that Stalin needed torture to gain confessions from the arrestees also needed to believe that he was mad; yet he had led the party to some important successes, at least from the point of view of industrial development, and major domestic crises seemed in the past. Therefore an apparently capable leader, by the standards and conditions of the contemporary USSR, had to be deemed insane in order for one to find a hole in Yezhov's presentation. And striking at former oppositionists had little to do with the vast majority of the Central Committee in 1936, which had never resisted Stalin. Thus the cases of Pyatakov, Sokolnikov, Serebryakov, Bukharin, and the others did not suggest that Stalin had a broader attack on the party in mind. For all these reasons, it would have been both psychologically

safer and more logical to accept what the top leadership said was happening. And who could know for sure that the confessions were false?
In fact, not only staunch Stalinists but also Bukharin accepted the charges against many others, though of course not against themselves. Bukharin tried to play by Stalin's rules in defending himself to the Central Committee when he was allowed to speak, on the same day that Yezhov had presented his charges.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 37-38

The Central Committee plenum met on December 4th to the 7th. On December 4th, Yezhov reported on "the Trotskyite and Rightists anti-Soviet organizations" and said that Bukharin and Rykov had not "laid down their arms" but had gone underground. He produced the evidence of Kulikov and others, and Bukharin and Rykov were violently denounced by Kaganovich, Molotov, and Voroshilov. Although many seem to have remained silent, and Ordjonikidze is reported as making remarks implying distrust of Yezhov, many speakers demanded the expulsion of the two Rightists from the Central Committee and the Party (all the Central Committee–including Bukharin and Rykov themselves–had been receiving confidential copies of the testimony against the two men). They strongly denied the accusations. During intervals they were brought to confrontations with Kulikov and with Pyatakov and Sosnovsky. But Stalin again temporized, and the plenum accepted his proposal "to consider the question of Rykov and Bukharin as incomplete. Further investigation to be undertaken, a decision postponed until the next plenum."
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 145

…On 4 December 1936 Stalin convened a plenum of the Central Committee in the Kremlin, prohibiting any mention of it in the press…. The plenum approved the final text of the USSR Constitution and heard a report from Yezhov on the activities of the "anti-Soviet Trotskyist and Right organizations." Yezhov, joined by several other speakers, demanded that Bukharin and Rykov be expelled from the Party and their case handed over to the NKVD. Bukharin tried to defend himself, categorically denying all the accusations that had been made against him. Stalin spoke cautiously, but said that although it was impossible simply to believe Bukharin, there had to be more substantial evidence. Arrangements were made for a confrontation to take place on 7 Dec 1936 during an interval between sessions of the plenum. On one side there were Pyatakov, Radek, Kulikov, Sosnovsky, and several other prisoners, all of whom had implicated Bukharin. On the other side there was Bukharin, who was given the opportunity to refute their accusations. Questions were asked by Stalin, Molotov, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Andreev, Ordzhonikidze, and Zhdanov. At the evening session of the plenum Stalin reported that he had not found the statements of all the accusers to be convincing. Therefore he proposed that they "consider the question of Rykov and Bukharin to be unfinished and postpone a decision until the next plenum."
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 290

ORDJONIKIDZE SHAKEN BY PYATAKOV ADMITTING GUILT & SAYING HE TESTIFIED VOLUNTARILY

It appears that in late 1936 Ordjonikidze had wavered in his judgment of his longtime subordinate, Pyatakov. In a speech Ordjonikidze gave in early December, he departed from his notes to say that he had spent many sleepless nights wondering how wrecking could have occurred in the Commissariat of Heavy Industry…. According to Bukharin's wife, Anna Larina, Ordjonikidze met with Pyatakov in prison at this point and asked him twice if his testimony was entirely voluntary. Upon receiving the answer that it was, Ordjonikidze appeared shaken.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 46

WHY HAVE FRAME-UP TRIALS AS TROTSKY CLAIMS THEY ARE WHEN THE WORLD IS WATCHING

But Trotsky would try and have us believe that a whole series of entirely innocent men, working quietly at their posts– some of them in key positions in the country–were arrested and forced to confess to a plot which had no existence in reality. Why? What purpose could this serve? The trials gave the capitalist press of the world an opportunity which they used to the full to throw mud at the Soviet Union.
The Soviet government was perfectly well aware that they would do so, and yet it is alleged to have gratuitously presented capitalism with this opportunity by inventing a monstrous plot which had no existence in fact. And people who accept this monstrous nonsense dare to talk of "credibility"; "Who led these people into a state in which all human reflexes are destroyed?" Who indeed? What proof is there that the prisoners were other than in their normal state of physical and mental health? They answered questions for hours on end. The testimony of the one was carefully compared with the testimony of the other before a crowded court.
…We are asked by Trotsky to believe that one of his most outstanding followers, a man [Muralov] who never made his peace with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, not only confessed to crimes of which he was guiltless, but actually falsely declared that he was treated most politely.
We are told that Stalin was anxious to ensure the world bourgeoisie that he had completely abandoned Socialism and revolution and was moving back to capitalism, and that the executions were a proof of the genuineness of his intentions. And so Stalin selects a number of men who never believed in the possibility of building socialism in Russia anyhow, and has them shot in order to show the world that he also no longer believes in that possibility! And the victims–enemies of Stalin from pass struggles–they also treat Stalin "decently and politely" and falsely accuse themselves of committing a crime which they know is punishable by death. Surely the more the Trotskyists try to explain away the trial, the more fantastic their explanations become. In fact the more they talk the more they confirm the fact that there was a plot of a particularly despicable character.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 248-250

THE CHARGE OF NO DOCUMENTS OR MATERIAL EVIDENCE AT THE TRIALS IS BOGUS

"All trials of political opponents, real and alleged," says Shachtman, Trotsky's American henchman, "that is, all trials held in public, have been monotonously identical under the reign

of Stalin. No documents, no material evidence, nothing written adduced, all the evidence confined to the spontaneous and 'voluntary' confessions of the invariably penitent accused. This has been the case from the Shakhty trial to the Zinoviev trial."
This is completely untrue. There were witnesses and material evidence to supplement the evidence of the accused in all these trials. And what is more, before Trotsky went over to terrorism it never occurred to him to doubt these trials for a single moment. In a pamphlet entitled Problems of the Development of the USSR which Shachtman translated in 1931, Trotsky treats both the Shakhty and the Menshevik trial as "giving an extremely striking picture of the relationships of force of the classes and the parties in the USSR." He expresses no doubts about these trials. On the contrary, he says:
"It was irrefutably established by the Court that during the years 1923-28 the bourgeois specialists, in close alliance with the foreign centers of the bourgeoisie, successfully carried through an artificial slackening down of industrialization, counting upon the re-establishment of capitalist relationships" (page 26).
To take the Radek-Pyatakov trial as an example, there was the testimony of five accomplices, Bukhartsev, Romm, Tamm, Stein, and Loginov.
There were the Experts Committee of three, which showed that some of the explosions could not have occurred accidentally. Further, letters that Knyazev, a prominent railway official concerned in wrecking, had received from Japanese agents and had omitted to destroy, were found amongst his personal effects and were identified by him.
The diary of the accused Stroilov, who had been blackmailed by German Secret Service agents into engaging in espionage and sabotage, was produced and was found to contain their telephone numbers, which were checked and confirmed by the appropriate telephone directory.
The movements of the German agents mentioned in the trial were confirmed by the production of official records of their arrival. The identity photographs were produced, and the accused Stroilov picked them out from a number of other photographs. The charge of "no documents, no material evidence" will not bear examination.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V.Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 261-262

Touching upon the trial's main weak spot–the absence of even the slightest material evidence of the defendants' criminal activity–Vyshinsky declared: "May I be so bold as to state that, in accordance with the fundamental demands of the science of criminal procedure, in cases of conspiracy such demands cannot be presented."
In conclusion, Vyshinsky saw only one shortcoming in the given trial. "I am convinced," he said, "that the accused have not stated even 1/2 of the truth which comprises the nightmarish tale of their terrible crimes against our country, against our great motherland."
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 123

TROTSKY TRIES TO DISCREDIT THE TRIALS WITH 3 MAIN ARGUMENTS ABOUT FACTS

There are three points in the trials, however, on which Trotsky had tried to fasten in order to discredit the whole edifice of evidence put forward.
In the first trial, Holtzman, one of the accused, confessed to having a long interview with Trotsky in the Hotel Bristol in Copenhagen. "But it so happens that the Hotel Bristol," says Trotsky gleefully, "was razed to its foundations in 1917. In 1932 this hotel existed only as a

fond memory." The Trotskyists are gleeful: the OGPU, which made the prisoners confess down to the minutest detail, was apparently so clumsy that when it made Holtzman confess that he had seen Trotsky in the Hotel Bristol in Copenhagen in 1932, it did not even trouble to ascertain whether there was a Hotel Bristol in Copenhagen in 1932. A frame up is (according to Trotsky) devised down to the minutest detail, but the authors are so clumsy that they mention meeting places in hotels that do not exist. But what do the facts show? Holtzman testified that when he arrived at the station he crossed over to the Bristol Hotel. Now opposite the station there is no Bristol Hotel. There is, however, the Grand Central Hotel, and in the same building there is a Bristol Cafe. Further, at the date mentioned, it was possible to obtain entrance to the Hotel through the cafe. It may be that Holtzman, seeing the sign above the cafe, was confused as to the name of the hotel. He was naturally not taking notes with a view to a future confession. It is one of the curiosities of Trotskyist quibbling that while they were at great pains to convince the world that no Bristol Hotel existed in Copenhagen, they concealed the fact that just over from the station, as described by Holtzman, there was the Bristol cafe through which entrance could be obtained to the Grand Central Hotel. But those who believe in Trotsky's innocence will find the following remark of Trotsky more than curious. "Holtzman apparently knew the Hotel Bristol through memories of his emigration long ago, and that is why he named it." On the one hand we are told by the Trotskyists that the confessions were dictated to the prisoners by the remorseless OGPU, and on the other hand we have a prisoner who obligingly makes up his own confession out of his memories of emigration.

The second objection is the journey of Pyatakov to see Trotsky in Oslo in 1935. It is declared that this is impossible because not a single foreign airplane landed at the Oslo airport in December 1935.

On the other hand, not only Pyatakov, but a witness, Bukhartsev, the Berlin correspondent of Izvestia, gave the most circumstantial details as to how the journey was arranged in a special airplane placed at Pyatakov's disposal by the German government. To put it on the lowest possible level, it is more likely that the Nazi Government, which has known how to get hundreds of airplanes into Northern Spain in spite of the control exercised by the Non-Intervention Committee, should succeed in getting a single airplane in and out of Norway, than that Pyatakov and Bukhartsev should charge themselves with a crime which they never committed.

The next so-called loophole refers to the evidence of the witness Romm, another Izvestia correspondent who carried correspondence between Trotsky and Radek. Romm deposed that he had a meeting with Trotsky in the Bois de Boulogne at the end of July 1933 and had a conversation lasting from 20 to 25 minutes. Trotsky seeks to refute this by declaring that he was staying during the month of July 1933 at Royan, and that he was seen there by John Patton and C.A. Smith of the British Independent Labor Party, and those gentlemen have very obligingly told the world that they saw Trotsky there in the flesh during that period. We do not doubt that for a single moment. Suppose in a criminal case in Great Britain a witness testified that he had a conversation with one of the accused in Hyde Park in the middle of July. Would it be regarded as an adequate refutation of that witnesses evidence that the accused had been domiciled in Edinburg during July? Are there not trains traveling between Edinburg and Glasgow, and are there no motor-cars? Really, would that type of refutation convince anybody?

Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 263-265

TROTSKY'S EXPLANATION FOR THE TRIALS OCCURRING IS A PATHETIC JOKE

But if there were no conspiracy in the Soviet Union why the trials?
Hear the explanations of Trotsky's defenders are many and varied.
"The Trial," says the American Trotskyist Shachtman, "also served the purpose of the bureaucracy in distracting the attention of the Soviet proletariat and the workers in the capitalist lands from the base betrayal of the Spanish working-class by the Stalinist apparatus." This was written on November 1st, 1936, after the Soviet Union had declared that it was no longer bound by the non-intervention agreement, and when it was apparent to the whole world that the Soviet Union was rendering most generous aid to the Spanish people–aid which was to transform the whole prospects of the struggle. What "aid" Trotskyism rendered the Spanish people will be seen later. It would be more correct to say that Trotsky and his supporters have used the trials in order to endeavor to detach working-class support from the Soviet Union, at the very moment when it was rendering unforgettable assistance to the Spanish people.
The "explanation" of Trotsky is that the trials were staged in order to discredit him and the Fourth International.
"An international conference as recently been held under the sign of the Fourth International. This movement does not cease to grow beneath the blows of its enemies, while the Communist International is the prey of trouble and confusion. Now Stalin cannot keep his leadership of the bureaucracy and his power over the people without having international authority. The growth of the Fourth International, information about which penetrates more and more into Russia, constitutes a grave peril for him. Finally, the leading coterie fears more than anything the still living traditions of the October Revolution, inevitably hostile to the new privileged caste. All this explains why Stalin and his group have not for a moment ceased to combat me personally."
Is this a rational explanation? According to Trotsky's whole hypothesis there was no conspiracy in the Soviet Union; the accused were not in opposition to the Government, they have "capitulated" to the Government; Trotsky had no relation with the Nazis, he had few direct connections with the Soviet Union and no organization within it; and yet the Government suddenly swoops upon scores of people who are loyally doing the jobs assigned to them, Prime Ministers of National Republics, Vice -Commissars of Industry, prominent diplomats, ex-leaders, whose names were well-known throughout the international Labor Movement, and charged them with crimes they never committed. And all this was done–to make things a little more difficult for Trotsky and to discredit the Fourth International! One might as well argue that the trials were held to discredit the Rugby Union and the Southern League. Was there ever such a crying disproportion between means and ends? The Bolshevik steamroller is set in motion to crack a peanut.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 268-269

DEWEY COMMISSION'S REASONS FOR THE TRIALS ARE WORTHLESS

Still acting on the assumption that if one throws out a sufficiency of "explanations" some of them are bound to be believed by someone, the Dewey Commission tries once again:
"The Commission finds that the conclusion appears to be inevitable that the indictments and the confessions in the series of widely publicized trials against the regime, were governed in

each case by current internal difficulties economic and political and by the current situation in the foreign relations of the Soviet Union. In other words the trials have not really been criminal but political."

Did the Commission take any evidence which showed that the years 1936-38 were years of economic or political difficulty inside the Soviet Union? It did not. All evidence goes to show that these years were years of remarkable economic growth (despite all the saboteurs could do) and of advancing standards of life for the people. We are asked to believe that at the very moment that the Soviet Government was telling the people of the marvelous progress it had made, it was also staging trials to explain the terrible difficulties it was in. No, it will not do!

There only remains the pseudo-historical explanation of the capitalist intellectuals, i.e. "all revolutions devour their children." In his concluding speech, Rakovsky dealt with this "explanation."

"It is a ridiculous, groundless analogy. Bourgeois revolutions did indeed finish–excuse me if I cite here some theoretical arguments which, however, are of significance for the present moment–bourgeois revolutions did indeed finish by devouring their own children, because after they had triumphed they had to suppress their allies from among the people, their revolutionary allies of the Left.

"But the proletarian revolution, the revolution of the class which is revolutionary to the end, when it applies what Marx called 'plebeian methods of retaliation', it applies them not to the advanced elements, it applies them to those who stand in the way of this revolution, or to those who, as ourselves, were with this revolution, marched along with it for a certain time, and then stabbed it in the back."

Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 272

THE FALLACIES OF TROTSKY'S MAJOR ARGUMENTS IN THE 1930'S

Naturally there is no attempt by the Trotskyists to frame a policy on the basis of an objective evaluation of the situation existing in a given country, bearing in mind the relations of that country to the rest of the world, for this would inevitably expose the true character of Trotskyist policy.

Instead of proceeding from a concrete analysis we are presented with a theoretical hotch-potch, calculated to confuse the workers and justify the sabotage of the anti-Fascist front. Elements of the old Trotskyism in which alliance of the workers with other sections of society, notably the peasantry, is rejected; misrepresentation of the tactics which brought victory to the Bolsheviks in the Russian Revolution, and the urging of the workers to apply this caricature to the struggles of today; a wholly mechanical interpretation of the relation of monopoly capitalism to Fascism; attempts to draw an analogy between the immediate post-war period when parliamentary democracy was the rallying ground of reaction against the advancing Social Revolution, and the present day when monopoly capitalism is seeking to attack and undermine parliamentary democracy; attempts to show that the building up of an anti-Fascist People's Front to resist the drive of monopoly capitalism to Fascism is a betrayal similar to that of those Socialist parties which at the end of the war cooperated with capitalism to defeat the advancing social revolution–such are the principal arguments in the arsenal of Trotskyism.

Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 314

STALIN ASSURES BUKHARIN NOT TO WORRY ABOUT THE ACCUSATIONS AGAINST HIM

Before the commission met, Bukharin composed a long and impassioned memorandum repudiating every charge…. Stalin reassured him: 'Nikolai, don't panic. We'll sort things out… We don't believe you're an enemy. But as you been implicated by Sokolnikov, Astrov, Kulikov and other double-dealers, who have admitted to being wreckers, we have to look into it calmly. Don't worry!'
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 285

MIKOYAN CHALLENGES BUKHARIN TO CONFESS

If you [Bukharin] won't confess', Mikoyan answered malevolently, 'you're just proving that you're a Fascist hireling. They're already writing in the newspapers that our trials are a provocation. We're arresting you–confess!'
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 286

SOKOLNIKOV DIED IN PRISON

Footnote: [Sokolnikov] Condemned to life imprisonment in 1937 at the trial of the oppositionists, Sokolnikov died in the central prison at Yakutsk, Siberia. (That was not his sentence)
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 82

ALL ADMIT THEIR GUILT EXCEPT SMIRNOV

All the accused had fully admitted their guilt, with the exception of I. N. Smirnov, whose full guilt was, however, proved by the confessions of the other accused. He had made only a partial confession: of belonging to the " United Center " and being personally connected with Trotsky up to the time of his arrest in 1933; and of having received, in 1932, instructions from Trotsky to organize terror. He had denied, however, taking part in terroristic activities.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 93

Next came–as witness only–Smirnov's former wife, Safanova. She said that Smirnov had transmitted Trotsky's instructions on terrorism and strongly supported them. Smirnov firmly denied both assertions, but others of the accused backed her up.

At the afternoon session, Smirnov was the first to be questioned. He continued with his partial confession. He had passed on Trotsky's and Sedov's ideas about terrorism; but he had not shared them, and he had done nothing else:
"I admit that I belonged to the underground Trotskyite organization, joined the bloc, joined the center of this bloc, met Sedov in Berlin in 1931, listened to his opinion on terrorism and passed this opinion on to Moscow . I admit that I received Trotsky's instructions on terrorism from Gaven and, although not in agreement with them, I communicated them to the Zinovievites through ter-Vaganyan."
VYSHINSKY: (ironically) When did you leave the Center?
SMIRNOV: I did not intend to resign; there was nothing to resign from.

VYSHINSKY: Did the center exist?
SMIRNOV: What sort of Center…?
VYSHINSKY: Mrachkovsky, did the Center exist?
Mrachkovsky: Yes.
VYSHINSKY: Zinoviev, did the Center exist?
ZINOVIEV: Yes.
VYSHINSKY: Evdokimov, did the Center exist?
EVDOKIMOV: Yes.
VYSHINSKY: Bakayev, did the Center exist?
BAKAYEV: Yes.
VYSHINSKY: How, then, Smirnov, can you take the liberty to maintain that no center existed?
Smirnov again said that no meetings of such a Center had taken place, and again three of the other members of it were made to bear him down.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 97

Smirnov's partial confession was a rather difficult position to maintain, but on the whole he succeeded in confusing the issue. When the contradictions in his stance became awkward, he simply did not answer the question.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 98

The prosecution case made much of better-established contacts between Smirnov, Holtzman, the absent Gaven, Sedov, and others in the early 1930s, and the establishment of a "bloc" between them and the Trotskyists. These contacts had indeed taken place, and in the old sense of the coming together of factions in the prewar party (like the "August bloc") the Trotskyists certainly thought that an opposition bloc had been established. When the accused were so charged, however, the Trotskyites in exile denied the whole story, apparently on the supposition that this would help the accused and discredit the trial.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 100

Smirnov here again intervened to deny that Putna was a Trotskyite, but Pikel, Reingold, and Bakayev confirmed it.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 101

Even so, he [Smirnov] is said to have gone to his death remarking that he and the other defendants had behaved despicably.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 119

Despite all the efforts of both the prosecutor and Safanova, who furiously defamed Smirnov at the trial, the latter refused during the entire trial to conduct himself in a manner which would please Vyshinsky.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park , Michigan : Labor Publications, 1998, p. 22

Finally, in his concluding remarks, Smirnov "just as he had been at the pretrial and trial investigations, continued to deny responsibility for the crimes committed by the Trotsky-Zinoviev center after his arrest."
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park , Michigan : Labor Publications, 1998, p. 23

THOSE LATER CONVICTED TRY TO HIDE BY STRONGLY DENOUNCING ZINOVIEV AND KAMENEV

Ever since the publication of the indictment, the Soviet press had been violently demanding the death penalty. Resolutions from all over the country came in and were printed. Workers in the Kiev Red Flag Factory and the Stalingrad Dzerzhinsky Tractor Works, Kazakh kolkhozes and Leningrad Party organizations, calling for the shooting of the accused, day by day made an overwhelming buildup…. But, in addition, there were manifestos from Rakovsky, Rykov, and Pyatakov, which showed another aspect of Party discipline. They, too, all demanded the death penalty. Rakovsky's was headed "No Pity." Rykov insisted that no mercy be shown to Zinoviev. The tone of all may be judged from Pyatakov's contribution, which said:
"One cannot find the words fully to express one's indignation and disgust. These people have lost the last semblance of humanity. They must be destroyed like carrion which is polluting the pure, bracing air of the land of the Soviets; dangerous carrion which may cause the death of our leaders, and has already caused the death of one of the best people in our land–that wonderful comrade and leader Kirov…. Many of us, including myself, by our heedlessness, our complacency and lack of vigilance toward those around us, unconsciously helped these bandits to commit their black deeds…. It is a good thing that the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs had exposed this gang…. It is a good thing that it can be exterminated…. Honor and glory to the workers of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 98

Amid the pages crowded with these [resolutions pass by workers in hundreds of factories and kolkhozes demanding the deaths of Zinoviev and Kamenev] there also appeared "manifestos" from three prominent party leaders, Rakovsky, Rykov, and Pyatakov, also demanding the death penalty. Pyatakov wrote:
"One cannot find words fully to express one's indignation and disgust. These people have lost the last semblance of humanity. They must be destroyed like carrion that is polluting the pure, bracing air of the land of Soviets , dangerous carrion that may cause the death of our leaders."
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York : Knopf, 1992, p. 479

On 21 August 1936 the newspapers carried articles by Rakovsky, Radek, and Piatakov sharply condemning Trotsky, Kamenev, and Zinoviev, and demanding that they should be executed.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven : Yale University Press, c2003, p. 317

MRACHKOVSKY ADMITS HE SHOULD BE SHOT

He [Mrachkovsky] ended by saying that he was a traitor who should be shot.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 103

Various accounts of the actual execution have filtered out. They are of course based on unconfirmable NKVD reports.

Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 104

TROTSKYITE MRACHKOVSKY HELPED ORGANIZE THE 1927 REVOLT WITH THE PRINTING PRESS

He [Mrachkovsky] had later been one of the boldest of Trotsky's followers, and had been the first to be arrested when, in 1927, he organized the Trotskyites' short-lived underground printing press.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 109

NOT EVERYONE FULLY CONFESSED IN THE AUG. 1936 TRIAL

…That impression of unanimous surrender was not, indeed, entirely a correct one. Two of the 1936 accused (Smirnov & Holtzman) hedged considerably in their admissions, but this was hardly noticed among the self-abasement of so many others, including the two major figures, Zinoviev and Kamenev.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 109

IN SEPT 1936 CHARGES AGAINST BUKHARIN & RYKOV DROPPED FOR LACK OF PROOF

On September 10, 1936, in a small paragraph at the top of page 2, Pravda announced that the investigation into the charges against Rykov & Bukharin was being dropped, for lack of evidence. This reversal is said to have been made "under pressure of some members of the Politburo."
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 136

PYATAKOV WILLING TO DENOUNCE TROTS AND HIS EX-WIFE

He [Pyatakov] denied the terrorist charges (Yezhov reported), but said that he deserved demotion for not having denounced his ex-wife's connections with Trotskyites. To regain the trust of the Party, he would be willing to appear for the prosecution at a trial, and would personally offer to shoot all the accused, including his ex-wife, and announce this publicly….
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 141

At first, Pyatakov did not feel any similar threat hanging over him. At the end of July he was even selected as public prosecutor at the trial of the "Trotsky-Zinoviev center." In his own words, he saw this appointment "as an act of the most enormous confidence on the part of the Central Committee," and he prepared to fulfil this mission "heart and soul." However, on the night of July 28, Pyatakov's former wife was arrested. At her apartment correspondence was seized belonging to Pyatakov, including material relating to the period when he was in the Opposition.
… Calling himself guilty of "not paying attention to the counter-revolutionary work of his former wife, and of being indifferent to meetings with her acquaintances," Pyatakov said that he should be punished more severely, and asked "that he be granted any form of rehabilitation." With this in mind, he asked that "they allow him personally to shoot all those

sentenced to be shot in the (upcoming) trial, including his former wife," and to publish a statement about this in the press.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 69

MANY PEOPLE GAVE EVIDENCE AGAINST BUKHARIN

A number of the Rightists under arrest, including Uglanov and Schmidt, did not give evidence against Bukharin before his own arrest. Some of his junior associates, however, were testifying to his plans for a "palace coup," and their statements were sent to him. Bukharin was then called in for several confrontations in the presence of the whole Politburo and Yezhov. First the prominent ex-Trotskyite Sosnovsky gave testimony that some money Bukharin had given him when he was in trouble was a conspiratorial payment. Then came a confrontation with Pyatakov. Pyatakov is described as looking like a skeleton, and so weak that he could hardly stand. When he had confessed his membership in a counter-revolutionary center, implicating Bukharin, Ordjonikidze asked him if his testimony was voluntary. He replied that it was. The next confrontation was with Radek. Although pale, he was not in such a bad state as Pyatakov, and, unlike the lifelessness reported of the others, was "visibly agitated." He confessed everything, on his own behalf and Bukharin's, including a plot of theirs at Izvestia to assassinate Stalin. Rykov, who had earlier been sent confessions implicating him made by his secretary Ekaterina Artemenko, also had "confrontations" with Sokolnikov, Pyatakov, and others. Meanwhile, with the Bukharin-Rykov group thoroughly implicated, Stalin was fully prepared to face the resistance of his own "moderates" squarely. [Stalin is the moderate stupid –editor]
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 146

Therefore, on Dec. 7, 1936 the plenary session was recessed for four hours. During this time, Bukharin and Rykov confronted Pyatakov, Sosnovsky and Kulikov, who had been brought from prison. Stalin, Molotov, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Ordjonikidze, Mikoyan, Andreev, and Zhdanov were also present.
Sosnovsky stated at the confrontation that he had held "a political conversation" with Bukharin, in the course of which "they agreed that the practice of terror was correct." Pyatakov recounted that in 1928 Bukharin had read him his platform, about which he, Pyatakov, had then informed the members of the Stalinist grouping in the Politburo. To this solitary real fact Pyatakov added that at the beginning of the 1930s he had told Bukharin about Trotsky's directives for terror and sabotage; after Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky had exchanged opinions on this question, they told Pyatakov that they shared Trotsky's position and that the center of Rightists had itself come to analogous conclusions.
During the confrontation, Stalin and Ordjonikidze asked Pyatakov whether he was giving his testimony freely or under pressure. Pyatakov replied that no pressure had been applied. When he recounted this episode at the February-March plenum, Voroshilov added: during the face-to-face confrontation, "Pyatakov knew that he would be shot…. When Ordjonikidze asked him this question, he waved his hand and said: "I know the position I am in."
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 110

PYATAKOV ADMITS ORGANIZING TERRORIST & SABOTAGE GROUPS BUT DENIES DOING ACTS

He [Pyatakov] made certain limitations in his evidence. Admitting the responsibility for forming terrorist and sabotage groups, and for planning acts of terror and “diversion” to be carried out in the future, he at no time confessed to complicity in any particular act of violence, and specifically denied being in direct touch with all the plotters. After considerable revelations about the political contacts of the alleged plot, he went on to confess to the organization of sabotage.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 150

[At the Feb. March 1937 Plenum Stalin stated]…In their trials in 1937, Pyatakov and Radek took a different path. They admitted that they had another political path that they were promoting. They did not call upon the workers to follow them, instead they admitted their guilt that they did want to re-establish capitalism, eliminate collective and state farms, sign a treaty with fascist Germany and Japan; give up Ukraine to Germany while in the East, give the Maritime Provinces to Japan. These traitors admitted their work, which included terroristic acts against the Soviet Union. These confessions were heard and witnessed by foreign dignitaries of capitalist embassies (it was a perfect time for these traitors to say that they were innocent–Editors).
It is easy to understand that such a program the Trotskyites had to hide from the masses. These leaders not only hid these aims from the masses, they hid them also from their own Trotskyite followers.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 233

SEREBRYAKOV SAYS RAILWAYS BEFORE KAGANOVICH WERE INTENTIONALLY SABOTAGED

Serebryakov, who followed, exposed a number of railway chiefs and explained that the system of railway organization prior to Kaganovich’s appointment in 1935 had amounted to intentional sabotage.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 154

DROBNIS ADMITS TO MINING SABOTAGE

[Drobnis stated]… The Kemerovo district power station was put into such a state that, if it were deemed necessary for wrecking purposes, and when the order was given, the mine could be flooded. In addition, coal was supplied that was technically unsuitable for the power station, and this led to explosions. This was done quite deliberately.”
He went on to the case of the Tsentralnaya Mine. He ended, but only after considerable bullying from Vyshinsky, with the confession that the plotters had hoped for as much loss of life as possible from the explosions. Although he had been in jail at the time of the disaster, he accepted responsibility.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 154

SHESTOV SAYS TROTS NOT THE GOVERNMENT ARE MAKING THE WORKERS’ LIVES MISERABLE

Shestov explained that it was Trotskyites rather than Government policy which was rendering the worker's life intolerable:…
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 154

MURALOV ADMITS TRYING TO KILL MOLOTOV BUT NOT ORDJONIKIDZE

VYSHINSKY: "Muralov, who will under no circumstances agree to having the preparation of an attempt on the life of Comrade Ordjonikidze attributed to him… admits that he did indeed organize a terrorist act against Comrade Molotov." We can hardly see it as other than a demonstration of loyalty to, and hope of help from, Ordjonikidze.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 156

KNYAZEV ADMITS HAVING 33 MEN AS CADRES IN HIS TROTSKYITE RAILWAY ORGANIZATION

He [Knyazev] named 33 men in all as the "cadres of my Trotskyite organization on the South Urals Railway.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 160

RATAICHAK ADMITS CAUSING THE DEATHS OF 17 WORKERS

VYSHINSKY: You directed the clearance operations in such a way that 17 workers were killed and 15 injured.
RATAICHAK: That is true, but it was the only thing to do.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 161

DEFENDANTS HAVE NOT ADMITTED ALL THAT THEY HAVE DONE SAYS VYSHINSKY

VYSHINSKY:… I think that all these circumstances enable me to say that if there is any shortcoming in the present trial, it is not that the accused have said what they have done, but that, after all, the accused have not really told us all they have done, all the crimes they have committed against the Soviet State.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 162

BOURGEOIS COURTS CONSIDER A CONFESSION ALONE SUFFICIENT BUT SU COURTS DID MORE

The present case had, Vyshinsky pointed out, been proved with a rigor not demanded in bourgeois courts:
VYSHINSKY: With the assistance of the experts, we verified the evidence of the accused, and although we know that according to the laws of certain European countries the confession of an accused person is regarded as sufficient proof of guilt and the court does not consider itself obliged to call corroborating evidence, we, however, in order to observe strict impartiality, notwithstanding the confessions of the criminals themselves, verified their

statements once again from the technical side and obtained a categorical reply concerning the explosion of November 11, the fires in the Prokopyevsk mine, and the fires and explosions at the Kemerovo plant. Malicious intent was established without any possibility of doubt.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 162

(Sinclair's comments only)
I read many criticisms of the legal procedure in the Russian trial. People seem to find that there's something obviously improper in accepting confessions of guilt as a basis for the death penalty. Curiously enough, our own Constitution provides for the same thing in explicit terms. Article 3, Section 3, specifies what treason shall consist in, and adds that conviction may be had upon the basis of "confessions in open court."
Sinclair and Lyons. Terror in Russia?: Two Views. New York : Rand School Press, 1938, p. 61

VYSHINSKY SAYS DOCUMENTS ARE NOT NEEDED IN CONSPIRACY CASES

Certain of the objections to the Zinoviev Trial were dealt with. For example, on the absence of documentary proof Vyshinsky now remarked:
VYSHINSKY: The accused committed the deeds attributed to them…. But what proof have we in our arsenal from the point of view of judicial procedure?… The question can be put this way: a conspiracy, you say, but where are the documents?… I am bold enough to assert, in keeping with the fundamental requirements of the science of criminal procedure, that in cases of conspiracy such demands cannot be put.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 163

DEFENSE LAWYER BRAUDE FREELY ADMITS THE PROSECUTOR PROVED HIS CASE

BRAUDE (lawyer for the defense): In this case, Comrade Judges, there is no dispute about the facts. Comrade Prosecutor was quite right when he said that from all points of view, from the point of view of documents available in the case, from the point of view of the examination of the witnesses who were summoned here, and cross-examination of the accused, all this has deprived us of all possibility of disputing the evidence. All the facts have been proved, and in this case the Defense does not intend to enter into any controversy with the Procurator. Nor can there be any controversy with the Procurator concerning the appraisal of the political and moral aspects of the case. Here, too, the case is so clear, the political appraisal made here by the Procurator is so clear, that the Defense cannot but wholly and entirely associate itself with that part of his speech.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 164

RADEK SAYS MANY PERSONS AND GROUPS ARE TRYING TO KILL SOVIET LEADERS

Radek referred, perhaps ironically, in his evidence to "scores of wandering terrorist groups waiting for the chance to assassinate some leader of the Party." At least 14 separate groups

or individuals are named who had the task of assassinating Stalin (several of them), Kaganovich, Molotov, Voroshilov, Ordjonikidze, Kossior, Postyshev, Eikhe, Yezhov, and Beria. Again, in spite of the protection and complicity of high officials everywhere, they had been unable to carry out any overt act, successfully or unsuccessfully, with the sole exception of the attempt to murder Molotov, and even this did not sound very professional….
Vyshinsky had to deal with the fact that Zinoviev and his colleagues, who had supposedly made full confessions, had (as it now appeared) concealed much of the story. He said flatly, as we saw, that they "lied and deceived when they already had one foot in the grave."
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 166

RAKOVSKY WAS A TROT TRAITOR FROM THE START AND DID A FAKE 1934 RECANTATION

Becoming attached to Trotsky's views, he [Rakovsky] lost his high posts and from 1924 to 1927 was Soviet Charge d'Affaires in London and then ambassador to Paris. He was recalled to Moscow in November 1927 and was expelled from the Central Committee in the same month, for supporting the Left opposition. He defended the opposition viewpoint at the 15th Party Congress. In January 1928, he was expelled from the Party and deported to Astrakhan, and later to Barnaul. It had not been until February 1934, one of the very last, that he had recanted and been readmitted to the Party. He had been implicated in the Pyatakov Trial and was arrested on Jan. 27, 1937.
…now confessed that he had been a British spy since 1924. His disavowal of Trotskyism in February 1934 had been designed to deceive the Party.
…He himself became a Japanese as well as a British spy.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 360

After his [Rakovsky] capitulation in 1934, he went so far as to write an article during the Trial of the Sixteen demanding the execution of "these agents of the German Gestapo, the organizers of the attempt on the life of our dear leader, Comrade Stalin."
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 54

BUKHARIN SAYS TROTSKY SPOKE OF CEDING THE UKRAINE BUT DID NOT CONSIDER IT BINDING

Bukharin admitted that Trotsky had spoken of ceding the Ukraine, but that he himself "did not consider Trotsky's instructions as binding on me"
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 368

MENZHINSKY, KUIBYSHEV, PESHKOV AND GORKY MURDERED JUST BEFORE KIROV

There were four of these alleged murders. First, in May 1934, Menzhinsky, Yagoda's predecessor as head of the OGPU, had been killed by his favorite doctor, Kazakov, under instructions from Levin. Then, in the same month, Gorky's son Peshkov had been killed by Levin & Pletnev. Next came Kuibyshev, killed by Levin & Pletnev; and finally Gorky himself, killed by Levin & Pletnev.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 375

BULANOV TESTIFIED AGAINST FORMER NKVD HEADS AND HOW YAGODA COVERED UP

Bulanov, a veteran NKVD officer–he had been in charge of the expulsion of Trotsky from the country in January 1929–testified to the special version of the planned coup involving Yenukidze, Yagoda, and the seizure of the Kremlin, and developed its links with the Tukhachevsky group and with Karakhan's German negotiations. He went on to say that Yagoda had protected Uglanov and Smirnov in their interrogations and had ordered no search to be made when Zinoviev and Kamenev were arrested. He implicated all the old NKVD chiefs in the plot, and described how Yagoda had ordered Zaporozhets to "facilitate" Kirov's assassination, and how Zaporozhets had released Nikolayev on his first attempt and later killed Borisov.
…Yagoda was, Bulanov said, "exceptionally" interested in poisons. His laboratory is believed to have really existed (Yagoda had been a pharmacist by profession before the Revolution). Given the characters and the motivations, this is one crime which appeared to be possibly genuine.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 380

YAGODA COVERED UP FOR OTHERS, PUT TRAITORS IN HIGH PLACES & FRAMED OTHERS

He [Yagoda] confirmed his long connection with the Rightist plotters from 1928 on. In the early days, he had supplied Rykov & Bukharin with tendentious material from the NKVD secret files, for use in their anti-Party struggle. It was due to his activities in the NKVD that the Rights, and the "bloc of Rights and Trotskyites," had not been uncovered and liquidated until 1937-1938. He had appointed conspirators in all the leading posts in the Secret Police –Molchanov (on Tomsky's express instructions), Prokofiev, Mironov, Shanin, Pauker, Gay, and others. He had joined in Yenukidze's plot to seize the Kremlin, and it was on Yenukidze's orders that he had arranged for Zaporozhet's collaboration in the Kirov assassination.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 381

After Kirov was assassinated, the investigation was being conducted by Agranov, Yagoda's assistant, who was falsifying everything. Stalin was becoming suspicious about this and had a commission appointed from the Central Committee CPSU to investigate the NKVD. In the personal files of Yagoda, this commission found a right-wing clique opposing the party and at the same time, files of Tsarist Secret Police and their agents that were still operational. Agents of Tsarist Police, like Zelensky, Zubarev, and Ivanov, were agents in Tsarist times. Where do you think these agents under Soviet power were? Zelensky was the Secretary of the Moscow Party Committee. Zubarev was the Second Secretary of the Sverdlovsk Party Committee. Ivanov was the Secretary of the North-Caucasus District Party Committee, and on the instructions of Bukharin, organized the hunger epidemic from 1928 to 1934, in order that the people would be dissatisfied with Soviet power. These are the kind of people that were supported and helped by Yagoda, and before him, Bukharin!
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 74

This must explain the fact that the obliging Yagoda inserted false accusations of collaboration with the tsarist security services in the dossiers of many old Bolsheviks.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 317

…In March, 1934, a serious discovery was made in the Kremlin. A pharmacist employed in the Kremlin nursing-home–Moise Rosenfeld, a nephew of Kamenev's–had proposed to poison several members of the Politburo. He had also made plans for a military coup d'etat, thanks to the complicity of the military commandant of the Kremlin, Peterson, a Lett. They were denounced by a Confederate, Pastukhov. The opposition insisted that the entire conspiracy was a provocation engineered by Pastukhov, an agent of Yagoda's. Rosenfeld and the conspirators confessed that they wanted "to get rid of Stalin and his Politburo and regenerate the leadership of the Party."
…During this period–a crucial period for him–Stalin, who trusted no one, subjected Rosenfeld and his accomplices to a personal interrogation. His confidence in Yagoda, who after Menzhinsky's death had become the head of the G.P.U., with the title of "Commissary-General for the security of the State" was not complete. Menzhinsky's private diary, found by Redens and submitted to Stalin, told the latter that he could not place absolute confidence in the heads of the secret police.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 173

YAGODA ADMITS KILLING MENZHINSKY

Yagoda went on to admit to killing Menzhinsky and to reluctantly becoming involved in the murder of Gorky, at Yenukidze's insistence.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 382

With the help of his associate Bulanov, Yagoda tried hard to get rid of Menzhinsky, who suffered greatly from asthma and bronchitis. After getting rid of Menzhinsky, this faithful comrade of Lenin, through poison, Yagoda was now free to do his evil deeds, while masking himself in the cloak of a Bolshevik, patriot, and falsifying documents in court. Practically all of the people that were sentenced and shot had the signature and hand of Yagoda on them. Letters from innocent arrested comrades, written to Stalin, never reached the eyes of Stalin…but were utilized to fabricate threats against Stalin… this giving credence to their arrest and execution.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 73

KAZAKOV ADMITS TO HELPING KILL MENZHINSKY

Kazakov, the remaining doctor, confirmed his part in Menzhinsky's death.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 385

MAXIMOV-DIKOVSKY ADMITS HE HELPED KILL KUIBYSHEV

The last accused, Maximov-Dikovsky, was then examined. He admitted having been placed in Kuibyshev's secretariat by Yenukidze, and explained how he had helped the medical killers to dispose of Kuibyshev.

Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 386

YAGODA ADMITS HELPING TO KILL KUIBYSCHEV AND GORKY

We must turn rather, to the details. In the first place, there is Yagoda's evidence of the morning of March 8, when he pleaded guilty to the murders of Kuibyshev and Gorky, and not guilty to those of Peshkov and Menzhinsky.
On the whole, Yagoda's initial evidence seems to have been true, or as true as was possible in the circumstances, on most other matters.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 387

One day, Yagoda came to visit Gorky at his dacha on Gorky Hills. I was there to go with Yagoda. The party was taking place until about 4 a.m.. I could not understand what this uncouth Yagoda had in common with this literary genius, Gorky. It became known to me later. Yagoda and his friends were pouring drinks for Gorky from all the bottles, mixing them together. After Gorky became completely drunk, Yagoda and his friends threw Gorky into the snow where he froze all night. There, Gorky contracted inflammation of the lungs. In the end, even the "doctors" of Yagoda helped to have death come sooner for Gorky.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 73

BAKAEV SAYS ZINOVIEV GAVE HIM ORDERS TO KILL STALIN

4. The United Center of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite counter-revolutionary bloc set as its fundamental and principal task the killing of Comrades Stalin, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Kirov, Ordjonikidze, Zhdanov, Kossior, Postyshev. The killing of Comrade Stalin was decided upon at the same time as the killing of Comrade Kirov. To this end the center organized in Moscow several strictly conspiratorial terrorist groups. To co-ordinate the activities of these groups the all-union Trotskyite-Zinovievite center set up a Moscow center consisting of the Zinovievites–Bakayev, Reingold, Pikel, and the Trotskyites, Mrachkovsky and Dreitzer. Bakayev was entrusted with the direct organization of the killing of Comrade Stalin. At the investigation Bakayev admitted his role as direct organizer of terrorist acts.
He testified:
"I recognize that Zinoviev entrusted me personally with organizing the killing of Comrade Stalin in Moscow.
Further:
On Zinoviev's instructions, the Zinovievites, Reingold, Bogdan, and Faivilovich, who consented to take part in a terrorist act, were recruited by me to organize a terrorist act against Stalin.
Not only we, but Smirnov and Mrachkovsky were also preparing to kill Stalin, having received a direct order from Trotsky to commit a terrorist act."
(Bakaev, Record of Interrogation, July 17-19, 1936)
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 172-173

PIKEL STATES THAT BAKAEV WAS ORGANIZING PEOPLE TO KILL STALIN

Pikel, an active member of the Zinovievite center and Zinoviev's former chef-de-cabinet, stated at the investigation that Bakaev displayed feverish activity in organizing the attempt, putting all his energy into the matter.
Pikel stated:
"Bakaev not only guided the preparation of the terrorist act in the general sense but went out personally to the observation point, checked up on people and inspired them…. In the summer of 1934 I was once with Reingold.__Reingold told me that the observations of Stalin had yielded positive results and that on that very day Bakaev had left in his own automobile with a group of terrorists to kill Stalin. Reingold was nervous because they had been away for so long. I again encountered Reingold on the evening of the same day, and he told me that Stalin's Guard had prevented the terrorist act from being carried out, frightening the participants in the organization (as he expressed himself)."
"Pikel, Record of Interrogation, July 22, 1936)
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 173

REINGOLD SAYS KAMENEV ADVOCATED KILLING THE TOP LEADERS

Analogous testimony was also given by the Zinovievite, Reingold, a member of the Moscow terrorist center:
"I met Kamenev in the second part of 1933, and also in 1934, at his apartment on Karmanitsky Lane in Moscow. Kamenev evaluated the situation in much the same way as Zinoviev but reinforced his own conclusions by an analysis of the economic and political situation in the country. Kamenev came to the conclusion that "affairs, in any case are not headed for catastrophe but for an improvement; therefore, all expectations of an automatic collapse are groundless, and the existing leadership is granite which is too hard to permit any expectation that it will split of itself." From this Kamenev concluded that 'it was necessary to split the leadership.'
Kamenev frequently quoted Trotsky's saying that 'the summit is everything and therefore the summit must be removed.'
Kamenev proved the need for a terrorist struggle and, above all, for the killing of Stalin, pointing out that this was the only way to reach power. I especially remember his cynical remark that 'heads are distinguished by the fact that they don't grow back on.
Kamenev ordered terrorist fighters to be trained. He said that the new bloc differed from the former Opposition bloc by its adoption of active terrorism.
And further:
I have already testified above that the Trotskyite-Zinovievite united bloc did not have any new political program. It was based on the old decrepit platform, and none of the leaders of the bloc were concerned with or interested in working out any sort of unified and coherent political programme. The only unifying feature of this whole ill-assorted bloc was the idea of a terrorist struggle against the leaders of the party and the government.
Indeed, the bloc was a counter-revolutionary, terrorist band of killers striving by any and all means to take power into their own hands."
(Reingold, Record of Interrogation, July 9, 1936)
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 177-178

[An 18 January 1935 Control Committee letter to all party organization says], “As can be seen, all of this testimony by the arrested trotskyites and zinovievites only indicates that, lacking any positive political platform acceptable to the toilers of our country, without any influence upon the masses or contact with them, forced to recognize the decisive successes of our party and their own total political bankruptcy, they turned into an unprincipled band of killers whose only ‘principle’ was the careerist slogan of worming their way into power using any means available.
Their decisions as to the ways and means of struggling were directly connected with this ‘principle’ of theirs.
Practicing double dealing on a broad scale, as a system of relationships with the party and the Soviet government, they extended it to monstrous proportions. They created a whole system of double dealing, one to be envied by…any secret police, with its whole staff of spies, provocateurs, and diversionists.
Considering double dealing to be the fundamental method for attaining power, the trotskyites and zinovievites made broad use of it in connection with their terrorist activities.
Painstakingly concealing their infamous, terrorist intentions, every day spitting on their own views and convictions, every day swearing fidelity to the party and setting themselves up as adherents of the Central Committee line, they counted on success in achieving power, after murdering the main leaders of the party and the government, because in the eyes of the party and the broad masses of toilers they would appear to have fully repented and to have recognized their errors and crimes–adherents of the leninist-stalinist policy.
That is precisely why they took particular pains to conceal their terrorist activities.
In line with this, Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev, while issuing directives to the executors of terrorist acts, at the same time gave them detailed instructions to conceal any and all ties with trotskyite-zinovievite organizations.”
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 178

REINGOLD SAYS ZINOVIEV SAID THEY SHOULD DENY EVERYTHING, ESPECIALLY TERRORIST ACTS

It his testimony, for example, Reingold told of the following directives from Zinoviev:
“In 1933-34 Zinoviev told me face to face in his apartment–the main practical task is to arrange terrorist work in such a conspiratorial manner as not to compromise oneself in any way. In an investigation the main thing is to stubbornly deny any ties at all with the organization. If accused of terrorism–deny this categorically, using the argument that terror is inconsistent with the views of Bolshevik Marxists.”
(Reingold, Record of Interrogation, July 17, 1936)
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 179

[The summary in an 18 January 1935 Control Committee letter to all party organization says], “Trotsky displayed particular concern about this. He gave instructions that, if a terrorist act was carried out, the trotskyites must disassociate themselves from it and ‘take a position analogous to that taken by the Social Revolutionary central committee with respect to Miss Kaplan’ who shot Lenin.”

McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 179

REINGOLD SAYS ZINOVIEV AND KAMENEV DID FAKE RECANTATIONS, ESP AT 17TH CONGRESS

On the same matters Reingold testified as follows at the investigation:
“In addition to the deeply conspiratorial work on preparing terrorist acts against the party and government leadership, Zinoviev and Kamenev devoted every effort to winning the confidence of the Central Committee and the party and, insofar as this was possible, to occupying leading positions in the party.
The statements of Kamenev and Zinoviev in the press, emphasizing their devotion to the party and their repudiation of the past, were directly aimed at this. In meetings with party leaders Zinoviev and Kamenev in every way stressed their loyalty and devotion to the Central Committee of the party and their repudiation of their former errors. The speeches of Zinoviev and Kamenev from the rostrum of the 17th Congress served the same purpose. Here Zinoviev and Kamenev counted on the success of the terrorist act against the leaders of the party and government directly opening up to them–persons who had been pardoned by the party and accepted into its ranks under Stalin–a straight road to the leadership of the party and the country.
Zinoviev’s and Kamenev’s deeply concealed calculations of ways to power took the form of this Machiavellian plan of struggle.”
(Reingold, Record of Interrogation, July 17, 1936)
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 180

[At the closed joint meeting of the ECCI party organization and the ECCI Komsomol organization on 28 December 1934]
KNORIN: …We broke with Zinoviev not because we wanted to lay down arms before the party. We broke with Zinoviev because he capitulated to the party. We knew that this capitulation was a false one, that he deceived the party.
Chase, William J., Enemies Within the Gates?, translated by Vadim A. Staklo, New Haven: Yale University Press, c2001, p. 65.

STALIN REMINDS RADEK OF A TUKHACHEVSKY-TROTSKY TAKEOVER PLOT IN THE PAST

But now the conversation took a turn for which Radek was not prepared. Stalin began to talk of army loyalty and of Tukhachevsky. He reminded Radek of what happened in 1924, when the Politburo relieved Trotsky of his post as President of the War Council.
“You remember the letter of Antonov Ovseenko” (Political head of the army at that time) “threatening us with trouble and protests from the army at Trotsky’s dismissal. The ‘ignoble dismissal of the Soviet Carnot’ as he called it?”
“There were certain meetings of senior officers,” Stalin went on, “and they even spoke of arresting members of the Politburo.”
Radek reminded him that Zinoviev, not Stalin, had been the target.

“It was a question of arresting all the Politburo, and of electing a new Secretary-General in my place. Trotsky, wasn’t it?”
“Many foolish things were said, I really don’t remember.”
“Then I’ll refresh your memory. A young Komandarm, Tukhachevsky, was to have had the job of carrying out the putsch by agreement with Trotsky.”
Radek protested. “You know very well that Trotsky refused that sort of discussion. He repeated many times that he would never agree to open the door to a third force that could mean the end of the Soviet state.”
“I wonder whether Tukhachevsky would take the same position today,” pursued Stalin.
“What’s your personal opinion of him?”
“What does it matter? I’m only a figure from the past.”
“This concerns the past. According to my evidence, you were given the job of liaison with Tukhachevsky and his associates, by Trotsky.”
“To tell him ‘no’ to the proposal Trotsky had been offered. But things didn’t go so far.”
“To tell him ‘no’, but a ‘no’ with nuances, a ‘no’ that, in case of need, very well may have been ‘yes.’”
“How you exaggerate! You are seeing phantasmal plots from the past. Even if they had existed, which they didn’t, it was more than ten years ago. Why are you so keen on stirring up the dust on the archives?”
“Because there are germs in it. If it isn’t disinfected, there’s a risk of an epidemic. To be specific, I received some time ago from our Paris Embassy a book about Tukhachevsky by a French officer. The author shared his captivity in Germany, in the fortress of Ingolstadt. A very curious little book. I’ll have it sent to you. Anyway, it looks as though Tukhachevsky told that French officer that he joined the Party to try to profit from the next war, and perhaps to play the role of Bonaparte….”
“Pure fiction! There’s been a civil war since then; Poland, Antonov’s revolt, Kronstadt–and Tukhachevsky never wavered. He’s become a convinced Marxist–as you very well know.”
“Consider. You’re very fond of quoting the history of the French Revolution–”
“Marx wasn’t the cause of that….”
Has it never occurred to you that Tukhachevsky put down the Tambov and Kronstadt revolts just as Bonaparte crushed the Vendemiaire?”
Radek countered with more parallels from the French Revolution. “You could just as well say that Tukhachevsky’s crushing of the Antonov revolt was like Hoche’s treatment of la Vendee. And Hoche was no Bonaparte.”
He produced more apt parallels to deal with Stalin’s point about the Kronstadt incident.
Stalin was skeptical. “I’d still like to know what you really think of Tukhachevsky.”…
“Well,” Radek said finally, “I think he’s a sincere believer in our system and an outstanding officer. And if I didn’t think it risky to praise anyone unduly in front of you, I would say he had a gift for generalship, just as some people have a gift for mathematics.”
“On that last I think we’re in agreement,” said Stalin. “Nor are we alone in thinking so. Would you like to know what your friend Trotsky wrote in his rag?”
He felt in his pocket and pulled out a quotation from Trotsky’s article. “By his ill-fated policy, Stalin is making the task of the Bonapartist elements easier. If matters came to conflict, a man like Tukhachevsky would have little trouble in overthrowing the regime, with the help of all the anti-Soviet elements.”
Radek shrugged, as if all this was hardly worth recalling.
“These are my fears,” Stalin hastened to add, “but they do represent the hopes of Trotsky. As far as I’m concerned I would like nothing better than to forget this ancient history.

Alexandrov, Victor. The Tukhachevsky Affair. London: Macdonald, 1963, p. 31-34

YAGODA UNCOVERS CRIMINAL PLANS BY RADEK

Yagoda the toxicologist knew all this. The idea of resorting to his own special methods to get rid of Stalin and his rival [Yezhov] simultaneously was to occupy long hours of his sleepless nights. But Stalin must have guessed his meditations.
Yagoda was caught up in his own police machinery and could see only one way out; to re-double his zeal and make himself irreplaceable, at least for the time needed to get rid of Yezhov. He knew what he wanted: all he had to do was to invent what might have taken place between Radek and Nikolai [German political envoy and acquaintance of Radek's during the Russo-German military-industrial collaboration 1920-21. Meets Radek as Stalin's envoy at Oliva talks. After a long and dramatic talk with Orlov, of the state security, Yagoda obtained a full "report" on the Oliva meeting.
In it Orlov stated that while in conversation with Schwebel, he had been able to overhear some important snatches of the Radek-Nikolai interview. Radek had told the colonel:
(1) That a conspiracy was being hatched against Stalin instigated by the Opposition in collaboration with the military group, Tukhachevsky, Kork, Putna, Yakir, Gamarnik.
(2) That he, Radek, was playing the role of political leader, with Pyatakov as second.
(3) That Pyatakov had been to see Trotsky in Norway for his approval, and that he had also been to Copenhagen to see Trotsky's son, Sedov.
(4) That the conspirators offered to conclude an economic and political agreement with the German government, on condition the said government undertook not to take advantage of possible disturbances during the coup d'etat to attack the USSR.
Armed with this fantastic report, Yagoda demanded permission to arrest Radek, which was given forthwith.
Alexandrov, Victor. The Tukhachevsky Affair. London: Macdonald, 1963, p. 91

RADEK REMINDS THE COURT THAT HE IS THE ONE WHO REVEALED THE TROT CONSPIRACY

[In the correspondence from Joseph Davies, U.S. ambassador in Moscow, to Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, are to be found many details relating to the Tukhachevsky affair]. "He [Radek] had several sharp colloquies with the prosecutor and did not come off second best. Throughout his testimony he gave indications of spirit, but in his final plea to the court he asked them to remember that it was he who disclosed the Trotsky conspiracy, with the implication that but for him that which the government desired to establish would not have been forthcoming."
Alexandrov, Victor. The Tukhachevsky Affair. London: Macdonald, 1963, p. 130

VYSHINSKY TRIES TO GLOSS OVER MENTION OF TUKHASHEVSKY'S NAME AT THE RADEK TRIAL

"In the course of the Radek trial the names of general Putna and Marshal Tukhachevsky were mentioned. Great care at the time was taken by Vyshinsky, the prosecutor, to absolve Tukhachevsky from all possible criminal complicity.
Alexandrov, Victor. The Tukhachevsky Affair. London: Macdonald, 1963, p. 130

POLITBURO LEFT THE TRIAL DECISIONS TO THE COURT MEMBERS

He [Mekhlis] shrugged his shoulders and said the Instantsia had decided not to foist a decision on the Court. Ulrich will. I understood that they did not want to take any formal responsibility, but that the lives of the defendants would not be spared.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 238

DEFENDANTS MISTAKENLY THINK PARDON OF OTHERS WILL BE APPLIED TO THEM

Stalin's promises to spare the lives of the defendants [in the Zinoviev trial] may have been given weight by a decree published in February 1936 by the Central Executive Committee freeing the defendants of the "Promparty" Trial from further time in prison. This amnesty was linked to their "full repentance…with regard to their earlier crimes against the Soviet regime" and their successful work performed in prison. It was also well known that the Academician Tarle, who, according to the material of the same trial had been marked by the "Promparty" for the post of Foreign Minister, was living at liberty, pursuing scientific studies, and completing the preparations for the publication of his book, Napoleon.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 36

1937 DEFENDANTS WERE GIVEN THE RIGHT TO APPEAL FOR CLEMENCY

An announcement was made that all the defendants had refused the services of defense lawyers.
Five days before the trial began, the Central Executive Committee passed a decree which restored the right of those condemned on charges of terror to appeal for clemency.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 37

PYATAKOV & RADEK STRONGLY ATTACK THE ZINOVIEV DEFENDANTS TO COVER THEMSELVES

Particularly shameful were the articles by Pyatakov and Radek. "After the pure, fresh air which our beautiful, flourishing socialist country has been breathing," Pyatakov wrote bombastically, "suddenly we were enveloped by the overwhelming stench emanating from this political morgue. People who long ago became political corpses are rotting and decomposing, poisoning the air around themselves. And it is precisely in this final stage of decomposition that they have become not only lonesome, but socially dangerous…. There are no words which can fully express one's indignation and loathing. These are people who have lost their last human characteristics. They must be destroyed like carrion which infects the pure and refreshing air of our Soviet land, like dangerous carrion which is capable of bringing death to our leaders and which has already brought death to one of the best people in our land –such a wonderful comrade and leader as Kirov."
Radek used similar expressions to state his attitude toward the trial. "From the trial room in which the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR investigating the case of

Zinoviev, Kamenev, Mrachkovsky, and Smirnov, the case of the absent Trotsky," he wrote, "a corpse-like stench engulfs the whole world. The people who raised their weapons against the lives of the favorite leaders of the proletariat must pay with their heads for their boundless guilt."
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 67

BUKHARIN DENOUNCES THOSE SHOT AT THE 1937 TRIAL TO COVER HIMSELF

Using the lexicon of the current newspapers, Bukharin expressed in his letter his enthusiastic satisfaction with the trial's results [WHICH TRIAL]: "That the bastards have been shot–wonderful: the air immediately became fresher. The trial will have the most enormous international significance. This is an aspen stake –a real one–driven into the grave of the bloody turkey, filled with arrogance which led him [Trotsky] into the fascist secret police."
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 73

…Bukharin sent a letter to Voroshilov, in which he used Vyshinsky's terminology: "I am terribly happy that they shot the dogs. Trotsky has been politically destroyed by the trial, and this will soon become absolutely clear."
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 75

STALIN SAYS BUKHARIN CAN'T SAY HE HAS NOT BEEN TRUSTED AND RYKOV AGREES

Stalin said to Bukharin: "I'm not saying anything personally about you. Perhaps you're right, and perhaps you're not. But you can't come here and say that you have not been trusted, that there is no belief in my, Bukharin's, sincerity. And do you want, Comrade Bukharin, that we take you at your word? And if you don't want that, then don't get upset because we have raised this question at a plenum of the Central Committee…. And you cannot frighten us with your tears or with suicide.
After Stalin had spoken, the floor was given to Rykov, who announced that he "must fully and completely acknowledge the correctness of the points" made in Stalin's speech, "correctness in the sense that we live in a period when double-dealing and deception of the party have reached such dimensions and have assumed such a sophisticated and pathological character, that, of course, it would be absolutely baffling if you took Bukharin or me at our word."
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 103

RYKOV REALIZES HE IS FINISHED WHEN HIS CLOSEST ALLIES TESTIFY AGAINST HIM

That Rykov had lost any hope for a favorable outcome of their case was caused in large part by the fact that on the eve of the plenum he had been brought to a face-to-face confrontation with his former closest colleagues, Nesterov, Radin, Kotov, and Schmidt. In the presence of Stalin and other members of the Politburo, the participants in the confrontation testified that

after 1929, the “center of rightists” continued its work and in 1932 developed a program, the authorship of which was attributed to Ryutin as a means of camouflage.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 210

SARKISOV AND BAGIROV SAY EXPLOSIONS WERE DONE DELIBERATELY NOT BY NEGLIGENCE

Only the speeches made by Sarkisov and Bagirov contributed to deepening the psychosis over wrecking….
Bagirov announced that previously, explosions at oil fields had been considered the results of negligence, but “now the people under arrest are testifying that this was not negligence or dereliction of duty, but was done consciously.”
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 254

SMIRNOV’S WIFE, SAFANOVA, SAYS HE IS GUILTY

Smirnov told his interrogator that he had met Trotsky’s son in Berlin and exchanged letters with Trotsky. But terrorism had never been mentioned in the exchange as a method of political struggle. There had been no “instructions,” no “center,” and even less a terrorist conspiracy. But Safanova [Smirnov’s wife] said, when the two were confronted: “Ivan, the talk about terrorism took place in my apartment; you yourself talked about killing Stalin.” The confrontation took place one week before the opening of the trial, and Safanova repeated her accusation against her husband in open court. Smirnov, who had been holding out for so long, now admitted everything and was duly executed.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 136

RADEK TELLS HIS WIFE THAT HE WILL ADMIT HIS GUILT IN COURT

In this regard, Karl Radek’s letter to his wife is quite characteristic.
Knowing that the letter would be read by the interrogators… Radek quite transparently gave to understand what was the true value of the “unexpected” and “intolerable” admissions that he had to “confirm” in court. A draft of this letter has been preserved in the archives; it is dated January 20, 1937:
“During the next few days there will be the trial against the Zinoviev-Trotsky organization. I have asked for a meeting with you so that what will happen in court should not come as a shock to you. Listen to what I shall tell you and don’t ask any questions. I have admitted that I was a member of the center, that I participated in terrorist activities and about links with the German and Japanese governments, and shall confirm this in court…. It means that this is the truth. If this truth is intolerable as far as you are concerned, then try to remember me as you knew me.
But you have no reason or the right to put any doubt whatsoever concerning the truth as it will be established by the court. If you think it over carefully, you will understand that in view of what will happen in court, and in particular the international part of the revelations, I had no right to hide the true from the world.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 312

RADEK TESTIFIES AGAINST THE RIGHTISTS AND ZINOVIEVISTS AND SAYS WHO KILLED KIROV

At the end of 1936 and the beginning of 1937, a number of people were arrested, including Radek, Astrov, Padin, and Nesterov. Radek gave depositions concerning the connections of the leaders of the former “right opposition” with the supporters of Trotsky and Zinoviev, their terrorist activity, and the participation of Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky in the murder of Kirov….
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 327

MANY PEOPLE MAKE DEPOSITIONS AGAINST BUKHARIN

After these confrontations, new and numerous arrests of former rightists and other opposition members followed, from which the “necessary” depositions on Bukharin and Rykov were obtained. The proceedings of the interrogations of these persons were sent to Bukharin in his apartment. For only one day, Feb. 16, 1937, Bukharin received 20 such depositions. In his letters to Stalin and the Politburo, Bukharin denied the statements of all these individuals and protested against his persecution in the press, against the fact that Pravda was already proceeding from the “proven nature” of unprecedentedly grave charges against the “leaders of the right,” and against the fact that in Pravda he had been “proclaimed an agent of the Gestapo.”
For a day prior to the opening of the plenum in 1937, confrontations were held in the Politburo between Rykov and the previously arrested Radin, Schmidt, and Nesterov. Radin testified that in 1932 Rykov allegedly provided the “right” with a directive on the use of terror and wrecking. Schmidt provided depositions concerning the fact that after 1929 the “center of the right continued to operate,” that in 1932 a meeting of the “center” was allegedly held that considered the question of “the need for the violent elimination of the AUCP (B) leadership–Stalin et al.”
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 328

BULANOV SAYS HE AXED PEOPLE ILLEGALLY UNDER THE ORDERS OF TROTSKY & BUKHARIN

Therefore, his secretary Bulanov during the court proceedings humbly admitted: “All these anti-state activities, I carried out on behalf of Trotsky & Bukharin. On their directives, we killed people, crippled people, and jailed people–people that were absolutely innocent. We cannot be forgiven. Let not Bukharin shake his head here…he is ready to drown all of us, but he is a vicious crook and an enemy of our era. It is they–Trotsky and Bukharin–who told us that we must kill Menzhinsky and Kuibyshev, Peshkov and Gorky.”
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 74

YAGODA WORKED HARD TO UNDERMINE THE SYSTEM AND GOVERNMENT

There were many such provocations, instigated by Yagoda in order to get rid of people loyal to the State, to Stalin and Socialism.
One more example. Once I asked a well-known flyer, Gromov, why it was that they arrested so many engineers-designers of the Flying Institute. He very calmly said:
“Arrests were being made because, under goading by Yagoda, plus foreign agents working in the Institute, the designers-builders of airplanes used to write protests against each other, praising their own designs while criticizing others. This was the calamity that was masterminded by enemies in order that the aviation industry of the USSR would suffer from backwardness in design and production.”
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 76

[In a June 1937 speech Stalin said], The others. Enukidze, Karakhan I already mentioned. Yagoda–a spy, and being in charge of GPU (Internal Security) he promoted spying for Germany. He conveyed to the Germans what the GPU has and how it counteracts German provocateurs and spies. He sent Intelligence agents across the borders, on the pretext that they were going on holidays, and these names were given to the German General Staff. Now the German Counter-intelligence agency, knowing these names, set a trap and caught these people. They were made to spy for Germany, or otherwise they would be exposed to the Central Committee CPSU. Yagoda told them: “I know the Germans have you in their clutches–you have a choice, either you will be my people, devoted to me and you shall work as I direct you, blindly follow my instructions, or I will expose you to the Central Committee CPSU–that you are German spies.” That is the way he started with Gayem–the German-Japanese spy. Yagoda admitted this himself at the trial.
(At that Jan. 1937 trial, there were scores of foreign journalists, ambassadors, and other political observers. None of them wrote at that time that the trial was staged. The American Ambassador himself stated that the trial was in harmony with international law and that the defendants themselves confessed without any urging from the prosecution or that torture was seen on any of the accused–Editors) Thus, those had to obey and carry out everything that Yagoda demanded–those were his own people. These people themselves confessed. He also did the same with Volovich–a German spy. The same was with Paukero—a spy for Germany, he admitted himself, already from 1923. It was evident that Yagoda was the organizer.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 109-110

… Yagoda, the former head of the NKVD (who had prepared the evidence for the first purge trial) figured in the third of these well-publicized trials. Yagoda was charged with collaboration with German and Japanese intelligence agencies, and, in conspiracy with the others, of falsely accusing many honest revolutionaries of counter-revolutionary activities and thus being responsible for their wrongful execution….
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 239

THE 1937 TRIAL WAS FAIR TOWARD THE DEFENDANTS

Within the circumscriptions of Russian procedure the trials were fair enough. The defendants had the right of legal defense; they had the privilege of cross-examining witnesses; they

talked with the greatest vivacity and freedom. The attitude of the court was severe but not coercive. The closing speeches of the prosecutor, Vyshinsky, were violent, but during the testimony he treated the defendants with reasonable consideration. For instance:
VYSHINSKY: Accused Pyatakov, perhaps you are tired.
PYATAKOV: No, I can go on.
THE PRESIDENT: I propose to adjourn at 3:00.
VYSHINSKY: I do not object, but perhaps it is tiring for the accused?
PYATAKOV: How much longer?
THE PRESIDENT: 50 minutes.
Vyshinsky then resumes the questioning.
The confessions, in both the first and second trials, bewildered observers because it seemed literally inconceivable (a) that men like Sokolnikov, Smirnov, Radek, Serebryakov, and so on could possibly be traitors, and (b) that they should have so meekly gone to conviction without a struggle. Point (a) we shall come to later on. As to point (b), the defendants did struggle. It lasted during all the preliminary examination which was prolonged. Radek held out 2 1/2 months. Muralov, an old Trotskyist, held out eight months. Radek says of him, “I was convinced he would rather perish in prison than say a single word.”
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 553

1937 TRIAL SHOWS THAT SABOTAGE DID OCCUR IN MANY AREAS

The plot developed although inefficiently. Sabotage did occur. Trains were wrecked, soldiers killed. Details came out in testimony that make the flesh creep; officials of the railroads deliberately slowing up car loadings, disrupting freight schedules, stalling trains (the chief train wrecker, Knyazev, confessed to getting 15,000 rubles from a Japanese agent); engineers ruining chemical factories by burning out their furnaces and sabotaging work in the mines; one defendant, Shestov, described how he ordered the murder of an honest official who suspected sabotage in the coal industry.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 557

An element of paranoia may have actuated some of these arrests and trials. But without question the world’s first socialist society’s enemies, both outside and inside the USSR, did engage in actions designed to weaken it, and popular mobilization against saboteurs did reduce the level of both active sabotage and passive resistance to socialist construction.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 227

THE CONFESSIONS AT THE 1936 TRIAL WERE GENUINE AND VOLUNTARY

As I have had the advantage of having studied Soviet legal procedure pretty thoroughly for some years past, and also of having attended the trial in question, I would like to state and answer as briefly and as clearly as I can the main criticisms that have been made in Great Britain.
Probably the most general and important criticism that has been made is the simple one that it is incredible that men should confess openly and fully to crimes of the gravity of those in question here. Associated with this criticism there comes the suggestion that the confessions

must have been extracted by “third-degree” or other improper means. I can deal with these two points more or less together, starting with the more general one….
If, then, it may be taken to be normal, in the USSR or anywhere else, for accused persons to know in their own minds that they are guilty to consider whether they will admit their guilt, and in some cases at any rate to decide to admit it when they see that the prosecution can prove it quite clearly if they do not, and we proceed to consider the present case in the light of this act, we arrive at several somewhat interesting conclusions. The first is this, that if one studies the matter revealed in the indictment itself, the questions put to the accused by Vyshinsky (the public prosecutor), and their answers, the long uninterrupted narrative statements made by most of the accused in their examination by Vyshinsky, and still more the occasionally vigorous contradictions of one accused by another when some point was being thrashed out by men concerned in the course of these examinations (which occupied practically three out of the five days of the hearing), one forms the view… that the evidence available against each of the accused, including in that evidence, as every European jurisdiction would without hesitation include, the testimony of others of the accused, was evidence of real strength and substance. When I use the moderate phrase, “one forms the view,” I do so because it is of crucial importance, when attempting to criticize or to appraise this case in general or the actual strength of the prosecution’s evidence in particular, to bear in mind that, as all the accused pleaded guilty to the whole charge (with definite but minor reservations on the part of two of them, Smirnov and Holtzman), there was no necessity either for the prosecution to adduce in open court all the available evidence going to establish the whole case, or for the court to consider and weigh the evidence against the other 14 of the accused for the purpose of deciding their guilt.
Pritt, Denis Nowell. At the Moscow Trial, New York City: International Publishers, 1937, p. 4, 6

…the evidence was pretty strong, that the accused when confronted with it, having the opportunity to consider it and to make up their minds, elected to plead guilty. They were experienced, intelligent, and educated men, and they said that they were guilty; that might well be the end of the matter. But for many of the critics it seems rather to be the beginning; for the confessions, they suggest, may have been extorted by brutality, by threats, or by promises. We are asked to assume this, apparently; assuming what one desires to prove is one of the oldest of the unconscious tricks of criticism, and certainly saves a good deal of trouble. We know, of course, that the obtaining of confessions by such methods is only too common in too many countries;… but what iota of evidence is there that anything of the sort actually happened in this case?
Pritt, Denis Nowell. At the Moscow Trial, New York City: International Publishers, 1937, p. 9

It is sufficient, I think, in this instance to confine oneself to considering the circumstances of the present case. It seems plain to me, on a number of different grounds, that anything in the nature of forced confessions is intrinsically impossible. In respect of most of the accused, it must be remembered that we are considering the case of stubborn and infinitely experienced revolutionaries, men who knew from the best of all sources, that of personal contact, most kinds of prisons and most kinds of investigations, and who were also fully acquainted above all with the mentality and outlook of the authorities who were dealing with this case. If it were the practice of the People’s Commissariat for Home Affairs, which has taken over the staff and the functions of the GPU, to extract confessions by false promises of lenient treatment (which I do not know and do not believe, but which others who equally do not know are at

liberty to believe), surely no one would be better able to estimate the complete worthlessness of such a promise under the circumstances of this case than the experienced revolutionaries whom I saw in the dock. If, again, it were the practice of this department to attempt to extract confessions by violence (which I do not think any competent observer believes) no one would be better able than these men to support the violence and subsequently to expose it before the world in the sure hope of discrediting their enemies and gaining sympathy for themselves. If any trickery or deceit, simple or complicated, were employed in an effort to trap any of these men into confession, surely they would be better fitted than anyone else on earth to detect and circumvent the plot.
It was, moreover, obvious to anyone who watched the proceedings in court that the confessions as made orally in court could not possibly have been concocted or rehearsed. Such a farce would doubtless not be beyond the mental powers of normal men to stage in the case of a small set of well-defined facts, which could be memorized by one or two people and parroted without any basis of truth. But in the present case 16 men were involved, and dozens of conversations and incidents spread over years and over thousands of miles, now one, now another, or two or three or more of the accused being involved. I doubt whether, even if they had to deal with the relatively slow tempo of an English trial, more than one or two of the accused could successfully master their role in such a farce without betraying the whole thing; certainly 16 could not hope to do so…. And in the middle of the examination of one of the accused, when he said something that implicated another or denied something to which another had previously testified, that other would come to his feet spontaneously or would be called upon by the prosecutor, and then and there the point would be fought out with a quick cross-fire of question and answer, assertion and counter-assertion. Months of rehearsal by the most competent actors could not have enabled false participants in such a contest to last 10 minutes without disclosing the falsity; nor indeed would any stage manager risk a breakdown by allowing the farce to play so quickly. The employment of this procedure (normal, of course, in the Soviet Union), without the keenest critic finding a false note, is a most convincing demonstration of the genuineness of the case. (I observed in one eminent newspaper the statement that the accused seemed to be repeating a well-learned lesson as if hypnotized; but I am unable to understand how any correspondent, however far away he was from the courtroom, can have obtained such an impression. I am more impressed by the Moscow correspondent of a Conservative Sunday paper, who reported: “It is futile to think the trial was staged and the charges trumped up. The Government’s case against the defendants is genuine.”)
Pritt, Denis Nowell. At the Moscow Trial, New York City: International Publishers, 1937, p. 10

Another point of some substance in favor of the genuineness of the confessions is the complete absence of that very usual feature of proceedings in most countries (including England) in which it is common to allege that confessions have been improperly obtained: to wit, the attempt by the accused at some stage of the trial to withdraw all or part of his confession. One may repeat that if either intelligence or courage were needed for such withdrawal, the accused in this case possessed both. If experience or common sense were needed to make clear to the accused that, so long as their confessions stood unwithdrawn and unchallenged, the chances of, at any rate, most of them escaping the death penalty were infinitesimal, they, above all possessed it. And it is worth while realizing the number of opportunities they had to make such a withdrawal. They could have done so after the indictment was read. If they chose to let that pass, they were each of them separately examined during the first three days, and could have made any withdrawal then. Moreover,

throughout those examinations, each of the accused was allowed to come to his feet and address the court almost whenever he liked and for as long as he liked, whilst one of the other accused was really under examination, to explain, or contradict, or amplify, or modify. Further, when these examinations were over, and before the prosecutor's final speech, each of the 16 defendants was called upon, in accordance with the usual procedure, to state his defense. Naturally and reasonably enough, as they were not in the strict sense making a defense at all, and as the universal rule of Soviet procedure gives accused persons always the right to the last word, they preferred not to say anything at that stage, when the prosecutor would have the full opportunity to answer anything they put forward, but to reserve what they wanted to say until their "last word" should come. And finally, when the prosecutor had made his final speech, vigorous in substance, however quiet and well-controlled in form, each one of the 16 had the right of the last word, the right to address the court freely and at any length he desired. They exercised this right, of course. Some of them spoke briefly, some at length; some addressed themselves to the court, as it was their duty to do; some turned quite frankly away from the court and addressed the public in the body of the hall, without being called to order for doing so; interruptions of the speeches by the court or the prosecutor certainly did not take up 1/10 of 1% of the time. If, with all these successive opportunities, these resourceful and experienced, and, however criminal, brave men did not even suggest (except to the extent that Holtzman at the outset stated that he, like Smirnov, denied direct complicity in terrorist acts, although during the investigation he had admitted it) that they desired to withdraw any part of their confessions, or that anything improper had gone to their procuring (and let it be remembered that if the old-fashioned trick of getting A to confess by telling him that B has already confessed were employed, and were not detected at the time, it would inevitably be detected at the hearing); and if, above all, this attitude of making no withdrawal continued at the end of the case, when the prosecutor had very emphatically asked for the death sentence as to all the accused, and the whole nature of the case made it impossible, save perhaps for one or two of them, to cherish the slightest hope of leniency, surely the inference is inevitable that they confessed because they were guilty, and without threats or promises, or third-degree. Where is there any justification for the assertion of one well-known critic that the confessions were "worthless in the circumstances"? It is, above all, the circumstances that demonstrate how they must be genuine. Are we not to assume, of such men as these, that if they said nothing against the Government and against the investigators, and nothing in favor of themselves, it was because there was nothing to be said? And where, we may ask still more cogently, is there any ground for the categorical assertion that comes from one very distinguished quarter, that the "confessions were extracted by means which have not yet been properly disclosed"? I understand how it is assumed, without proof, that the confessions were "extracted," because experience has taught me how oddly even intelligent people will reason; but what is this complaint of non-disclosure? The accused, of course, might have disclosed how they came to confess; indeed, they did in effect disclose that they confessed because they were guilty and could not hope to escape conviction. But apparently this critic demands that the means of investigation employed should be published to the world. Is it part of the duty of the judicial authorities to publish reports showing exactly how they have conducted preliminary investigations of which the persons who are at once most interested and best informed, viz. the accused, make no complaints? Can he tell us of any case in any country where this has been done, or even demanded?

Pritt, Denis Nowell. At the Moscow Trial, New York City: International Publishers, 1937, p. 12

That answer [as to why these criticisms should be rejected] is to be found in a study of the more or less immediate past history of four of the accused, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Evdokimov, and Bakayev. The circumstances of this history demonstrate that these four men possessed, and exercised in very important circumstances, the tactical wisdom, when confronted with evidence which clearly implicated them, to confess exactly what they could not evade, and no more, however much more they might in fact have done.
In the present case, of course, confronted with the evidence, they all confessed to being directly implicated in the murder of Kirov at Leningrad in December 1934; but it is important to follow the history of the discovery of their guilt, and of their confession of it, stage by stage. The first judicial proceeding in respect of Kirov's death was instituted by an indictment presented on the 25th of December 1934, against the actual murderer and some 13 other persons directly implicated; in that indictment none of these four persons was included (although investigations into their activities were being pursued), since evidence implicating them was not forthcoming.
Pritt, Denis Nowell. At the Moscow Trial, New York City: International Publishers, 1937, p. 14

…At the hearing I studied over long periods the demeanor of the defendants. They were an interestingly varied group. One looked like a German watch-maker, one like a book-keeper, one like an intelligent German prince, one like an English cavalry officer, one like a pugilist, one like a popular actor, one like an alert businessman. But all of them, at every stage, save two, of the five long days of the hearing showed a complete absence of fear, or embarrassment. The haggard face, the twitching hand, the dazed expression, the bandaged head, normal ornaments of the prisoners' dock in too many modern jurisdictions, were all alike absent. As soon as one entered the court, one was struck by their apparent ease. Treated with courtesy and patience equally by the court, the prosecutor, the guards, (even strolling out of court for a few moments when they wished), they spoke up freely when they wanted to, disputed minor and major points of difference with one another with vigor if not violence of speech, and displayed no signs of pressure or repression. The two stages at which, as I have mentioned, this was not wholly the case were naturally enough, the one coming during the strong final speech of the prosecutor, and the other during the accused's own last words. In the first of these, always a depressing period for the accused in any criminal case, four or five of the accused sat with their eyes closed or their heads in their hands, not fidgeting but rather drearily motionless. The journalists present varied in their views as to whether they were sleeping, or merely bored, or greatly affected. For my part, as a lawyer, I was satisfied that they were undergoing the experience of many accused persons; however clearly they might have thought before that they realized the strength of the case against them and the peril of their position, the final speech of the prosecutor was bound to make that realization more clear and more depressing. In the other stage, the final speeches of the defendants, it was natural enough to find that some of them, but some only, were somewhat affected by emotion.
On the whole, then, examining the two main and, at first blush, most weighty criticisms [it is incredible that men should confess openly and fully to crimes of the gravity of those in question and the confessions must have been extracted by "third-degree" are other improper means] with all the care and skill that I can command, I confess that I can find no solid ground for either of them.
Pritt, Denis Nowell. At the Moscow Trial, New York City: International Publishers, 1937, p. 16

Whatever impression may be made on the purely English mind by this curious psychical attitude [of the defendants], it seems difficult on full consideration to see how it can, in the light of all the circumstances of the present case, convince any observer of the falsity of the confession, of the innocence of the accused, or of the existence of any impropriety in the preliminary examination of the accused.

The next criticism that should be dealt with can be answered more shortly. It takes the form, briefly, that the whole story is simply incredible, and that nobody, least of all old revolutionaries, could possibly have behaved as these men are said to have behaved. There would be some weight in this argument if the men had denied the charge, and the evidence in support of it had proved to be weak; but in the circumstances I hope I shall not be thought flippant if I say that it reminds me of the man who, when first confronted with the Grand Canal at Venice in a beautiful sunset, bluntly said that he did not believe it. The odd thing, moreover, about this criticism is that it comes mainly from people who for years have been saying that both the Government of Soviet Russia and its economic conditions are so bad, and its people in such a state of seething revolt, that only the most ruthless employment of force prevents a revolutionary outbreak at any moment. Such critics should surely receive news of plots to murder the heads of such a Government as the most natural and inevitable thing in the world, instead of offering a blank incredulity which at once insults the Soviet judicial authorities and evidences the critics' real belief in the stability of the Soviet Government. Still, it is well to answer the criticism by reasoning, so far as it is solid enough to admit of such treatment. In the first place, surely the most skeptical examination imaginable of the evidence available, both within the limits of this case and without, must convince anyone that Trotskyite and Zinovievite centers or groups of a more or less conspiratorial character had been in existence for some time; and the real question is as to how far some or all of these centers were prepared to go to achieve their aims. It is, alas, beyond question that some of them were prepared to go, and did go, as far as to arrange for and achieve the murder of Kirov; and if one takes account also of the confessions and of the mass of genuinely corroborative evidence which, as above-mentioned, can be deduced from the indictment and from such evidence as was actually brought out in court, there is a good deal to show that the terrorist conspiracy did exist; and one does not need to be a student of psychology to realize how far, over long periods, a frustrated longing for power, or a sense of injustice or defeat, will ultimately demoralize ambitious men.

Pritt, Denis Nowell. At the Moscow Trial, New York City: International Publishers, 1937, p. 19

IF SOVIET LEADERS WANTED TO KILL RIVALS THE KILLING OF KIROV GAVE THEM THE CHANCE

The more extreme critics might perhaps pause at this stage to consider the weight of these facts. If the views which they put forward so readily, although without any apparent ground, about Soviet procedure were correct, if Stalin and his associates were the sort of persons who would readily engage in a conspiracy to procure the judicial murder of their old rivals, and if confessions were as easily obtained as the critics suggest, surely a little thing like the absence of evidence would not have deterred the prosecuting authorities at that stage. They suspected the four men; their confession, conviction, and punishment at that time would have been of the greatest possible value from the point of view of prestige and propaganda; and the moment was psychologically the most favorable imaginable for unscrupulous men to engineer the elimination of opposition. Such men as the critics suggest that Stalin is, would

not have hesitated for a moment; they would have procured a confession, a simple enough task. It only involved a promise of leniency; or some simple trick like telling each of them that the other has confessed; or a dose of the famous drug invented by one of the more unscrupulous of the slanderers at the time of the Metro-Vickers' trial, which compels men to tell the truth, or to tell a lie, or anyhow to tell something; a little hypnotism, or a little torture; or a simple fabrication of evidence.

It would seem, indeed, that nothing but a desire to administer justice fairly and properly could have hindered them. Nevertheless, in sober fact, the Soviet authorities, just as if they were civilized people, having no evidence against the four men, did not then indict them; and, as there was no evidence with which to confront them, the four did not of course confess. (Zinoviev, indeed, sent to Pravda a somewhat fulsome obituary on the man in whose murder he was later to admit direct complicity, but it was not printed). Soon after the trial of the 14 persons, however, the investigating authorities discovered further facts, and on January 13, 1935, the four men, with others, were indicted for the crime involved in their membership of the " Moscow center" of a terrorist organization, in touch with the " Leningrad center" which had been responsible for the murder of Kirov. There was still nothing to show that any of them had consented to or given instructions for the murder; and, confronted with what evidence there was then available, the four men deliberately, and no doubt very wisely, confessed to what could be proved–to far less, of course, than was subsequently discovered. Zinoviev in his confession stigmatized the persons who were then already implicated in the Kirov murder as degenerate miscreants, and Kamenev called them a gang of bandits, thus carefully circumscribing their confessions. They were not even then sentenced to death, as they might have been, but to imprisonment; so far as Zinoviev and Kamenev were concerned, it is not unfair to attribute this leniency to respect for their great services to the revolution, but it is to be remembered that this and many other instances of leniency towards these two men and their associates is inconsistent with the suggestion that excuses were being sought to destroy them. They were probably never of less weight as a serious political opposition, whatever their danger as inciters to individual assassination, than they were in 1936. There seems no reason to doubt either the truth of the confessions of January 1935 or the propriety of the investigations which led to them; and if that is so it is difficult to see why such doubts should be entertained about the confessions of 1936, or the methods of obtaining them. They seem but a consistent following, by clear and cool-headed men, of a prudent course; let the investigators show them what can be proved, and they will confess to that and no more.
Pritt, Denis Nowell. At the Moscow Trial, New York City: International Publishers, 1937, p. 15

IT WOULD BE ABSURD FOR THE SU TO HAVE TRIALS UNLESS THEY WERE DEFINITELY GUILTY

The most cogent repudiation of this criticism, however, seems to me to lie in this, that it is surely not merely unlikely but utterly impossible that any intelligent group of persons engaged in the government of a country should let lose all the fears and doubts, the heart-searchings and criticisms, the innumerable misunderstandings and misrepresentations, that must follow in the train of a case such as this, on any ground whatsoever other than that the conspiracy was clearly and definitely shown to exist by the evidence finally forthcoming. It is worthwhile pausing here to consider for a moment the

internal political setting into which the discovery of this conspiracy has intruded…. The Soviet Union has recently, and in particular in the present year of 1936, entered upon a new phase not merely of economic but also of political advancement [a New Constitution]. Politically, such an event as the complete and unreserved concession of the franchise to all members of the "deprived" classes, which friendly critics thought and hoped might come about in the next eight or ten years will almost certainly be accomplished before 1936 is gone. Direct election by secret ballot, right through the whole series of Soviets and other bodies so long elected by the indirect system, is also pretty certain to come this year. Moreover, both in the administrative and in the judicial sphere, concessions have been or are being made which, taken as a whole, amount to a very great surrender of executive power. (One knows that few Governments have ever surrendered willingly any part of their executive power, be it large or be it small, and that almost every Government in the world today is seeking to enlarge its executive powers). Such further points as freedom of speech and assembly, freedom from arrest, and inviolability of correspondence, are also at any rate formally a matter of early concession. These proposals and tendencies, in the existing world-political situation, constitute an almost defiant assertion in the face of the world that the Soviet Union is politically and economically so stable that it no longer needs any exceptional executive power to safeguard itself, the long and stubborn, if circumscribed, heresies of the Trotskyite and Zinovievite fractions having apparently come to an end, the bulk of their leaders, even those involved in grave counter-revolutionary activities, having recanted fully and publicly, and been forgiven and reinstated in the Communist party. A summer sky indeed, one in which no one could want a thunderstorm, in which no one would, above all, attempt to precipitate a thunderstorm. Suddenly, tragically, the storm bursts; the recantations are seen to have been false, and the heretics are shown to have taken advantage of their reinstatement, not merely to continue propaganda for their point of view (thus alas almost forcing the Government to wonder whether lenient treatment of hostile elements was not a mistake after all, and whether it would not be compelled in the interests of public safety to re-investigate the activities of all known or suspected ex-Trotskyites and ex-Zinovievites at present holding responsible posts in different parts of the government), but also to conspire actively to bring about the assassination of a number of the principal leaders of the country in a fashion likely to produce the maximum of confusion, terror and bloodshed, for the sole purpose of themselves seizing power. Surely even the worst paranoiacs and morphiomaniacs of Central Europe would appear to be mild and sober citizens in comparison to the rulers of a great country who would at such a time announce the discovery of such a conspiracy and proceed to the public trial of the conspirators on any ground other than the overwhelmingly compelling one that the facts were there, the conspiracy proved, and the nettle had to be grasped.
Pritt, Denis Nowell. At the Moscow Trial, New York City: International Publishers, 1937, p. 20

STALIN SAYS THEY HAVE EVIDENCE AGAINST BUKHARIN

[Stalin said in a June 1937 speech], Bukharin. We have no proof that he himself delivered the secrets, but with him were linked very firmly Enukidze, Karakhan and Rudzutak–these discussed with him, made plans, were informing him, although they themselves did not do the actual spying–but they organized and oversaw these spying activities.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 109

ZINOVIEV ADMITS HIS GUILT

Under interrogation on 28 July 1936, Zinoviev was asked: “It has been established by investigation of your case that the organization’s center carefully worked out a plan of the conspiracy. What evidence can you give us about this?” He replied: “The political aim of the plot was to overthrow the Central Committee and the Soviet government and to create our own central committee and our own government, which would have consisted of Trotskyites, Zinovievites, and Rightists. In concrete terms the plan for the coup was the following: we calculated that the murder of Stalin (and other party and governmental leaders) would cause confusion in the Party leadership. We intended that Kamenev, Zinoviev, I. N. Smirnov, Rykov, Sokolnikov, Tomsky, Evdokimov, Smilga, Mrachkovsky and others would in these circumstances return to leading Party and governmental posts…. According to the plan, Trotsky, I, and Kamenev were to have concentrated in our hands the entire leadership of the Party and state…., and so on in the same vein.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 287

STALIN ASKS BUKHARIN TO REVIEW THE PARADE WITH HIM ON THE TOMB ON NOV. 7, 1936

He [Stalin] made another such gesture when Bukharin, using the pass issued to him as Izvestia’s editor, appeared in Red Square for the annual parade on 7 November 1936 and took a place with his wife on a side-stand–only to have a guard approach him, salute, and say: “Comrade Bukharin, Comrade Stalin asked me to inform you that you are in the wrong place. Would you please proceed to the stand above the Tomb? That was where Stalin and the other top leaders stood.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 375

According to Larina, whom I often met in the 1970s, she and her husband went together to Red Square on 7 Nov 1936 for the celebration of the 19th anniversary of the October Revolution. They had and Izvestia pass to be admitted to the stands near the platform on top of the mausoleum. Stalin noticed Bukharin. Suddenly Larina saw a guard pushing his way towards them through the crowd. She thought they would be told to leave Red Square immediately but the young Red Army soldier saluted and said: “Comrade Bukharin, Comrade Stalin asked me to inform you that you are not in the right place and he requests that you come up to the platform.”…
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 289

On a holiday, having received a guest pass from the newspaper, he [Bukharin] decided to greet this 19th anniversary in Red Square with me at his side. His place on the reviewing stand turned out to be on the lowest level, closest to the Mausoleum, where Stalin caught sight of him. Suddenly, I noticed a sentry coming our way and took fright. I assumed that he was either going to ask us to leave or, worse, arrest Nikolai. But the sentry saluted and said, ” Comrade Bukharin, Comrade Stalin asked me to convey to you that you are not standing in the right spot. Come up onto the Mausoleum.” Thus we found ourselves atop the Mausoleum,…

Larina, Anna. This I Cannot Forget. New York: W.W. Norton, 1993, p. 299

Former ‘Right deviationists’ seem to have been left alone in late 1936, and Stalin went out of his way to demonstrate that he had accepted Bukharin’s innocence, inviting him to stand on the Lenin Mausoleum during the observances in November of the anniversary of the revolution.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 191

KAGANOVICH DEMANDS DEATH FOR TROTSKY, ZINOVIEV AND KAMENEV

[In a letter to Stalin on 6 July 1936 Kaganovich stated] I read the testimonies of those swine Dreitzer and Pikel. Although this was clear even earlier they have now revealed the true bandit face of those murderers and provocateurs Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Smirnov. It is a already absolutely clear that the main instigator of this gang is that venal scum Trotsky. It is time to declare him an outlaw, and to execute the rest of the lowlifes we have in jail.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 324

SEVERAL LEADERS TESTIFY AGAINST PYATAKOV

[in a letter to Stalin on 17 August 1936 Kaganovich stated] Golubenko, Loginov, and Mrachkovsky had given very serious evidence about Piatakov, the minutes have been sent to you. They all testified that he was the leader of a Ukrainian terrorist center. They also point to Livshits as a participant. We don’t think that Piatakov’s article should be allowed in the press now, and in general what should we do with him?
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 326

Pyatakov kept his principles but, like so many others, took to the bottle. Just because he was bold, stubborn, shrewd and could not be seduced beyond some point fixed by his conscience, he knew that he had no future. It was said that in his last year at the Ministry he was often drunk at work, that he drank himself into DTs and wanted only to die. This did not come out at the trial.
Berger, Joseph. Nothing but the Truth. New York, John Day Co. 1971, p. 91

1936 DEFENDANTS ADMIT THEIR GUILT AND TESTIFY AGAINST OTHERS

[in a letter to Stalin on 19 August 1936 Kaganovich and Yezhov stated] When the defendants were asked whether they had any statements, a reply came from Zinoviev and Kamenev. Zinoviev and Kamenev made the following statements:
a) Zinoviev stated that he confirmed the entire testimony of Bakaev that the latter reported to Zinoviev that a terrorist act was being prepared against Kirov and, in particular, that Nikolaev would be the direct perpetrator. In addition, Zinoviev also reported that on the day of Kirov’s assassination, Mandelshtam, a member of the Leningrad center, traveled to deliver a report

to Zinoviev in person. Mandelshtam reported all the circumstances of Kirov's assassination to Zinoviev.
b) Kamenev asks to be allowed to cross-examine the witness Yakovlev, only after he, Kamenev, is questioned.
…The indictment was read. After the indictment was read, all of the defendants were asked whether they pleaded guilty, and all of them replied, "Yes we do."
Three of them made qualifying statements:
a) Smirnov stated:
he was a member of the united center;
he knew that the center had been organized with terrorist objectives;
he had received a personal directive from Trotsky to proceed to terrorism. But he himself did not personally take part in the preparation of acts of terrorism.
b) Goltsman stated that he pleads guilty. He confirmed that he had received a written directive from Trotsky to proceed to terrorism and to pass on this directive to the center and specifically to Smirnov. At the same time he stated that he personally did not take part in the preparation of acts of terrorism.
c) Ter-Vaganian pleaded guilty only to the extent of the statements he gave (he was a member of the terrorist center and so forth, according to his statements in the transcript).
…The guilty pleas by all the defendants made a stunning impression on the foreign correspondents.
After the recess the direct examination of Mrachkovsky began. His demeanor was calm. He confirmed and clarified all the statements. He totally buried Smirnov. Smirnov, under pressure from the statements and the prosecutor, was compelled to confirm most of Mrachkovsky's testimony. It is actually good that he is expressing a little discontent. Because of that he has put himself [in] a stupid situation. All the defendants are attacking Smirnov.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 328

1. [In a letter to Stalin on 20 August 1936 Kaganovich and Yezhov stated] During the morning and evening sessions the following were examined: Mrachkovsky, Yevdokimov, Dreitzer, Reingold, Bakaev, and Pikel.

2. The most essential parts of their examinations were the following:
a) Mrachkovsky confirmed in full the entire factual aspect of his statements from the pretrial investigation and clarified these statements. His testimony with regard to the role of Trotsky and Smirnov was especially convincing. This was the most important part of Mrachkovsky's testimony.
b) Yevdokimov fully confirmed the statements from the pretrial investigation and added a number of important details. What was most convincing in his testimony were the details of Kirov's assassination on the direct instructions of Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, himself–Yevdokimov–and others.
c) Dreitzer confirmed all the statements from the pretrial investigation. He dwelled in particular on the roles of Trotsky, Smirnov, and Mrachkovsky. He gave very detailed testimony about them. The especially attacked Smirnov for the latter's attempt to play down his role in organizing the terror.
d) Reingold confirmed in full the statements made during the pretrial investigation and clarified them in a number of places. The most essential parts of his testimony were:

a detailed account of the two variants of the plan to seize power (double-dealing, terrorism, military plot);
a detailed statement on communications with rightists and on the existence of terrorist groups among the rightists (Slepkov, Eismont), of which Rykov, Tomsky, and Bukharin were aware;
a statement about the existence of a reserve center consisting of Radek, Sokolnikov, Serebriakov, and Piatakov;
a statement about a plan to expunge the trail of the crime by destroying any Chekists who knew anything about the crime as well as their own terrorists;
a statement about the theft of state funds for the needs of the organization with the aid of Arkus and Tumanov.
e) Bakaev confirmed in full the statements from the pretrial investigation. He gave a very detailed and convincing account of Kirov's assassination and the preparation for Stalin's assassination in Moscow. He especially insisted that Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Yevdokimov were direct accomplices in this affair. While he minimized his own role somewhat, he was resentful that they had not told him everything earlier.
f) Pikel confirmed in full the statements from the pretrial investigation. For the most part, he repeated Reingold's testimony. He gave particular attention to Bogdan's suicide, stating that, in effect, they had murdered Bogdan, that he had committed suicide at Bakaev's insistence. The day before Bogdan's suicide, Bakaev spent the entire night at his home and told him that either he had to commit suicide himself in the morning or they would destroy him themselves. Bogdan chose Bakaev's first suggestion.

3. We are taking special note of the behavior of the following defendants at the trial:
a) Smirnov has taken the line that, while he was a member of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite center and knew about its terrorist principles, he did not himself participate in the organization's practical activities, did not participate in the preparation of acts of terrorism and did not share the principles of Trotsky-Sedov. The cross-examinations of all the defendants immediately and repeatedly exposed Smirnov's lies. Under pressure from the other defendants' testimonies, Smirnov was compelled at the evening session to admit a number of facts that incriminated him and he became less active.
b) Zinoviev, when questioned by the prosecutor on redirect examination about whether the facts set forth by the defendants were accurate, admitted to the overwhelming majority of them. He disputed minutiae, such as whether it was precisely those particular individuals or others who were present during the discussions of plans for terrorism, and so forth. His demeanor was more depressed than anyone else's.
c) Kamenev, when questioned by the prosecutor on redirect examination about whether the facts disclosed by the defendants were accurate, confirmed the overwhelming majority of them. His demeanor was more provocative than Zinoviev's. He tried to show off.

4) Several defendants, especially Reingold, spoke in detail about ties with rightists, referring by name to Rykov, Tomsky, Bukharin, and Uglanov. Reingold, specifically, testified that Rykov, Tomsky, and Bukharin knew about the existence of rightist terrorist groups.
This made a particular impression on the foreign correspondents. All of the foreign correspondents dwelled specifically on this point in their dispatches, calling it especially sensational testimony.
We believe that when the report on Reingold's testimony is published in our newspapers, the names of the rightists should not be deleted.

5) Many defendants identified the reserve center as consisting of Radek, Sokolnikov, Piatakov, and Serebriakov, identifying them as convinced supporters of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite bloc. All of the foreign correspondents in their dispatches pounced on this testimony as a sensation and are transmitting it to their press. We believe that when the report is published in our press these names should not be deleted, either.

[Footnote]: The draft of the letter also contained an item 6, which has not survived in full: "The trial has had a stunning impression on every foreign correspondent without exception. According to a report from Tal, Astakov, and the Chekists, the foreign correspondents have no doubts about the guilt of all the defendants, and in particular Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev. They were particularly impressed by the redirect examination of Kamenev, Zinoviev….
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 330

STALIN SAYS KAMENEV WAS PLOTTING WITH FOREIGN GOVTS AGAINST SU

[In a letter to Kaganovich on 23 August 1936 Stalin stated] First. The articles by Rakovsky, Radek, and Piatakov came about pretty well. Judging by the correspondent summaries, the foreign correspondents are keeping quiet about these articles, which were of great significance. They must be reprinted in newspapers in Norway, Sweden, France, and America, at least in the Communist newspapers. What makes them important, by the way, is that they deprive our enemies of the opportunity to depict the trial as a show and as a factional reprisal by the Central Committee against the Zinoviev-Trotsky faction.

Second. It is obvious from Reingold's testimony that Kamenev, through his wife Glebova, sounded out French ambassador Alphand about the possible attitude of the French government toward a future "government" of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite bloc. I think Kamenev also sounded out the British, German, and American ambassadors. This means that Kamenev must have disclosed to those foreigners the plans for the conspiracy and assassinations of the [party] leaders. This also means that Kamenev had already disclosed these plans to them, because otherwise the foreigners would not have agreed to talk with them about a future Zinovievite-Trotskyite "government." This is an attempt by Kamenev and his friends to form an outright bloc with the bourgeois governments against the Soviet government. This is also the key to the secret of the well-known advance obituaries by American correspondents. Obviously, Glebova is well informed about this whole filthy subject. Glebova must be brought to Moscow and subjected to a series of meticulous interrogations. She might reveal a lot of interesting things.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 338

STALIN VOTES TO EXPEL PYATAKOV FROM THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE FOR TERRORISM

[Footnote to a letter sent by Stalin to Kaganovich on 11 September 1936] A little earlier on 9 September, Dvinsky sent a secret telegram to Sochi for Stalin's vote: "To Comrade Stalin. For voting purposes. It has been determined on the basis of indisputable information that Central Committee member Piatakov maintains close ties with the terrorist groups of Trotskyites and Zinovievites. The Politburo believes that such behavior by Piatakov is not compatible with membership in the Central Committee or the Communist Party, and submits for a vote by Central Committee members a proposal that Piatakov be expelled from membership in the Central Committee of the Communist Party…." Stalin wrote on the secret message "In favor."
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 355

AT QUESTIONING RYKOV WANTED TO KNOW FROM SOKOLNIKOV WHO ELSE KNEW OF HIS ACTS

[In a letter to Stalin on 14 September 1936 Kaganovich stated] A few words about the confrontation between Sokolnikov, Rykov, and Bukharin [as part of their interrogation]. Sokolnikov makes an impression of an embittered criminal bandit who lays out the assassination plan and their work in this direction without the slightest embarrassment. Rykov was fairly composed and kept trying to find out from Sokolnikov whether he knew about Rykov's participation only from Tomsky or from someone else as well. Evidently, after he found out that Sokolnikov knew about Rykov's connections with Zinoviev and Kamenev only from Tomsky and Kamenev, he, Rykov, completely settled down and went on the offensive. But both Rykov and Bukharin put their main emphasis on recent years, as for '31-'32-'33 , they were both obviously evasive.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 357

STALIN DEMANDS THAT YAGODA BE REPLACED FOR INCOMPETENCE AND INEFFECTIVENESS

[In a letter to Kaganovich, Molotov and other members of the Politburo on 25 September 1936 Stalin and Zhdanov stated] First. We consider it absolutely imperative and urgent that Comrade Yezhov be appointed People's Commissar of Internal Affairs. Yagoda has clearly turned out not to be up to his task in the matter of exposing the Trotskyite-Zinovievite bloc. The OGPU was four years late in this matter. All the party functionaries and most of the regional representatives of the NKVD say this. Agranov can be retained as Yezhov's deputy at the NKVD.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 359

STALIN ASKS YAGODA TO TAKE OVER COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSARIAT AND LEAVE NKVD

[Footnote]: Preserved in the file is a memorandum from Stalin to Yagoda dated 26 September, taken down by Chechulin: "Comrade Yagoda. The People's Commissariat of Communications is a very important matter. It is a defense-oriented People's Commissariat. I

have no doubt that you will be able to get this People's Commissariat on its feet. I urge you to agree to take the People's Commissariat of Communications job. Without a good People's Commissariat of Communications we feel as though we have no hands. The People's Commissariat of Communications cannot be left in its present condition. We must urgently get it on its feet.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 359

BUKHARIN EXPRESSES LOVE FOR STALIN

Little Bukharin went on writing to him [Stalin], 43 letters, 43 unanswered declarations of love.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 376

STALIN NEVER PROMISED TO PARDON BUKHARIN

This letter [from Bukharin to Stalin] gives us the final key to the trials. It tells us everything. No, Stalin had not promised to pardon him. Bukharin went on hoping, but the Boss was silent.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 380

SEVERAL MEN TESTIFIED AGAINST BUKHARIN IN A CONFRONTATION

But only days later [after the incident in which Bukharin was invited by Stalin to view the Nov. 1936 parade on the mausoleum] Bukharin had to face a much more distressing ordeal. He was not summoned to the Lubyanka but taken straight to a room in the Kremlin where a confrontation took place between Bukharin and a number of prisoners who had incriminated him in their "confessions"–former Trotskyists as well as several young academics and political figures who had been part of the "Bukharin school." He had to face, one after another, Sokolnikov, Radek, Serebryakov and others. They all spoke of their "criminal links" with Bukharin and claimed that he was the head of yet another underground counter-revolutionary terrorist centre. Bukharin was stunned by his encounter with Tseitlin who had been one of his favorite disciples. In the presence of the investigator of his case, Tseitlin declared that Bukharin had personally given him a revolver and positioned him on the street just where Stalin was due to drive by. Stalin took a different route that day, which prevented the assassination from taking place.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 289

STAND-INS AND FAKES WERE NOT USED AT THE TRIALS AS SOME ALLEGE

Indeed, many people at the time did think that there were stand-ins at the trial, that this Bukharin was not Bukharin. But as the reading continued, my initial doubts rapidly dissolved. I knew Nikolai too well not to recognize his style and character. Besides, using impostors would have been too crude and risky a subterfuge in general, and with Bukharin in particular….

Many years afterward, when I had returned to Moscow, the writer Ehrenburg confirmed that it was definitely Nikolai in the dock.
Larina, Anna. This I Cannot Forget. New York: W.W. Norton, 1993, p. 67

YAGODA WAS A BUKHARIN/RYKOV ALLY FROM THE 1920'S

When political differences arose in the Party in 1928, Yagoda, who understood better than most the overall situation in the countryside, was closer to the views of Bukharin and Rykov than those of Stalin,…
Larina, Anna. This I Cannot Forget. New York: W.W. Norton, 1993, p. 100

BUKHARIN SAYS HE MET WITH TROTSKY IN OSLO

Nicolaevsky permits himself this fiction [according to Anna Larina]…
"When we were in Copenhagen, Bukharin recalled that Trotsky lived not too far off, in Oslo, and said, "Why not take a trip for a day or two to Norway to visit with Trotsky?" And then he added, "Of course, there were great conflicts between us, but this does not prevent me from holding him in great respect."
Larina, Anna. This I Cannot Forget. New York: W.W. Norton, 1993, p. 275

STALIN NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR TOMSKY'S DEATH

[Footnote]: Medvedev relates that Tomsky's son believed that the suicide [of Tomsky] occurred just after Stalin visited Tomsky at his apartment, bearing a bottle of wine, and that a violent argument occurred between him. But it is reasonably clear that Stalin was not in Moscow at the time, and the official report of Tomsky's death states that it occurred at his dacha in Bolshev, not in Moscow.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 363

STALIN OUTLINES THE STRATEGY FOR EXPLAINING THE 1930's TRIALS

Conversation on 11 February 1937 with Stalin about the resolution by the Presidium of the Comintern on the anti–Trotskyite campaign.
Stalin says:
1. You are not taking into account that the European workers think that everything is happening because of some quarrel between me and Trotsky, because of Stalin's bad character.
2. It must be pointed out that these people fought against Lenin, against the party during Lenin's lifetime.
3. Quote Lenin on the opposition: "Any opposition in the party under Soviet power that insists on is slipping directly toward whiteguardism."
4. Refer to the stenographic report of the trial. Quote the defendants' testimony.
5. Play up their politics and their working for the defeat of the Soviet Union
Dimitrov, Georgi, The Diary of Georgi Dimitrov, 1933-1949. Ed. Ivo Banac. New Haven : Yale University Press, c2003, p. 52

STALIN WATCHED THE ZINOVIEV TRIAL FROM A FAR DISTANCE

… it has taken over 60 years for anyone to discover that Stalin was actually far away [from the Zinoviev trial], though he followed the legal melodrama almost as closely as if he had been listening to it in his office.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 189

Party Purges

WHAT IS A PURGE

The entire membership of the Communist Party was therefore subjected to what is called a "cleansing" or "purge" in the presence of large audiences of their non-Communist fellow workers. (This is the only connection in which the Soviet people use the term "purge." Its application by Americans to all the Soviet treason trials and in general to Soviet criminal procedure is resented by the Soviet people.)
Each Communist had to relate his life history and daily activities in the presence of people who were in a position to check them. It was a brutal experience for an unpopular president of a Moscow university to explain to an examining board in the presence of his students why he merited the nation's trust. Or for a superintendent of the large plant to expose his life history and daily activities — even to his wife's use of one of the factory automobiles for shopping — in the presence of the plants workers, any one of whom had the right to make remarks. This was done with every Communist throughout the country; it resulted in the expulsion of large numbers from the party, and in the arrest and trial of a few.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 136

The purge–in Russian "chiska" (cleansing)–is a long-standing institution of the Russian Communist Party. The first one I encountered was in 1921, shortly after Lenin had introduced "NEP," his new economic policy, which involved a temporary restoration of private trade and petty capitalism and caused much heart burning amongst his followers. In that purge nearly one-third of the total membership of the party was expelled or placed on probation. To the best of my recollection, the reasons then put forward for expulsion or probation were graft, greed, personal ambition, and "conduct unbecoming to communists," which generally meant wine, women, and song.
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1941, p. 116

Kirov's murder brought a change, but even so the Purge that was held that winter was at first not strikingly different from earlier Purges.
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1941, p. 116

The Central Committee organized a "purge" and expelled barely 170,000 members in order to improve the party quality.
Stalin has frequently been held responsible for the "purge." He was not its author. This party-cleansing was done under Lenin's leadership. It is a process which is unique in the history of little parties. The Bolsheviks however, do not regard it as an extraordinary measure for use only in a time of crisis, but a normal feature of party procedure. It is the means of

guaranteeing Bolshevik quality. To regard it as a desperate move on the part of leaders anxious to get rid of rivals is to misunderstand how profoundly the Bolshevik party differs from all others, even from the Communist Party's of the rest of Europe.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 144

Lenin initiated the first great "cleansing" of the Bolshevik party just as the transition had begun from "war communism" to the new economic policy. In 1922, when, as Lenin put it, "the party had rid itself of the rascals, bureaucrats, dishonest or waivering Communists, and of Mensheviks who have re-painted their facade but who remained Mensheviks at heart," another Congress took place; and it was this Congress which advanced Stalin to the key position of Bolshevik power.
It brought him into intimate contact with every functionary of the organization, enabling him to examine their work as well as their ideas.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 145

The party maintains its quality by imposing a qualifying period before granting full membership, and by periodical " cleanings" of those who fail to live up to the high standard set.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 169

In all fairness I must add that no small proportion of the exiles were allowed to return home and resume their jobs after the Purge had ended.
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1941, p. 122

Besides examining Communists against whom definite complaints are made, the Control Commission at long intervals resorts to wholesale "purges" of the Party. In 1929 it was decided to institute such a purge, with a view to checking up on the rapid numerical growth of the Party, which has been increasing at the rate of about 200,000 a year during the last few years, and eliminating undesirable elements. It was estimated in advance that about 150,000 Communists, or 10 percent of the total membership (including the candidates) would be expelled during this process. In a purge every party member, regardless of whether any charges have been preferred against him or not, must appear before representatives of the Control Commission and satisfy them that he is a sound Communist in thought and action. In the factories non-party workers are sometimes called on to participate in the purge by offering judgment on the Communists and pointing out those who are shkurniki or people who look after their own skins, a familiar Russian characterization for careerists.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 68

From time to time the party "cleans out" its membership, and this is always done an open meetings to which all workers of the given institution are invited. Each communist in the institution must give before this public an extended account of his life activities, submit to and answer all criticism, and prove before the assembled workers his fitness to remain in the "leading Party." Members may be cleaned out not only as "hostile elements, double-dealers, violators of discipline, degenerates, career-seekers, self-seekers, morally degraded persons" but even for being merely "passive," for having failed to keep learning and growing in knowledge and authority among the masses.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 31

I have in the course of 15 years in the Soviet Union met an occasional Communist who was a grafter, and many more who were stubborn bureaucrats and unenlightened fanatics. But I have also seen how the party throws out dead wood–not always accurately–and renews itself from the working class it leads.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 37

It would be a mistake to regard the 1933 chistka as having been directed solely against members of the opposition. The largest single group expelled were “passive” party members: those carried on the roles but not participating in party work. Next came violators of party discipline, bureaucrats, corrupt officials, and those who had hidden past crimes. Members of dissident groups did not even figure in the final tallies. Stalin himself characterized the purge has a measure against bureaucratism, red tape, degenerates, and careerists, “to raise the level of organizational leadership.” The vast majority of those expelled were fresh recruits who had entered the party since 1929, rather than Old Bolshevik oppositionists. Nevertheless, the 1933 purge expelled about 18 percent of the party’s members and must be seen as a hard-line policy or signal from Moscow.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 127

“Not everyone who wishes can belong to the party,” said Stalin; “it is not given to everyone to brave its labors and its torments.”
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 280

Western students have applied the word “purge” to everything from political trials to police terror to nonpolitical expulsions from the party. The label “Great Purges,” which encompasses practically all party activities between 1933 and 1939, is an example of such broad usage. Yet the Communist Party defined and used the word quite specifically. The term “purge” (chistka–a sweeping or cleaning) only applied to the periodic membership screenings of the ranks of the party. These membership operations were designed to weed the party of hangers-on, nonparticipants, drunken officials, and people with false identification papers, as well as ideological “enemies” or “aliens.” In the majority of purges, political crimes or deviations pertained to a minority of those expelled.
No Soviet source or usage ever referred to the Ezhovshchina (the height of police arrests and terror in 1937) as a purge, and party leaders discussed that event and purges in entirely separate contexts. No political or nonpolitical trial was ever called a purge, and under no circumstances were operations, arrests, or terror involving nonparty citizens referred to as purges. A party member at the time would have been mystified by such a label.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 38

It is to these operations [periodic cleansings] and not to trials, arrests, or prosecutions, that the Soviet usage of the term “purge” applies. The 1919 operation was called pereregistratsiia, “reregistration.” The 1921 purge, and each subsequent purge, was called proverka (verification) or chistka (a cleaning, cleaning out, combing out, or sweeping). For consistency and accuracy, the term “purge” will be applied below only to a membership-accounting operation.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 40

The reasons for which one could be expelled in a purge varied throughout the ’20s, but there were some constant themes. One category consistently marked for expulsion was that of

“class-alien,” “counter-revolutionary,” or “hostile” elements. This group of offenders included former officers (but not always soldiers) of the White Armies, “regenerate bourgeois elements,” kulaks, and other elements of the pre-revolutionary power structure. There was no official stricture against persons of bourgeois or kulak origin entering the party, as long as such origins were not kept secret. Hiding one’s origins, however, was always grounds for expulsion.
Another category for expulsion was that encompassing official misconduct or corruption. This might be phrased “acts unworthy of a party member,” “violations of party discipline,” or “self-seeking careerism” in cases of continued violations. This “abuse of position” category often included theft, embezzlement, and the like. A third group of offenses providing grounds for expulsion centered on nonparticipation or “passivity.” This group always accounted for a large percentage of those expelled in a purge, as did a fourth group–the morally corrupt. Offenses such as drunkenness, sexual crimes, and financial corruption were taken as signs of “personal corruption.”
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 41

The largest of these operations was the 1921 purge following the Civil War, which expelled one in four party members. At no time in the 20s did an all-union purge embrace even one-half that rate of expulsion.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 45

If 1929 is typical of a 1920s-era purge in its causes and criteria for expulsion, then membership operations seem to have been implemented to rid the party of corrupt, inactive, undisciplined, class-alien, or criminal persons. The idea was to “clean” the party of those who were not full-time, dedicated, honest party members according to Lenin’s strict code. It was not done, at least explicitly, to rid the party of all ideological dissenters or suspected oppositionists….
Nationally, 1,530,000 members went through the 1929 purge. Of these, 170,000 (or 11 percent) were expelled. Subsequently, however, 37,000 of these expellees (22 percent of them) were reinstated into the party on appeal. In Smolensk, the figure was 43 percent restored to membership and in Voronezh 33 percent. These readmissions eventually reduced the impact of the 1929 purge from 11 to 8% nationally and comprised the greatest number of reversals for a purge to date. Subsequent clarifications show that the vast majority of those reinstated to membership had been expelled for “passivity” (nonparticipation) and that most of these were rank-and-file members of working-class origin.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 47

Accordingly, the party was to purge itself in 1933 of the following categories:
1. Class-alien, hostile elements who try to deceitfully demoralize the party
2. Double dealers, who deceitfully undermine party policy
3. Violators of discipline who fail to carry out party decisions and who are pessimistic about the “the impractibility” of party measures
4. Degenerates who merged with and do not struggle against kulaks, loafers, thieves, etc..
5. Careerists and self-seekers who are isolated from the masses and disregard the needs of people
6. Moral degenerates whose unseemly behavior discredit the party

These categories were slightly more ideological than those for the 1929 purge. There was more emphasis on “double dealers,” “underminers,” and “violators of discipline” who refused to “struggle against the kulak,” but the main focus of the 1933 chistka was on weeding out undesirables who had flooded the party since 1929 and not on persecuting members of the opposition, many of whose leaders remained in the party.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 49

The chistka of 1933 was to take place in a “comradely atmosphere,” was to tolerate no “petty and captious digging into the personal lives of people,” and was not to be used to settle personal accounts.
Local purge officials were warned not to expel large numbers of rank-and-file members on such flimsy pretexts as “passivity” or simple political illiteracy. The 1933 announcement enjoined those conducting the purge to take into account the “overall development” of the member–not to try to trick him or her with technical questions on the intricacies of the party program and not to expel loyal workers and collective farmers just because they had not had time to improve their level of ideological education. Moreover, a member found to lack sufficient political knowledge (or discipline) was to be reduced from a member to a candidate, or from a candidate member to a sympathizer, reflecting an attempt to prevent some of the abuses encountered in 1929 relating to unjustified expulsions.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 50

As head of the Control Commission, Yezhov now became responsible for overseeing the purges, the operations within the party to remove anyone unworthy of membership. Exactly what that phrase [purges] meant is hotly debated in the West; as noted, one point of view argues that Stalin aimed to crank up political tension and root out political opponents in 1935-36; another maintains that the purges were not largely political operations but, rather, mundane housecleaning, through which party members who had demonstrated incompetence or lack of interest in socialist affairs were removed.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 28

These documents suggest that the situation was ripe for a new party purge, and this is precisely what was announced in January 1933. Member categories subject to expulsion were specified: class-alien elements and enemies, “two-faced ones”–that is, those who say they are for but are actually against the basic party line–those who openly and covertly violate strict party discipline, those who jabber about the lack of realism in prescribed party plans, careerists, self-seekers, morally depraved members, and politically ignorant members unfamiliar with party rules, regulations, and programs. In the course of the purge, 18 percent of the party’s members were expelled, and a further 15 percent left the party out of fear.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 125

On the party purge–April 28, 1933
On the basis of this Comintern directive our party conducted a party re-registration in 1920, a party purge in 1921, a purge of non-production cells in 1924, a verification of village cells in 1925, and a purge in 1929-30. As is known, these purges and re-registrations reinforced the ranks of our party, improved its fighting efficiency, and intensified the feeling of responsibility of each party member for the work of the party.

The function of the party purge is to elevate the ideological level of the party members, to strengthen the party politically and organizationally, and further to intensify the confidence in the party of the millions of non-party masses.
During a purge this task is accomplished: (a) by the open and honest self-criticism of party members and members of party organizations, (b) by verifying the work of each party cell to ascertain how it has executed decisions and instructions of the party, (c) by involving the toiling non-party masses in the purge, and (d) by ridding the party of those persons who have not justified the lofty name of party member.
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 125

In Soviet Party history a 'purge' refers to a membership screening designed to rid the Party of lackadaisical, theoretically backward, ill disciplined, passive, opportunist, and so on, members. Purges were implemented either by a process of systematic expulsions organized by special 'purge' commissions, or by local Party leaders, in which charges were brought against unreliable members, or by a process of validation or exchange of Party cards in which members had to prove themselves. Such 'purges' had been a regular part of Party life since 1919. Interestingly, the Party purges of 1935 and 1937 resulted in significantly fewer expulsions than the previous four purges that had taken place in 1919, 1921, 1929, and 1933. All the purges mainly affected rank and file party members.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 229

Communist Party membership involved both special obligations and access to special benefits such as jobs (reserved for politically reliable people), as well as a certain prestige. As a result many people secured and maintained membership in the Party for other reasons than agreement with the Party's goals and political activism; many people even secured Party cards illlegally…. The periodic purges (1919, 1921, 1929, 1933, 1935, 1937) were all designed to deal with this problem and, in the words of Party instructions, were directed to ensure 'iron proletarian discipline in the Party and to cleanse the Party's ranks of all unreliable, unstable, and hanger-on elements. 'In the 1919 're-registration' 10-15% of the Party's total membership lost their Party cards; in the 1921 Party purge 25%; in the 1929 purge, 11% (25 percent of whom were reinstated after appeals); in the 1933 chistka 17% were expelled; in the 1935 proverka 9%; and in the famous 1937 Ezhovshchina again about 9% (the 1935 and 1937 purges were the smallest in terms of numbers affected).
The decree setting up the rules of the 1933 validation of Party members specified that all Party members must present themselves before open proceedings (attended by both Party and non-Party members), give an account of the facts of their lives, explain how they fulfilled Party tasks, and discuss the efforts made to raise their 'ideological and theoretical level.' Each member was then questioned by the validation commissioners and by rank and file Party and non-Party members.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 230

…The problem of inactive and irresponsible Party members, as well as the loose system of controls over membership, was largely a result of the emphasis, during the 1920s, on the recruitment of large numbers of working-class members, with little attention given to criteria other than class background.
In the membership screening of 1929, 22% were expelled for 'defects in personal conduct,' 17% for passivity, 12% for criminal offenses (mostly involvement in petty crimes), 10% for

violations of Party discipline (which includes those accused of factional activity) and 17% for being ‘alien elements’ or having lied about class background. Similarly in the 1933 chistka, in which 15% were expelled for personal degeneracy, 14% for violating Party discipline, 16% for political reasons, including concealing class background, and 18% for abuse of position. According to Rigby’s analysis of the 1933 membership screening,
“… political considerations play a relatively small part in this sample of expulsions, however, and the great majority were removed either because they made unscrupulous use of their Party membership to secure personal benefits, were immoral, or undisciplined in their personal lives or at their job, or simply failed to participate in Party activities.”

Data for the 1935 purge (which occurred immediately after the Kirov assassination) reveals that the reasons for expulsions were similar to those in the pre-1934 membership screenings; more than 20% were expelled for petty crimes or ‘moral turpitude,’ and most of the remainder for political passivity, ‘degeneracy’ or abuse of position. To quote Getty:
“The information on the incidence of the proverka suggests that it was not a hysterical, political witchhunt, in which helpless rank-and-file Party members fell in droves for the slightest infraction. Rather, it seems that the proverka of 1935 was more careful, and less political, in that there is evidence of investigation and of a policy in which a consistent pattern of problems or violations was necessary for expulsion.”

Results for one city in the Smolensk Region show that only 18% of the members against whom charges have been brought were actually expelled, and less than one-third of those formally criticized at meetings received any form of disciplinary treatment at all. The records of the Smolensk City Party Committee reveal that 7% were expelled for passivity, 21% were being petty criminals or degenerates, or corrupt; 28% for un-trustworthiness, 22% for being ‘class alien persons’ who had hidden their class origins, and only 8% for political unreliability. Undoubtedly there was a higher percentage of expulsions for political reasons in the 1937 purge owing to the hysteria engendered by the spy and ‘wrecker’ mania current at the time. Nevertheless, given the results of previous purges, especially that of 1935, there’s no doubt that the reasons for the majority of purges were not political.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 231

IN SHORT, THE VAST MAJORITY OF THOSE WHOSE PARTY CARDS WERE WITHDRAWN BOTH IN THE PRE AND POST 1934 MEMBERSHIP SCREENINGS WERE EXPELLED NOT FOR ASSOCIATION WITH ANY POLITICAL OPPOSITION, BUT RATHER FOR BEING ‘CAREERISTS,’ ‘OPPORTUNISTS, ‘ ILL-DISCIPLINED, ‘DEGENERATES,’ POLITICALLY PASSIVE, ‘POLITICALLY ILLITERATE,’ ‘WEAK WILLED,’ AND SO ON.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 232

A member of the Communist Party becomes such not only through his own selection, but by the approval of the working class among whom he lives and toils. Not only must he come with recommendations from older party members of from 5 to 10 years standing, recommendations taken so seriously that a member may be expelled for endorsing an unworthy candidate. Not only must he undergo a period of probation ranging from one to two years, but admission may be refused, or a member once admitted may be expelled not only by the judgment of other Communists, but in response to accusations from non-party workers as well. The list of offenses for which expulsion is possible include not merely “alien elements, double dealers, breakers of discipline, moral degenerates, careerists,

self-seekers," but even "passive elements who do not carry out their duties and who have not mastered the program, rules, and most important decisions of the party."
Steady, consistent efforts are made to improve the quality of membership and to weed out through the periodical "cleansing's" the unfit material. It is the common requirement made of all applicants for membership in the Communist Party who may be engaged in intellectual or office work, that they spend a year or two in "social work" in some large factory, before even making their application for membership, and are judged by the workers' view of their capacity to lead. A member who ceases to interpret and lead the workers around him, or who has merely become passive in this task, may be disciplined up to the point of rejection from the party. And this may happen not only to individual members, but to whole "city committees" if a situation develops which shows that they have failed to interpret and lead the masses….
Members of the party have their regular jobs by which they earn their living; they may be machine hands or People's Commissars. But their unpaid job as party members takes precedence over every other work, and of all family relations. At the very least they must expect to give several evenings a week to routine "party work," in some of the multitudinous, unexciting tasks of organizing masses in industry and government. This may be some dull job like collecting trade union duties, assembling material for a wall newspaper, checking up subscriptions to government loans; it may also include leading groups of youth or teaching classes in politics.
Strong, Anna Louise. Dictatorship and Democracy in the Soviet Union. New York: International Pamphlets, 1934, p. 11-12

[At the 13th Congress of the Party in May 1924 Stalin stated] Preobrazhensky's profound mistake is his failure to understand that the Party cannot strengthen its ranks without periodical purges of unstable elements. Comrade Lenin taught us that the Party can strengthen itself only if it steadily rids itself of the unstable elements which penetrate, and will continue to penetrate, its ranks. We would be going against Leninism if we were to repudiate Party purges in general. As for the present purge, what is wrong with it? It is said that individual mistakes have been made. Certainly they have. But has there ever been a big undertaking that was free from individual mistakes? Never. Individual mistakes may and will occur; but in the main the purge is correct.
The chief thing about the purge is that it makes people of this kind feel that there exists a master, that there is the Party, which can call them to account for all sins committed against it. It seems to me absolutely necessary that this master go through the Party ranks with a broom every now and again.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 6, p. 239-240

The first of the 1930s purges, in 1933, was officially justified by the need to reduce the number of Party numbers, which had almost tripled by the often unregulated admission of new and poorly motivated members. However, the decree from the Central Committee ordering it gave a list of reprehensible offenses, allowing action to be taken against a good many officials. Alongside elements with "alien" social backgrounds, it was aimed at "double-dealers" who swore oaths of allegiance to the Party line but worked for its failure, those who broke the "iron discipline" by not carrying out their duties or discrediting the plans through calling them impossible, "renegades" who had "closed ranks with bourgeois elements" and did not struggle against embezzlers, "careerists, self-seekers and bureaucratic elements" who neglected the interests of the people and used their power to

make profits, and finally “moral degenerates” who brought the party into disrepute. It was not by chance that local officials were accused of trying to sabotage the purge and save their friends. It was the so-called “passive elements,” one category the official instructions did not mention, who were purged in great numbers. Most of these were workers. This practice caught on, and the new Party rules approved by the 17th Congress added “passive elements” to the list of categories to be purged.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 44

The general criteria for the purging of party members were corruption, passivity, breaches of party discipline, alcoholism, criminality and anti-Semitism. For bourgeois individuals and kulaks who hid their class origin expulsion was certain. (But not for those who had been accepted into the party and who had admitted their class background.) For the former tsarist officers who hid their past were also inevitably expelled. All those who had been expelled could in their turn appeal to the Central control commission, and then their cases were reviewed at a higher level.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

The “purges” (in Russian, chistki or “cleansings”) were periodic attempts by the central CPSU leadership, the Central Committee and the Politburo, to find out who was in the Party, and to strengthen it organizationally. they never included imprisonment (much less executions), and only rarely resulted in many expulsions; the “purges” of the 1930s resulted in even fewer expulsions than those of the 1920s had. They were not aimed at rooting out oppositionists (supporters of Trotsky, Bukharin, or any of the other ex-opposition groupings of the 1920s), but rather at getting rid of the dissolute, drunks, careerists, and others who clearly had no place in a disciplined Communist party.
“Cleaning House in the Bolshevik Party,” Progressive Labor Magazine, Vol. 14, No. 1 (Spring 1981), pp. 70-73.

[11 August 1936 memorandum from Kotelnikov to Dimitrov, Manuilsky, and Moskvin about the work of exposing “the wreckers in the ECCI,”]
During the exchange of party documents, four members and three candidate members of our organization were expelled from the party. The reason for the expulsion of Gurevich, Gurianov, and Neibut was their affiliation with Trotskyism in 1923 and 1927, and [their] concealment of this during the verification of party documents. Nikolaeva [was expelled] for continuing to defend the innocence of her husband who had been arrested and sentenced to 10 years for wrecking. Candidate members: Romanov [was expelled] for being a moral degenerate [he was married five times] and for violating [the rules of] conspiracy; Arakcheev, for concealing from the party the fact of the arrest and exile of his father, an active SR;….
Chase, William J., Enemies Within the Gates?, translated by Vadim A. Staklo, New Haven: Yale University Press, c2001, p. 138.

TRANSFERRING PARTY LEADERS

The arrests affected chiefly the upper party circles and those officials dealing with foreigners; hence they seemed to foreigners more extensive than they were. None of the arrests was as wanton as the foreign press portrayed them; evidence of some sort was indicated. The

common sentence was not execution, but swift removal to another job in another part of the country. Fairly large numbers of such transfers seemed to have occurred merely on suspicion, on the theory that if suspects were guilty, or had guilty connections, the transfer would break these up; if they were innocent they would not suffer much from a job transfer and would come back to Moscow eventually if they chose. Naturally such people did not hasten to communicate with their foreign acquaintances during their absence, and this often led the latter to assume that the Russians had been “liquidated.” A year or two later, large numbers of such people returned, none the worst for their temporary job in the “sticks.”
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 137

LENIN SAYS A PARTY MUST PURGE AND STRUGGLE

Under the title What Is to Be Done? Lenin included a letter from Lassalle of June 24,1852: “party struggles give a party strength and life. The best proof of the weakness of a party is its diffusness and its blurring of clear-cut differences…. A party becomes stronger by purging itself.”
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 37

After the victory of the revolution, when the Communist party had become the ruling party, the party leadership and Lenin had to acknowledge that some unwelcome elements had penetrated into the party and state apparatus. They were people who wanted to make a career via a membership in the party. At the eighth party conference in December of 1919 Lenin brought this problem up. According to Lenin “It is natural, on the one hand, that all the worst elements should cling to the ruling party merely because it is the ruling party.” For that reason it was important to evaluate the contribution of the party members. On the proposal of Lenin, the party carried out a re-registration of all party members. Every member had to answer for his actions in front of the member collective; those who were considered unreliable were excluded. That was the first purification of the party apparatus. This method, to strengthen the party by purging the opportunistic elements, was to characterise the Communist party for many years to come.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle during the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

PURGE REVEALS EXTENT OF WHITE PENETRATION OF GOVT

January 7, 1933–These results [of purging in the North Caucasus] are published today in the newspaper Pravda.
Detailed investigation…revealed what is literally an appalling state of affairs from a Bolshevik point of view. Not merely had kulaks or their sympathizers crept into the party ranks, but such important posts as secretaryships and presidencies of local committees were held by former staff officers of Admiral Kolchak, General Denikin, and other counter-revolutionary forces.
The sons and daughters of landowners and merchants who had concealed their social origin had risen to high communist offices. In some cases the whole organization was “rotten with treason” and kulak resistance to the Soviet agrarian policy, while peasants, workers, and communists were eliminated or brow-beaten.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 289-90

SCOTT EXPLAINS WHY THE PURGE OCCURRED EAST OF URALS

The purge struck Magnitogorsk in 1937 with great force. Thousands were arrested, incarcerated for months, finally exiled. No group, no organization was spared.
This purge was part of a vast Union-wide storm which went on from 1935 until 1938. The causes of this purge have been widely discussed–I offer the following:
The October Revolution earned the enmity of the old aristocracy, the officers of the old Czarist army and of the various White armies, State employees from pre-war days, businessmen of all kinds, small landlords, and kulaks. All of these people had ample reason to hate the Soviet power, for it had deprived them of something which they had had before. Besides being internally dangerous, these men and women were potentially good material for clever foreign agents to work with.
Geographical conditions were such that no matter what kind of government was in power in the Soviet Union, poor, thickly populated countries like Japan and Italy and aggressive powers like Germany would leave no stone unturned in their attempts to infiltrate it with their agents, in order to establish their organizations and assert their influence, the better to chip pieces off for themselves. They sent fifth- columnists of all kinds into Russia, as they did into every other country. These agents bred purges.
Scott, John. Behind the Urals, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1942, p. 187

STALIN PROPOSES A JUST METHOD TO REINSTATE EXPELLED PARTY MEMBERS

[From Stalin's comments on Yezhov's report at the Plenum of the Central Committee on June 3rd, 1936….]
"I would like to say a few things concerning certain points which in my opinion are especially important if we are to put the affairs of the party in good order and direct the regulating of party membership properly.
First of all, let me say something concerning the matter of appeals. Naturally, appeals must be handled in timely fashion, without dragging them out. They must not be put on the shelf. This goes about saying. But let me raise a question: Is it not possible for us to reinstate some or many of the appellants as candidate members? We do not allow, as you know, for a transitional category. Either you are a member of the Party are you are not. Either you are nothing in the eyes of the party are you are a party member with full rights. But there is a middle ground.
Party rules do not provide direct instructions as to whether a party member who has been expelled may be brought back into the party at least as a candidate member. Such instructions are not mentioned in the party rules, but there are no prohibitions against it, either. Insofar as these party expellees cannot, as things stand, be reinstated as full members, why couldn't we reinstate some of the appellants into the party as candidate members? Why can't we do it?!
Voices: We can! We can!
Stalin: There are no prohibitions in the party rules on this account, though there are no direct instructions concerning this, either.
Voices: It is now being done.
Stalin: No, I don't think that it is being done. To this day, a certain, if I may say so, wholesale attitude toward party members has held sway among party leaders. They expel you. You

appeal. If they can reinstate you as a full member of the party, fine. If they can't, then you remain outside the party. All ties with the Party are severed. We have party sympathizers, party candidate members, and party members, and they are connected with each other. If party members are expelled and cannot be reinstated as full party members, then they are not reinstated as sympathizers or candidate party members. Is this practice right? In my opinion, such a practice is not right.
For this reason, it would be a good idea if the Orgburo of the Central Committee clarified this as soon as possible, if it explained that it doesn't follow from the party rules, from the traditions of the Bolshevik party, that a party member who has been expelled could not be reinstated as a candidate member or a sympathizer. This, after all, will allow a man to retain certain spiritual and organizational ties with the party. This opens up real prospects for him. Party organizations must learn well the following principle: they must establish a gradation, whereby they can determine whom to reinstate as party members–if the facts and materials available justify it–whom to reinstate as candidate members, and whom perhaps to reinstate as sympathizers, so as to give such comrades a real prospect, so as to help them rise and later become full party members.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 233-234

…Stalin had personally intervened (textually, if not orally) and had criticized the party secretaries and, implicitly, Yezhov. To those in the senior nomenklatura and the Central Committee, Stalin had been sharply critical of the entire screening process, suggesting it had targeted the wrong people.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 243

In several places, Andreev told Stalin that the former local party leadership, through its control of the local NKVD, had arrested large numbers of innocent people. In Saratov, Andreev reported that the former ruling group had dictated false testimony for the signatures of those arrested, and he blamed it on the "Agranov gang" within the NKVD. In Voronezh, Andreev complained that "masses" of innocent people had been expelled and arrested. With Stalin's approval, Andreev organized special troikas to review these cases–600 in Voronezh alone–and release those arrested by the now condemned former leadership.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 455

STALIN ATTACKS BAD EXPULSIONS AND DEMANDS THEY BE REINSTATED

The criticism of regional party chiefs in early 1937 also revisited the issue of who had been wrongly expelled in the recently completed membership screenings of 1935-36: the verification and exchange of party documents. As we have seen, those operations had been under the control of the regional chiefs themselves and had resulted in mass expulsions of rank-and-file party members; only rarely were any full-time party officials expelled in these screenings.
In June 1936, Stalin and others complained about this practice and ordered the territorial leaders to "correct mistakes" by speeding up appeals and readmissions of those who had been expelled for no good reason. At that time, Stalin interrupted Yezhov's speech to note that the screenings were being directed against the wrong targets. In early March 1937,

top-level Moscow leaders again denounced the “heartless and bureaucratic” repression of “little people.” Malenkov noted that more than 100,000 of those expelled had been kicked out for little or no reason, while Trotskyists who occupied party leadership posts had passed through the screenings with little difficulty.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 358

Stalin echoed the theme in one of his speeches to the February-March 1937 plenum. According to him, by the most extravagant count the number of Trotskyists, Zinovievists, and rightists could be no more than 30,000 persons. Yet in the membership screenings, more than 300,000 had been expelled; some factories now contained more ex-members than members. Stalin worried that this was creating large numbers of embittered former party members, and he blamed the territorial chiefs for the problem: “All these outrages that you have committed are water for the enemy’s mill.”…
On the other hand, even in the darkest days of the hysterical hunt for enemies in 1937 and 1938, most of those expelled back in 1935 and 1936 who appealed to Moscow were reinstated. Virtually all those expelled for “passivity” were readmitted, and appellants charged with more serious party offenses who appealed to the party control commission in Moscow…were usually readmitted, the proportion of successful appeals reaching 63 percent by 1938.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 359

PURGING IS A RISKY BUSINESS

Testing for loyalty and reliability, you know, is very complicated. Herein lies the danger for a state, especially a dictatorship of the proletariat, any dictatorship–it requires harsh, unquestioning discipline. But who is to maintain it? People who do not always want it, down deep oppose it, and oppose it in practice as long as that is possible. But the moment they sense danger, they go too far to curry favor and to protect their careers. Many, many deeds have been committed by such people, because we do not have ready-made pure people, purged of all sins, people who would carry through a very complicated, difficult policy fraught with all kinds of unknowns. Verify or not, verification itself is not always appropriate. To stage a purge of the party is very dangerous. The best people are the first purged. Many people who are honest and speak frankly are expelled while those who keep everything in the dark and are eager to curry favor with the party chiefs retain their positions.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 255

SOME PEOPLE ARE EXPELLED AND READMITTED MANY TIMES

Riz, lieutenant-captain in the navy, was the head of the clandestine movement in the Black Sea flottila. Expelled from the Party four times, he was reintegrated four times.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 180 [p. 160 on the NET]

[Footnote]: Frumkin. Vice-Commissar for Foreign Trade since 1928, having also held that post from 1924 to 1926. An old Bolshevik and member of the armed underground in 1906, he was accused by Stalin of “opportunist, right-wing deviations” at the November 1928

Plenum of the Communist Party Central Committee. Removed from Office in 1930, he was again appointed to the Commissariat for Foreign Trade two years later.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 145

[Footnote]: Serebryakov. Former Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, 1919-20 and later Commissar for Communications. Expelled from the party in 1927; reinstated in 1930; tried and executed in 1937.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 233

Radek: He returned to Russia in 1920 and rose to the leadership of the Comintern, but having associated with the Trotsky opposition he was expelled from the party in 1925. Readmitted in 1930, he again rose to prominence as a journalist, propagandist, and official Communist spokesman and in 1935 he was a member of the Constitutional Commission designated by the Seventh All-Union Congress of Soviets to draft the text of the new "Stalin" Constitution…. But in 1937 he was charged with treason and conspiracy and, after repudiating his former political associates at a public trial, he was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 327

It was logical that sooner or later the factional activities of the opposition which in themselves endangered the revolution by attempting to undermine the party's authority–would lead to open counter-revolutionary acts. This was the case on Nov. 7, 1927, on the occasion of the Tenth Anniversary of the Revolution.

On this date the leaders of the opposition attempted to organize a demonstration against the Central Committee of the Party and the Soviet Government. After such an act the question of their expulsion was unavoidable.

On December 18, 1927, 75 leading members of the opposition were expelled from the Party. Later Zinoviev and Kamenev again "recanted," and were readmitted to the Party, only to be again expelled in 1932 for duplicity and deceiving the Party.

Once more, in 1933, Zinoviev and Kamenev publicly renounced their views, and just prior to the Seventeenth Party Congress, in 1934, were readmitted to the Party–at a time when, as subsequent events showed, they were organizing the murder of Kirov and plotting the murder of Stalin and others….

All their "recantations" and "pledges" turned out to be double-faced dealing. Events proved that they never gave up their struggle. Their thirst for power took them along the path to terrorism.
Shepherd, W. G. The Moscow Trial. London: Communist Party of Great Britain, 1936, p. 12

He [Zinoviev] was nominal head of the Troika in 1924. In 1925, he joined with Trotsky's Left Opposition and was expelled from the CPSU by the 15th Party Congress in December 1927. Sent to Siberia, he recanted, was reinstated in 1928; he was again exiled and repeated the recantment and was again reinstated in 1932. In 1935, after the Kirov murder, he was sentenced for "complicity." In the first Moscow trial of August 1936 he was, in Trotsky's absence, the leading target and was executed after he "confessed."

He [Kamenev] was a member of the Troika with Zinoviev and Stalin but was expelled from the CPSU in 1927. He recanted, was readmitted, and like Zinoviev, he again was expelled, recanted, and was readmitted in 1932.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 244

Kamenev–Soviet revisionist politician; USSR Commissar Of Trade (1926-27); Minister to Italy (1927); leader of Trotskyist opposition (1926-28); expelled from CPSU (1927); readmitted (1928); Chairman, Main Concessions Committee (1929); again expelled from party (1932); again readmitted (1933); expelled from party for third time (1934); sentenced to imprisonment for terrorism (1935); sentenced to death for treason and executed (1936).

In 1921 he [Radek] was made secretary of the Comintern. In December 1927, at the 15th Party Congress, he was expelled from the CPSU for “Left Oppositionism” and was banished to the Urals but soon recanted and was reinstated. In 1932 he was the Comintern representative in Germany. In the late 1930s he was the senior foreign correspondent for many Moscow publications.

From 1921-26 he [Sokolnikov] was deputy, then chairman, of Narkomfin, but his descent began in 1925 when he joined with Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Krupskaya in opposition to Stalin. He was sent to the United Kingdom as ambassador in 1929, lost his Central Committee seat in 1933, was reinstated as a candidate in 1934, but was demoted to deputy peoples’ commissar for forestry in 1935. He was purged in the 1937 “trial of the 17,” and was sentenced to 10 years in jail, where he died.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 257

In 1925 he [Evdokimov] joined the Central Committee and was a strong supporter of Trotsky in 1927. He was expelled from the Party in 1935, recanted and was readmitted to the Party, then was purged with Zinoviev and Kamenev and executed in 1936.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 264

Uglanov–Commissar of Labor (1928-30): expelled from Party (1932); reinstated in the Party (1934): re-expelled from the Party, arrested, tried for and found guilty of anti-Soviet activity, and sentenced to imprisonment (1936)

Bukharin–Editor of Pravda (1918-29); editor of Bolshevik (1924-29); editor of Izvestia (1934-37); Member of Politburo (1924-29); President of Communist International (1926-29); expelled from Party to (1929); readmitted to Party (1934); arrested (1937)

Kamenev–member of Politburo (1919-25); expelled from Party (1927); readmitted to Party (1928); re-expelled from the Party (1932); arrested (1935); sentenced for being guilty of moral complicity in the murder of Kirov (1935); found guilty of actual complicity in the murder of Kirov (1936)

Ryutin–expelled from the Party (1930); acquitted of counter-revolutionary activity and readmitted to the Party (1931); published the Ryutin Manifesto for the Opposition (1932); re-expelled from the Party (1932); arrested and imprisoned (1932); retried for, and found guilty of, treason (1937)

Zinoviev–President of Communist International (1919-26); member of Politburo (1921-26); expelled from the Party (1927); readmitted to the Party (1928); re-expelled (1932); readmitted (1933); re-expelled (1934); arrested (1935) and tried for, and found guilty of moral complicity in the murder of Kirov; tried for and found guilty of actual complicity in murder of Kirov (1936)

Zinoviev– Soviet revisionist politician; Member, Politburo, Central Committee of the CPSU (1925); headed Leningrad opposition (1926); expelled from CPSU (1927); readmitted (1928); again expelled from Party (1932); again readmitted (1933); imprisoned for terrorism (1935); sentenced to death and executed for treason (1936).

Lominadze–Secretary of Communist Youth International (1925-26); expelled from Party for factionalism (1927); reinstated in Party and again expelled (1936); found guilty of treason (193

Throughout [until] 1937, ex-Party leaders who had been demoted, expelled, or sent into exile, were routinely brought back into leadership positions. Once they criticized their past practices they were released from banishment (for example, many of Trotsky's supporters, including numerous former supporters of the United Opposition of 1926-27, were released in 1928, after they had endorsed the new rapid industrialization line of the Party) and restored to a high level positions in the Party and state. For example, Bukharin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov, Tomsky, leaders of the various oppositional factions in the Party in the 1924-29 period, were restored to leadership positions– although never to the powerful positions they once held. Bukharin, for example, lost his important posts in 1929 including membership on the Politburo, the editorship of Pravda and the chairmanship of the Comintern for actively opposing the collectivization and rapid industrialization campaign. In the relatively tolerant climate during 1932-34, however, he was first made director of the research department of heavy industry and then given the responsible post of editor of Izvestia, which he held from 1934 to 1937. Tomsky, although he lost his position as leader of the trade unions and his seat on the Politburo (for the same reasons that Bukharin lost his position), remained on the Central Committee of the Party, and was re-elected at the 16th Party Congress in 1930. At the 17th Party Congress in 1934 both Tomsky & Bukharin were elected as candidate members of the Central Committee, as were other prominent, past opponents of the prevailing party policies (for example, Rykov), and one of them, Pyatakov, was elected as a full member. Zinoviev and Kamenev who, together with Stalin, had represented the maximal leadership of the Party in 1924-26, were removed from the Politburo and other leading positions, and in 1927 they were expelled from the Party for active opposition, including organizing street demonstrations to oppose the Party's continuing endorsement of the moderate New Economic Policy. In 1928, when most of their earlier critique was finally incorporated into the Party's new program of rapid industrialization and collectivization, they were both re-admitted and assigned relatively minor official posts. In 1932, they were once again expelled (and arrested) for oppositional activities, but again in the tolerant atmosphere prior to the Kirov assassination were re-admitted and again assigned Party work.

Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 228

Bukharin was expelled from the Politburo in 1929, and although appointed editor of Izvestia, the official government newspaper, in 1934, he never regained his previous power or influence….
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 83

Mdivani– Georgian nationalist politician; expelled from party for Trotskyism (1928); reinstated (1931); again expelled (1936); sentenced to death for treason and executed (1937).

[At the closed joint meeting of the ECCI party organization and the ECCI Komsomol organization on 28 December 1934]

HECKERT : But Zinoviev is very well known. For many years he duped the Comintern with his theory of two perspectives. He was expelled from the party three times, and three times he appealed [for readmission]. Three times he betrayed the friends to whom he was tied. And such an educated man as Magyar considered Zinoviev a distinguished personality, from whom he received advice. I am completely unable to understand it.
Chase, William J., Enemies Within the Gates?, translated by Vadim A. Staklo, New Haven: Yale University Press, c2001, p. 73.

The pair [Zinoviev and Kamenev] had been expelled from the party in 1927 and readmitted in 1928, only to be re-expelled, and exiled within the Soviet Union, in 1932 on charges that they failed to report what they knew about the Ryutin platform. But in harmony with the relaxation of 1933 they again were pardoned and appeared at the party Congress of early 1934 as repentants. But on 16 December 1934 following the death of Kirov, they were arrested once again along with several associates on suspicion of involvement in the Kirov case.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 175

INCOMPETENT PARTY LEADERS ARE EXPELLING AND PURGING THE WRONG PEOPLE

In January 1938, the Central Committee published a resolution on how the purge was taking place. It reaffirmed the necessity of vigilance and repression against enemies and spies. But it most criticized the "false vigilance" of some Party Secretaries who were attacking the base to protect their own position. It starts as follows:

"The VKP(b) Central Committee plenum considers it necessary to direct the attention of party organizations and their leaders to the fact that while carrying out their major effort to purge their ranks of Trotskyite-rightist agents of fascism they are committing serious errors and perversions which interfere with the business of purging the party of double dealers, spies, and wreckers. Despite the frequent directives and warnings of the VKP(b) Central Committee, in many cases the party organizations adopt a completely incorrect approach and expel Communists from the party in a criminally frivolous way."

Robert H. McNeal, editor, Resolutions and Decisions of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Volume 3, The Stalin Years: 1929–1953 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), p. 188.

…Yes, some Communists were unjustly hit, and crimes were committed during the purge. But, with great foresight, Stalin had already denounced these problems when the operation had only been running for six months. Eighteen years later, Khrushchev would use as a pretext the criminal activities of these provocateurs and careerists, denounced at the time by Stalin, to denigrate the purge itself and to insult Stalin!
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 190 [p. 166 on the NET]

Shortly before the Central Committee Plenum of January 1938, the press attacked the "false vigilance" of party secretaries who had victimized rank-and-file members to cover themselves. The January 1938 plenum produced a resolution that took a hard line against "certain careerist Communists who are striving to become prominent and to be promoted by recommending expulsions from the party through the repression of party members, who are striving to insure themselves against possible charges of inadequate vigilance through the indiscriminate repression of party members." This type of person "feels it unnecessary to make an objective evaluation of the accusations submitted against the Communist," "indiscriminately spreads panic about enemies of the people" and "is willing to expel dozens of members from the party on false grounds just to appear vigilant himself."

According to the resolution, such persons adopt "a completely incorrect approach, and expel Communists from the party in a criminally frivolous way." The resolution states, "There have been many instances of party organizations, without any verification and thus without any basis, expelling Communists from the party, depriving them of their jobs, frequently even declaring them enemies of the people without any foundation, acting lawlessly and arbitrarily toward party members….

It is time to understand that Bolshevik vigilance consists essentially in the ability to unmask an enemy regardless of how clever and artful he may be, regardless of how he decks himself out, and not in indiscriminate or "on the off-chance' expulsions, by the tens and hundreds, of everyone who comes within reach."

…The resolution gave several examples in which many expulsions from 1935-36 had been reversed by the higher party bodies or the Party Control Commission. The "heartless, bureaucratic attitude" on the part of the local party leaders allowed this to take place. Leaders were not considering their people on a "careful individual basis" and instead were "acting in an intolerably arbitrary manner."
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 186

In his final comment on the mistakes of the cleaning operations, Zhdanov cited the decisions of the February 1937 plenum and the January 1938 plenum,…

It might seem that such righteous indignation [at these plenums] after the operation was at least hypocritical and that, by speaking out at this late date, the leadership was trying to shift

the blame for the repression that they themselves had encouraged or tolerated. This is the general explanation for these remarks given by most students of the period. Its flaw, however, is that these criticisms had been voiced many times before, even during the cleaning operations themselves. The Central Committee had taken a stand on these errors at least as early as March 1936 (when, according to Khrushchev-era party histories, the first complaints from party members reached Pravda and the Central Committee). Indirect evidence even suggests that the matter was discussed in the Central Committee as early as December 1935, in connection with Yezhov's report on the proverka. Stalin associated his name with the criticism as early as June 1936 and strongly condemned the "outrageous practices," including even indiscriminate approaches to Trotskyists, in his speech to the February plenum in 1937. An attack on the local leaders responsible for these mistakes was the main topic at the January 1938 plenum, whose resolution finally led to a reversal of many of the errors. It was not that the Central Committee had been silent all the time, but rather that its admonitions had been ignored by local secretaries.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 193

PEOPLE UNJUSTLY EXPELLED AND PURGED APPEALED AND WERE READMITTED

Even before the 1938 Plenum, there were 53,700 appeals against expulsions. In August 1938, there were 101,233 appeals. At that time, out of a total of 154,933 appeals, the Party committees had already examined 85,273, of which 54 per cent were readmitted.
J. Arch Getty, Origins of the Great Purges: The Soviet Communist Party Reconsidered, 1933–1938 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 190.

It [Pravda] noted that, before the January 1938 plenum, there had been 53,700 appeals under consideration. Since the plenum, an additional 101,233 had been submitted, making a total of 154,933. Of these, party committees had so far examined 85,273, and 54 percent (46,047) of those appealing had been readmitted.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 190

PURGES WERE NECESSARY AND SAVED THE SU FROM THE FIFTH COLUMNISTS AND DEFEAT

It is precisely because of the purge and the education campaign that accompanied it that the Soviet people found the strength to resist. If that steadfast will to oppose the Nazis by all means had not existed, it is obvious that the fascists would have taken Stalingrad, Leningrad and Moscow. If the Nazi Fifth Column had succeeded in maintaining itself, it would have found support among the defeatists and the capitulationists in the Party. If the Stalin leadership had been overthrown, the Soviet Union would have capitulated, as did France. A victory of the Nazis in the Soviet Union would have immediately helped the pro-Nazi tendency in the British bourgeoisie, still powerful after Chamberlain's departure, take the upper hand from Churchill's group. The Nazis would probably have gone on to dominate the whole world.

Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 194 [p. 171 on the NET]

Footnote: In his book Only the Stars Are Neutral, written after ten weeks in Russia in 1941, Quentin Reynolds said: “Today there is not one Fifth Columnist, not one Quisling at liberty in Soviet Russia. The Germans tried desperately to set up local tribunals with local citizens as nominal heads of the tribunals when they captured cities like Odessa, Kiev, and others which fell to them during their successful march through the south last autumn. But in no case were they successful. Potential Quislings were all in the work camps of the far north. Stalin knew what he was doing back in 1938. Russia’s magnificent unity today and her completely unbroken spirit after the dreadful tragedy of that German advance is proof of the fact that Russia accepted the purge and approved of Stalin’s “You can’t make an omelette without breaking eggs” policy.
Knightley, Phillip. The First Casualty. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975, p. 264

EXPULSIONS & REINSTATEMENTS BY POLICE HELPED DETERMINE WHO WERE RELIABLE POLICE

Riz was, I think, four times expelled from a party and four times reinstated. In the Soviet Union there was a special order of such…Party ‘expellees’, who were of positive value to the cause of humanity. Every expulsion and every reinstatement involved lengthy debates in Party assemblies, and through these the fluctuating strengths and weaknesses of the regime were constantly under review. By them, moreover, we knew the power of men like Comrade X, or Army General 0sepyan, or Yenukidze, or even NKVD bosses Yagoda or Beria, or Regional Secretary Sheboldayev, in their roles not of servants, but of enemies of the regime.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 6

PEOPLE ARE EXPELLED AND REINSTATED REPEATEDLY

… He [Yefimov] was a sturdy little army engineer, an old Party member, but with no less than 10 expulsions and reinstatement behind him;…
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 60

My own record was dismal: expulsion from the Komsomol; expulsion from my Trade Union; Trade Union reprimand; expulsion from Leningrad; the charge of Trotskyism; the charge of Right-wing deviation and “civilian democratism”; one expulsion from the Party; a second expulsion from the Party; a stern Party reprimand; a second stern Party reprimand; a third expulsion from the Party which ended in a stern Party reprimand with final warning.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 74

Zinoviev and Kamenev had been expelled for the third time in 1934, on suspicion of politically inspiring Nikolayev in the murder of Kirov.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 117

PURGES DECREASED THROUGH THE 30’S AND DIFFER FROM THE EZHOVSHCHINA

The traditional view of the events of 1933-39–which sees them as related and incremental parts of the same terrorist crescendo–needs revision. Fainsod and others described the 1933-39 period as an “almost continuous purge” in the Western Region, and his conceptual framework has dominated nearly all views of the period. It is based on the idea that after 1933 (or 1934) there was a constantly increasing level of “purging” accompanied by a similarly rising curve of fear and panic. According to this view, the continuous purge began in 1933 with the chistka. The assassination of Politburo member Kirov in December 1934 “touched off a new round of almost continuous purges,” which expanded in “everwidening circles.” In the months after Kirov’s murder, “the net was spread wide,” leading to a hail storm of indiscriminate denunciations and a “rich haul” of victims….

This view is weakly supported by the available primary evidence. Aside from particular errors…this interpretation suffers from grave phenomenological problems.

First, in terms of their attrition to the Party the 1933-36 membership screenings were actually a decrescendo, in that each operation expelled fewer members than the previous one. Indeed, these purges were milder than their direct ancestors of the 1920s.

Second, most expulsions were for nonideological and nondissident infractions: violations of party discipline, theft, abuse of position. Simple nonparticipation accounted for more of those expelled than did political crimes. The screenings were hardly “heresy hunts,” and to associate the benign exchange of party documents with the “acts of the purge” is at least inaccurate.

The chistki were different from the Ezhovshchina, although Yezhov was involved in both. They had different targets and were conducted by different agencies for different reasons. In fact, the membership purges ended before the Ezhovshchina began, and readmission upon appeal began before, and continued during, the terror…. All political events of 30s were not simply related parts of the same Great Purges crescendo.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 201-202

Given the one-sided nature of discourse in the field, it may perhaps not be gratuitous to point out some of the minor, more technical aspects of the revisionist view of the origins of the terror that are being confirmed by new archival evidence.

First, when Stalin said in the fall of 1936 that the NKVD was “four years behind” in uncovering oppositionist plots, he was indeed referring to the 1932 united oppositionist bloc brokered by Trotsky & Smirnov, and not to the Ryutin platform. The 1932 bloc was, then, the catalytic event in the escalation of Stalinist terror.

Second, we also now have confirmation of the fact that party expulsions in the 1935-37 period (that is, after the Kirov assassination and before the onslaught of the terror) were steadily decreasing in number, even after the first show trial in the summer of 1936 and were not especially directed against oppositionists, “wreckers,” or “spies.”

Third, the January 1938 Central Committee resolution criticizing excessive vigilance and unjust persecutions was directed against regional party machines and their leaders who, like

Postyshev, expelled rank-and-file members to divert attention from their own people. It had nothing to do with the NKVD.

[Footnote: Roughly 264,000 people were expelled in 1935, 51,500 in 1936. In both years of "chistka" only 5.5% of those expelled were accused of opposition and .9% for being "spies" or having "connections to spies." Class- alien origins and personal corruption comprised the overwhelming majority.]
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 60

A resolution on a more general purging of the Party was passed by a plenum of the Central Committee on 12 January 1933. More than 800,000 members were expelled during the year, and another 340,000 in 1934.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 26

Between November 1936 and March 1939, including 1937, when the 'Great Purge' was at its most intense, roughly 160,000 to 180,000 people left the CPSU (for any reason). This represented about 8% of total Party members, far fewer than those who were expelled in the purge of 1933.

In 1937, at the height of the Great Purge in Moscow, 33,000 (13.4% of the total Moscow Oblast Party organization) left to the party; this compares with 133,000 in 1933 and 45,500 in 1935.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 241

THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF A STALIN MASTER PLAN TO ELIMINATE OPPONENTS IN THE 30'S

Some will feel that this study has taken a naive view of Stalin's role as planner and perpetrator. There's no doubt that he had chief responsibility for political leadership, but the present account has more than once failed to conclude that the events were part of a coherent plan. Evidence of high-level confusion, counterproductive initiatives, and lack of control over events has not supported the notion of a grand design. Careful analysis of archival, documentary, press, and creditable memoir sources neither supports nor disproves the existence of a plan. It is still possible that the events of 1933-39 were parts of a devilish and devious strategy, but the evidence indicates that a master Stalin plan must remain an a priori assumption, an intuitive guess, or a hypothesis. It can be suspected but not established on the basis of the presently available classes of evidence.

Stalin did not initiate or control everything that happened in the party and country. The number of hours in the day, divided by the number of things for which he was responsible, suggests that his role in many areas could have been little more than occasional intervention, prodding, threatening, or correcting. In the course of a day, Stalin made decisions on everything from hog breeding to subways to national defense. He met with scores of experts, heard dozens of reports, and settled various disputes between contending factions for budgetary or personnel allocations. He was an executive, and reality forced him

to delegate most authority to his subordinates, each of whom had his own opinion, client groups, and interests.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 203

First, the results of [Getty's] research show that the political events during the thirties were not "a unified phenomenon (the Great Purges), which can be studied as a process planned, prepared, and carried out" by Stalin and his most intimate men.

Second, the research shows that the allegation that "the Old Bolsheviks of Lenin's (and Stalin's) generation were the purges' target" has no relationship with reality. Further, Getty confirms that it is time to review what has been taught about the Soviet Union of the thirties.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

Some students of the 1930s view the period from December 1934 to 1939 as one in which Stalin orchestrated events according to a preconceived plan. To date, there is no evidence to prove that argument, which is based on assumptions about Stalin's intentions.
Chase, William J., Enemies Within the Gates?, translated by Vadim A. Staklo, New Haven: Yale University Press, c2001, p. 321.

Everything seems to indicate that Stalin and his lieutenants worked to expand their power at the expense of local leaders, to centralize decision-making power by reducing local authorities use of repression, and to modernize the judicial system by making it more uniform, transparent, and predictable. The eruption of mass repression in the kulak order of mid-1937 seems therefore not to have been part of any long-term planning or policy. Stalin had gone out of his way to identify himself with those who opposed mass operations; this would have been poor strategy indeed had he planned to launch one.
Getty, J. Arch. "Excesses are not permitted, "Russian Review 61 (January 2002) p. 122.

SECRET POLICE DID NOT AUTOMATICALLY ARREST THOSE EXPELLED FROM THE PARTY

It is already obvious that he NKVD did not automatically arrest people expelled from the party. Malenkov now gave sound and precise figures on this subject. In one district of Kuibyshev oblast, 50 of 210 Communists had been ousted, but the NKVD found no basis for arrest in 43 of the cases. The Central Committee of the Azerbaizhan Republic expelled 279 communists on one day in November 1937; of them, the NKVD arrested 63. Two-points stand out here: first, the NKVD began to investigate people after they encountered trouble in their party cells, not before, and second, it appears that the security organs investigated each charge rather than proceeding randomly.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 107

THE OLD BOLSHEVIKS RETAINED HIGH PARTY MEMBERSHIP & POSITIONS EVEN IN LATE 1930'S

The Old Bolsheviks, those who had joined the party before October 1917, and who were often cited as the key target group in the Terror, were not in fact especially singled out. About 5000 veterans of the prerevolutionary party were still members of it in March 1939, and 125,000 activists from the end of the Civil War were alive and at work. This group made up only 8.3% of the members of the Communist Party But Accounted for 20 Percent of the Delegates to the Eighteenth Party Congress and 73 percent of the Central Committee it elected.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 133

CAPITALISTS IGNORE PROOF AGAINST THOSE REMOVED AND PAINT IT AS AN UNJUST PURGE

Yet when the Communist Party of the Soviet Union proceeds to clear these people out of the Party, to remove them from the posts which they occupy in public life, a large part of the Socialist and Liberal press of the world, instead of approving the measures taken against those political degenerates, seeks to present their removal (and in some cases subsequent trial) as something of which democrats should be heartily ashamed. Thus it was possible for the Liberal and Socialist press to report day after day the arrests or removal of persons whose political and administrative degeneracy had helped wrecking, almost as if these people were the victims of a dictatorial "Stalin purge." The wide discussion and criticism which was raging in the unions and the Party, and which was leading to the further exposure of wrecking, was ignored in most of the "democratic" press.
Now the facts about the activity of the workers in the unions and the Party were as prominent in the Soviet press as were the accounts of people who had been dismissed from their posts and put on trial. But those facts were inconvenient. They did not fit in with the conception of a workers' dictatorship which is held by the Liberal and Socialist press. They do not fit in with the calumny that Stalin–for reasons always unexplained–is waging war on the Old Guard.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 189

PEOPLE ARE FORGIVEN AND GO ON TO DO GOOD WORK FOR THE PARTY

[Oct. 4, 1930, Petition from Kolgushkin for Reinstatement in the Party]
I beg the Presidium of The Central Committee of the All Union Communist Party to return me to the ranks of the Party. This will enable me to participate with even greater strength in the building of socialism, the party's struggle to surmount problems, and to atone for my guilt….
Following this, in May 1929, I was appointed chief of the Kuznetsk construction project. Organizing construction at a new location absorbed all my time. I had to move from Novosibirsk and was, successively, at the construction site in Tomsk and in Moscow. I was subsequently sent on an official trip to America to negotiate a contract with an engineering firm for building the Kuznetsk plant and to place orders for equipment. I spent eight months altogether in America and Germany.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 106

WHAT WAS NOTED, ANALYZED AND STUDIED DURING PURGE HEARINGS

During the purge, documents were collected and carefully verified by appropriate organs. When discrepancies were noted or something seemed unclear, an explanation was demanded of the person undergoing verification or inquiries were dispatched to various institutions. Verification results, including the verified person's own written explanation and other clarifying information, were duly included in the personal file of the person being verified. The number of documents required for each personal file constantly grew until it included an assessment of qualifications for a given type of work, references, evaluation of previous work performed, documentation of Marxist education, personal attributes, and, finally, Party references. In the file were also put denunciation letters, cadre verification results, and so forth.
During purge committee sessions questions were raised about participation in the revolutionary movement, Party membership, and knowledge of Marxist-Leninist theory.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 126

The party is purged of the following people:
1. class alien and hostile elements who made their way into the party by deceit and remain there in order to demoralize the party ranks;
2. double dealers who live by deceiving the party, who conceal from it their true aspirations and, covered by a false oath of 'fidelity' to the party, in fact strive to undermine the party's policy;
3. open and hidden violators of the iron discipline of the party and state who fail to carry out the decisions of the party and the state, who cast doubt on and discredit the party's decisions and plans by chatter about their 'lack of realism' and 'impracticablity';
4. degenerates who have merged with bourgeois elements, who do not really want to fight against class enemies, who are not really struggling against kulak elements, grabbers, loafers, thieves, and despoilers of public property;
5. careerists, self-seekers, and bureaucratized elements who exploit their sojourn in the party and their service with the Soviet state for their own personal self-seeking aims, who are isolated from the masses and disregard the needs and demands of the workers and peasants;
6. mortal degenerates whose unseemly behavior injures the dignity of the party, who sully the party banner.
Considering that among the party members who have recently entered the ranks of the Communist Party there are some comrades who are devoted to the cause of the working-class and have manifested this devotion in practice–in production, in the kolkhozes–but have not yet mastered the most elementary political knowledge necessary for a member of the Communist Party–the party Programme and Rules, its most important decisions–the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission of the party recommend that during the purge such Communists be transferred to the status of candidate member, not as a party penalty but for the sake of their political education and better training, so that in a year's time the question may be raised of transferring them back to party members if during this time they will have succeeded in heightening the knowledge of political fundamentals which is necessary for a party member.

Considering that, due to the same circumstances, among the party candidates there are not a few comrades who not only do not possess the elementary political knowledge necessary for a candidate but still suffer from instability and a lack of the self-command required by party discipline, the party Central Committee and Central Control Commission recommend that during the purge such comrades be transferred from the category of candidates to that of sympathizers, so that in a year's time the question may be raised of transferring them back to candidates or of admitting them to party membership if a check shows that they have fully matured.
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 126

The party had able men in its ranks but never enough of them. The purges it carried out–four between 1921 in 1934–were aimed at the corrupt, the incapable, and the opportunists as well as "deviationists" and "oppositionists."
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 389

CONTROL COMMISSION SET UP IN 1921 TO ADMINISTER PURGES

The picture would be incomplete without mention of another institution, the Central Control Commission, that came to loom large in Bolshevik affairs. Its role vis-a-vis the party was analogous to that of the Commissariat of the Inspectorate vis-a-vis the governmental machine: it audited party morals. It was formed at the 10th Congress, in 1921, on the demand of the Workers' Opposition, with which the Congress had otherwise dealt so harshly. It was in charge of the so-called purges. These, too, were initiated by the 10th Congress, on the demand of the Opposition. They were intended to cleanse the party periodically of careerists, who had climbed the band-wagon in great numbers, of Communists who had acquired a taste for the bourgeois life, and commissars who heads had been turned by power. Lenin adopted the idea and intended to use it in order to stop his followers departing from the party's puritanic standards. But he also turned one edge of the purges against 'anarcho-syndicalists', waverers, doubters, and dissidents, against the real initiators of the new practice.
The procedure of the purges was at first very different from what it became in later years. The purges were no concern of the judiciary. They were conducted by the party's local control commissions before an open citizens' forum, to which Bolsheviks and non–Bolsheviks had free access. The conduct of every member of the party, from the most influential to the humblest, was submitted to stern public scrutiny. Any man or woman from the audience could come forward as a witness. The Bolshevik whose record was found to be unsatisfactory was rebuked or, in extreme cases, expelled from the party. The Control Commission could impose no other penalties than these.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 233

The demand for a purge had come from the Workers Opposition at the 10th Congress; and the first purge was carried out in 1921. Police and the courts had nothing to do with the procedure. At public meetings the Control Commissions, i.e. party tribunals, examined the record and the morals of every party member, high or low. Every man and woman in the audience could come forward and testify for or against the investigated individual, whom the Control Commissions then declared either worthy or unworthy of continued membership.

The unworthy bore no punishment; but the loss of membership in the ruling party was likely to deprive him of chances of promotion or of a responsible post.
Within a short time 200,000 members, about one-third of the total membership, were thus expelled. The Control Commission classified those expelled into several categories: vulgar careerists; former members of anti-Bolshevik parties, especially former Mensheviks, who joined after the end of the civil war; Bolsheviks corrupted by power and privilege; and, finally, the politically immature who lacked an elementary grasp of the party's principles. It seems that people whose only fault was that they had criticized the party's policy or its leaders were not expelled.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Unarmed. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, p. 18

The Central Committee created a Control Commission of its own, which carried out the first general housecleaning with the result that 200,000 members were expelled from the Bolshevist ranks.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 199

PEOPLE LIED ABOUT OTHERS TO GET THEM PURGED AND EXPELLED

[Footnote:] The purges provided a good cover for all sorts of private vendettas. In May 1922, Lenin wrote in a letter to Stalin: '… the purging of the party revealed the prevalence, in the majority of local investigation committees, of personal spite and malice…. This fact is incontrovertible and rather significant.' In the same letter Lenin complained about the lack of partymen with 'an adequate legal education…capable of resisting all purely local influences'.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 234

SOME PEOPLE ARE BEING READMITTED TO THE PARTY WHILE OTHERS ARE BEING EXPELLED

Now it was again Stalin's turn to act. Towards the end of October 1926 he expelled Trotsky from the Politburo. Not a single representative of the Opposition now sat on that body. He deposed Zinoviev from the presidency of the Communist International and then indicted him before the Executive of the International, which confirmed the demotion. A Russian party conference endorsed the changes in the Politburo; and it also granted the requests of Shliapnikov and Medvedev for readmission to the party, after their exemplary recantation.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 309

OLD BOLSHEVIK WOMEN EXISTED THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE PERIOD OF STALIN'S LEADERSHIP

But there are many other cases of Old Bolshevik women surviving. Elena Stasova lasted right through the Stalin epoch. L. A. Fotieva, Lenin's secretary, who must also have known a good deal about what was one of Stalin's most sensitive points–the quarrel with Lenin in his last days–was also spared. So was Nikolayeva, the only woman full member of the 1934 Central Committee apart from Krupskaya, who was one of the few who was carried over into the Committee elected in 1939, and she was an ex-Zinovievite at that. Another case was Zemlyachka, member of the 1904 Central Committee. A brutal terrorist, she had been Bela Kun's chief colleague in the great slaughter in the Crimea in 1920, to which Lenin himself

had objected. She survived, while Kun went to the execution cellars. Alexandra Kollontai, the star of the Workers' Opposition, had been married to Dybenko and had lived with Shliapnikov. On top of all this, after her acceptance of the Stalin line she remained as ambassador (to Sweden),… she survived the Stalin epoch unscathed, en post.
… Another "category" to be spared has no such obvious source: the former Bolshevik members of the Duma (including Petrovsky, who was under the direct threat in 1939) all survived.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 69

PARTY MUST REBUFF THOSE ATTACKING EXPOSERS & ATTACK THOSE DECRYING GOOD PEOPLE

The purge commissions and all party members must resolutely rebuff anyone who will attempt to exploit the purge to settle personal accounts, for purposes of factional struggle; they must rebuff all troublemakers and cavillers, and also anyone attempting to defame a Communist for the firmness with which he carries out the party line in the fight for party discipline, for economy, for fulfillment of the industrial and financial plan, for the timely delivery of grain, for a proper preparation for the spring sowing, the harvest, and distribution of the crop, and generally for a firm attitude with respect to the accuracy and precision with which the party members under a given comrade in a leading position perform their work. At the same time a no less resolute rebuff must be given to anyone attempting to decry as troublemakers and cavillers all those who are sincerely striving to help the party disclose during the purge the alien, unstable, and unreliable elements in its ranks or to point out the actual oversights, short-comings, errors, and defects in the work of one or another comrade or of some whole organization.
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 127

EXPELLING PEOPLE FROM THE PARTY CREATES RESENTMENT AND ENEMIES

[A 19 January 1938 Pravda editorial says,] Certain of our party leaders suffer from an insufficiently attentive attitude toward people, toward party members, toward workers. What is more, they do not study the party workers, do not know how they are coming along and how they are developing, do not know their cadres at all. That is why they do not take an individualized approach to party members, to party workers. But the individualized approach is the main thing in our organizational work. And precisely because they do not take an individualized approach to the evaluation of party members and party workers they usually act aimlessly–either praising them indiscriminately and beyond measure or chastising them also indiscriminately and beyond measure, expelling them from the party by the thousands and tens of thousands. Certain of our party leaders strive in general to think in tens of thousands, not troubling themselves over the 'units,' the individual party members and their fate. They consider the expulsion of thousands or tens of thousands of persons from the party to be a trifle and console themselves with the idea that our party is large and that tens of thousands of expulsions cannot change anything in the party's situation. But only persons who are in essence profoundly anti-party can take such an approach to party members.

Such a callous attitude toward persons, party members, and party workers artificially creates dissatisfaction and resentment in one section of the party.
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 183

It is obvious that the Trotskyite double dealers adroitly latch on to such resentful comrades and skillfully drag them along into the swamp of Trotskyite maliciousness….
The practice of adopting a formalistic and callously bureaucratic attitude to the fate of individual party members, to the exclusion of party members from the party, or to the restoration of excluded members to the rights of membership, is condemned.
Party organizations are directed to display the maximum care and comradely concern in resolving the question of expelling from the party or restoring expelled persons to the rights of party membership.
[From Pravda, January 19, 1938]
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 184

And if, in spite of this [the insignificance of the Trot forces], the Trotskyite wreckers nevertheless have some reserves or other around our Party, it is because of the incorrect policy of some of our comrades on the question of expulsion from the Party and reinstatement of expelled people. The heartless attitude of some of our comrades toward the fate of individual Party members and individual Party workers, artificially engender a number of discontented and embittered people, and thus create these reserves for the Trotskyites.
Stalin, Joseph. Mastering Bolshevism. San Francisco: Proletarian Publishers, 1972, p. 46

CAREERISTS WERE EXPELLING PEOPLE ON FALSE CHARGES TO ADVANCE THEMSELVES

[From Pravda, January 18, 1938–on errors of party organizations in expelling Communists from the Party, on Formal Bureaucratic Attitudes toward the Appeals of Those Expelled from the Communist Party, and on Measures to Eliminate the Shortcomings]
The Communist Party Central Committee plenum considers that all these and similar facts are widespread in party organizations primarily because among Communists there exist, still unrevealed and unmasked, certain careerist Communists who are striving to become prominent and to be promoted by recommending expulsions from the party, through the repression of party members, who are striving to insure themselves against possible charges of inadequate vigilance through the indiscriminate repression of party members.
This sort of careerist Communist assumes that once the deposition has been submitted against a party member, regardless of how incorrect or even provocational it may be, this party member is dangerous for the organization and must be gotten rid of immediately in order that he himself will be proven vigilant. Therefore he feels it unnecessary to make an objective evaluation of the accusations submitted against the communist and decides beforehand on the necessity of expelling him from the party.
This sort of careerist communist, anxious to curry favor, indiscriminately spreads panic about enemies of the people and at party meetings is always ready to raise a hue and cry about expelling members from the party on various formalistic grounds or entirely without such

grounds. And the party organizations frequently follow meekly along behind such careerist loudmouths.

This sort of careerist Communist is indifferent to the fate of party members and is ready to expel dozens of Communists from the party on false grounds just to appear vigilant himself. He is willing to expel members from the party for unimportant offenses so as to take credit for 'services' in unmasking enemies, and if the superior party organs restore those who have been incorrectly expelled from the party, he is not the least embarrassed but assumes the pose of a man who is satisfied that, in any case, he is reinsured with respect to 'vigilance.' The time has come to unmask such, if you will permit the expression, Communists and to brand them as careerists striving to curry favor by expelling others from the party and to reinsure themselves through repressions against party members.

Furthermore, numerous instances are known of disguised enemies of the people, wreckers and double dealers, organizing, for provocational ends, the submission of slanderous depositions against party members and, under the semblance of 'heightening vigilance,' seeking to expel from the Communist party ranks honest and devoted Communists, in this way diverting the blow from themselves and retaining their own positions in the party's ranks.

The unmasked enemy of the people and former chief of the leading party organs section of the Rostov oblast committee of the Communist party, Shatsky, together with his accomplices, exploited the political shortsightedness of the leaders of the Rostov oblast committee of the Communist party to expel honest Communists from the party, to impose knowingly incorrect penalties upon the party personnel, to embitter Communists in every way, and at the same time did everything possible to keep their own counter-revolutionary cadres in the party.

In this same Rostov the former chief of the school section of the Rostov oblast committee of the Communist Party, the enemy of the people Shestova, at the behest of a counter-revolutionary organization expelled from the party about 30 honest Communists in the party organization of the Rostov Pedagogical Institute.

All these facts show that many of our party organizations and their leaders have not yet succeeded in pinpointing and unmasking those cleverly disguised enemies who try to disguise their hostility with shouts about vigilance, thus to maintain themselves in the party ranks–in the first place–and, in the second, who strive through repressive measures to beat up our Bolshevik cadres and to sow uncertainty and excess suspicion in our ranks.

This disguised enemy–the most vicious traitor–usually shouts louder than anyone else about vigilance, hastens to 'unmask' the greatest number possible, and does all this to cover the up his own crimes before the party, to deflect the attention of the party organization from unmasking the real enemies of the people.

This disguised enemy–a repulsive double dealer–strives in every way to create in party organizations an atmosphere of excess suspicion in which every party member speaking in defense of another Communist who has been slandered by anyone at all is immediately accused of lack of vigilance and of ties with enemies of the people.

Instead of bringing to light and unmasking the provocational activity of this disguised enemy, the party organizations and their leaders are frequently led by the nose, create for him an atmosphere of impunity for his slander of honest Communists, and themselves take the course of unfounded mass expulsions from the party, mass penalties, etc.. What is more, even after the enemies who have made their way into the party apparatus and are slandering honest Communists have been unmasked, our party leaders frequently fail to take measures to liquidate the effects of this sabotage in the party organizations–i.e. the proper expulsion of Communists from the party.

Everyone knows that many of our party leaders turned out to be politically nearsighted big operators who permitted themselves to be duped by enemies of the people and careerists and thoughtlessly relinquished to second-rate persons questions affecting the fate of party members, criminally abdicating their leadership of this matter.
The leaders of party organizations naively feel that correcting the errors committed with respect to those who were improperly expelled may undermine the party's authority and damage the cause of unmasking the enemies of the people, failing to understand that every instance of improper expulsion from the party plays into the hands of the party's enemies.
McNeal, Robert. Resolutions and Decisions of the CPSU–The Stalin Years: 1929-1953. Vol. 3. Toronto, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1974, p. 190-193

NOT ALL HIGH LEVEL REMOVALS WERE PURGES

… The so-called 'democracy campaign' of 1937 resulted in the displacement of about half of the Party's middle and lower-level leadership from their positions–but not generally 'purged,' that is, not expelled from the Party, or accused of treason, spying or sabotage largely as a result of rank and file activities.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 230

TIGHT NEW RULES ADOPTED AT THE 18TH CONGRESS REGARDING EXPULSIONS & PURGES

At the 18th Party Congress in March 1939, the events of the previous three years were criticized by Stalin, Molotov, and Zhdanov as having been accompanied by 'grave mistakes' and pathological suspicion that had most adversely affected the Party's work. Zhdanov, who gave one of the main political reports at the Congress, reprimanded the local Party organizations for 'stupid excess of zeal,' citing instance after instance of faked evidence and presumption of guilt by association. The resolution voted by the Congress summed up the purges as both unjust and ineffective. Party rules adopted at this Congress made new provisions for members' rights of appeal against expulsion, as well as banning the practice of mass purges of membership. A new rule passed at the 18th Congress read:
"When the question of the expulsion of a Party member or the reinstatement of an expelled member is discussed, the maximum caution and comradely consideration must be exercised and the grounds for the accusations brought against the Party member thoroughly investigated."
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 240

STALIN ARGUES FOR SENSIBLE GUIDELINES FOR PURGING PEOPLE

As there were plenty of passive elements, the exchange saw a mass of further expulsions through denial of new party cards. Most of these were apolitical, and Stalin intervened on the side of leniency and understanding,toward them. In the Central Committee plenum of 1-4 June 1936 he protested against wholesale expulsion of "passives." Industrious women textile workers in Ivanovo province should not have been expelled, for example, because of insufficient political literacy; it was the party organizations' business to improve their political literacy. The same point was made earlier in an unsigned Pravda editorial written in the hyper-peremptory tone that usually reflected Stalin's personal inspiration. "It is generally

known that the son does not answer for the father," it said, "and still less the grandson for the grandfather." Why, then, had the Brothers Mikhail and Alexei Popov been expelled from the party, with resulting loss of work, because their grandfather, now 20 years dead, owned a meat shop in Michurinsk? The purge should be conducted less as a campaign against passive members. Its main target must be "enemy and alien elements." Genuine Bolshevik vigilance lay in the ability to identify–and pitilessly unmask–the real enemy as distinguished from the mere violator of party discipline or party ethics.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 313

STALIN OPPOSES EXPULSION EXCEPT FOR THOSE WHO REFUSE TO RECANT & ONLY THROW MUD

[In a speech delivered to the Politburo on October 11, 1926 Stalin stated] The Central Committee has no desire to expel people from the Party. Expulsion is resorted to when there is no alternative. Take Smirnov, who was expelled–he was cautioned several times, and only then was he expelled. If he were to say that he recognizes his errors, if he were to conduct himself loyally, the decision of the Central Control Commission might be commuted. But far from acting loyally, far from acknowledging his errors, he has flown mud at the Party in his statement. Obviously, Smirnov's case cannot be reconsidered when he behaves in this way.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 8, p. 223

PURGES WERE NOT BLOODY REMOVALS BY A POWER HUNGRY DICTATORSHIP

What emerges clearly from the original documents is that the "Great Purge" simply did not have the characteristics of a victorious extermination campaign, meticulously planned by a strategist thirsting for revenge and absolute power, and carried out by his monolithic and obedient forces. On the contrary, begotten by the operation of a regime that was clearly out of control and ungovernable and not by the unchallengeable power of an omnipotent dictatorship, the dramatic events of 1936-1938 were the manifestation of a kind of civil war with the ruling elite itself.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 18

In relation to the purge of 1929, there is a detailed listing of the causes [of purges in other years]. It does in fact provide good information and does away with at least one myth that the purges would have been a way to get rid of opposing elements within the party. In 1929, 1.53 million party members went through the process of purges. Of these approximately 170,000 or 11 per cent were expelled. When they appealed to the Central control commission 37,000 got their party membership back (22 per cent of those expelled). In Smolensk, as many as 43 per cent of those expelled got their party membership back. When they are further examined, it turns out that the great majority were base members from the working class, who had been expelled by the local party functionaries for passivity. No regard had been taken to the living conditions which made it more difficult for these members to take part in the party activities.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

According to Getty, those expelled for political reasons “fractional” or oppositional activity were among the ones expelled for “violation of party discipline”. The former constitute 10 per cent of these 10 per cent. [Stated another way, 10% of all expulsions were for violations of party discipline and only 10% of these 10% were for fractional or oppositional activity]. Thus, the expulsions for political reasons were not more than one per cent of all expulsions which took place in the purges of 1929[13]. Compare this to the prevailing myth about the “Stalinists eliminating all those in opposition”. Moreover, the bourgeoisie always alleges, that those expelled met a certain death either in the work camps of the Gulag or just disappeared. Reality is something else. Of those expelled, only those caught with criminal acts theft, embezzlement, blackmail, sabotage or similar who were tried at court [went to work camps, etc.]. For the other expelled, life continued as usual, but now without the obligations which accompanied a membership but also without the support which membership did give.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

Let us now pass to the Soviet Union of the 1930-ies. The purges during the 1930-ies are precisely that what is always brought forth by those who want to defame socialism and reinforce the myth of the Soviet Union as an oppressive state. Among the most famous falsifiers of history we find the former police agent of the British secret service, Robert Conquest, the fascist Alexander Solsjenitsyn and the Russian social democrat Roy Medvedev.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

Another aspect of the statistics found by Getty concerns the allegation by Conquest and other rightists that the purge of 1933 was organised to throw out old Bolsheviks old party cadres from the days of Lenin who had come into opposition with Stalin. According to Getty, the allegation is improbable. The great majority by far of those expelled, two thirds in fact, had entered the party after 1928 and were for that reason to be considered relatively new party members. The distribution of those expelled as 23 per cent agricultural workers/farmers, 14.6 per cent civil servants and approx. 62 per cent workers shows, that the overwhelming majority, 85 per cent, were ordinary working men rather than party cadres from Lenin’s time. In The Great Terror Robert Conquest touches upon the purge of 1933 and hints that over a million members were expelled for political reasons. If one has knowledge of the history of the purges, it becomes evident that Conquest’s allegation is a lie.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

As can be seen [from the accusations leveled during a July 1935 meeting of the Smolensk town committee], more than a third of the accusations concerns kulaks and men who enriched themselves during NEP (the new economic policy). Another third plus of the accusations pointed at people who had committed severe moral and economic crimes. Only a small part of the accusations, hardly five per cent, had to do with political opposition. Simultaneously, one of six accusations, (circa 17 per cent) related to the criminal activities of leading cadres and political civil servants. On the national level, the party card control resulted in the expulsion of 170,000 members out of the 1.8 million investigated, i.e. 9.1 per cent.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

Let us now for a moment discuss some of the lies being divulged in capitalist mass media about the control of 1935. As we can see in the examples from the membership meetings in Smolensk the open debates dealt a hard blow against the bourgeois elements who had sneaked into the party, people who were hunting for economic and social gains. Anything from kulaks and merchants to thieves, former white army officers and tsarist policemen. Contrary to the version of the history falsifiers the [political] opposition was hardly at all affected. What happened during the party card control was above all that the workers of the party threw out from the party bourgeois elements who had been smuggled in. This is what makes the history falsifiers raging mad…. they totally lose their temper when forced to realise that the workers are in command in the party of the workers and that the discovery of inimical, bourgeois values led to expulsion.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

Another lie originating from the police agent Robert Conquest is that the objective for the control of 1935 was to eliminate the Old Bolsheviks. It is the same old, recurring story about a power crazy Stalin wanting to eliminating all the other Old Bolsheviks leaving him alone in power. The elimination of old Communists is an invented story which has nothing to do with reality. Arch Getty affirms in The Origins of the Great Purges that “Of the 455 expelled from the Smolensk City Committee, 235 had joined the party in 1929-32”[22]. At least half of those expelled could not have been old Bolsheviks.
Getty says further “Although the Great Purges are often associated with the decimation of the “Old Bolsheviks” the opposite seems to have been the case in Smolensk in 1935. On the average, party secretaries who were demoted or removed from office had joined the party in 1928, whereas their replacements had joined on the average two years earlier, in 1926. The replacement secretaries were about 3.7 years older as well. Thus those “not providing leadership” were replaced by older and more experienced party workers.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

The change of party cards in 1936 has also been used by Robert Conquest and the other history falsifiers in the dirty war against socialism. Conquest claims that there were massive purges undertaken during the exchange, and that the purges were higher in number than any before in the party. All this was, according Conquest, provoked by Stalin as a manoeuvre to ignite the moods against the [political] opposition awaiting the trials 19-24 August 1936 against the Trotsky-Zinoviev centre where Zinoviev, Kamenev and Smirnov were the main actors. They were, at the time, accused of having taken part in a conspiracy led from abroad by Trotsky to kill the leading persons of the Soviet government and grab power. Conquest’s allegations about mass expulsions in 1936 have for many years stood uncontradicted.
The figures in Getty’s research in the Smolensk archives prove that the statements by Conquest are complete lies. In fact, the purges during 1936 were the lowest in the history of the party, between two and three per cent of the members.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

A comparison between the years 1934 and 1937 also yields an interesting result. The number of “old Bolsheviks” was 182,600 at the 17th Party congress in 1934. At the 18th party congress 1939 they had diminished to 125,700. The reduction of “old Bolsheviks” during these five years, all causes included, even natural death and diseases, was 56,900 or approximately 31 per cent. A part of these 56,900, and probably a big part, were expelled

during the purge 1937. But still in 1939 125,700 “old Bolsheviks” were active, and the majority in leading positions in the party, all over the country. The myth that “Stalin had exterminated the “old Bolsheviks” is nothing but a myth, yet another lie by Conquest-CIA once initiated by Trotsky.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

PURGES OCCURRED DURING SEVERAL YEARS

After the re-registration of 1919 Lenin and the party leadership found that there were still considerable shortcomings in the party. The re-registration had not achieved its aim. A great number of new members continued to be drawn into the party without consideration to the directive of electing only workers and reliable elements from other classes. New purges took place 1921, 1928 and 1929.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

During the 1930-ies the party underwent three great purges: 1933, 1935 and 1937-1938. The first purge 1933 took part in a clime of great enthusiasm in society when the agricultural cooperatives spread all over the Soviet Union with great steps forward, and the industrial production attained results never before seen. The party had opened its doors for all who wanted to fight for socialism and hundreds of thousands new members had been elected during the first three years of the 1930-ies. Because of the great onslaught, the party leadership considered it to be a necessity to evaluate the new party members. They were seeking for opportunists, corrupt bureaucrats, criminals, anti-Semites, alcoholics or members violating party discipline.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

LOCAL LEADERS IGNORED PARTY ORDERS AND EXPELLED PEOPLE FOR WRONG REASONS

The party directives clarified that the purges should take place in a comradely atmosphere not allowing any deep digging into people’s private lives. Moreover, the party leadership encouraged base members to be openly critical against the local bureaucrats and warned the local party leaderships against expelling base members for passivity or political ignorance. The mistakes of 1929 were not to be repeated. Attention should be paid to the general development of members and in those cases it was deemed necessary party members could be degraded to candidates or sympathisers until they had improved their political knowledge or increased their participation in the activities of the party. Expulsion should be avoided as far as possible.
In spite of the directives, the purge of 1933 turned out differently from what the Central Committee had intended. In a country so vast as the Soviet Union the local party secretaries had a great power, which sometimes proved fatal. Facts show that local party secretaries did their best to avoid criticism from striking them or their near ones. In order to demonstrate their interest in a successful purge, some local secretaries threw out many base members, workers and farmers; faithful members, precisely the ones who should not have been expelled. The majority of those expelled were people who had entered the party between 1930 and 1933, who had not had time to get knowledge of all the party issues. Many had not been able to study the party programme in depth and Marxism-Leninism, and they were

regarded to be all too ignorant by the party secretaries. Others were people who had difficulties in taking full part in party life because of their work situation or family problems. During the purge of 1933 18.5 per cent of party members and candidates were expelled, circa 792,000….
The purge of 1933, which was terminated in the middle of 1934, revealed a serious contradiction within the party. The Central Committee wanted to throw out thieves and corrupt bureaucrats, but the biggest group expelled in fact almost one fourth were expelled for passivity. Passivity did not figure among the party directives as a criterion for expulsion. With the assistance of bureaucratic methods or authority gained for earlier merits, local party leaders did whatever they wanted without paying attention to the directives of the Central Committee. The extension of the antagonisms is implied by the one fourth expelled for passivity. The Central Committee had to do something about the local party leaders contravention of the party directives, but as the future was to show, it was not very easy.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

THE PURGES AND POLITICAL TRIALS ARE SEPARATE, DIFFERENT, AND UNRELATED

The political trials and the purges in the Communist party were two separate things which did not directly have anything to do with each other. The party members who were expelled and tried at court for having been involved in criminal or counter evolutionary activities were a small minority of all those who were expelled. In order to understand this, it is important to know the history of the political trials during the 1930-ies. Bourgeois history writings exclude such possibilities. They have made the events of the 1930-ies into a totally confused story and a grossly falsified mixture of happenings and myths, lies and half-truths, a falsification which presents the purges and the treason trials as the same one occurrence.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

THE MYTH OF THE EXPULSIONS OF 1937

The myth about the terrible year 1937 which the bourgeoisie has made one of its top items, not surprisingly through the police agent Robert Conquest and CIA / MI5, the true fathers of the myth are unmasked by the statistics about the purges during the whole of the1930-ies. [Party expulsions by year are as follows:] 1929 170.000 11%; 1933 792.000 18.5%; 1935 170.000 9%; 1936 —; 1937 100.000 5%; 1938 70.000 %2
Note! There are no national statistics for 1936. In Smolensk two/three per cent of the members were expelled.
Analysing the statistics one can perceive the dimension of the bourgeois lie. In fact, 1937 was one of the years of the lowest number of people expelled, not more than five per cent! How comes, that the bourgeoisie and its lackeys have transformed 1937 into the “Stalin’s incredible year of 1937 with “millions false accusations, millions deported, millions murdered” as Peter Englund likes to formulate it…. Why precisely 1937 taken as the worst that befallen the Soviet Union?
The explanation is related to class. The great difference between the purges of 1937 and other purges in the party is that during the other purges mainly base members, ordinary workers were expelled they constituted up to 80 per cent of all those expelled. The relationship was just the opposite 1937. Of all those expelled around 80 per cent were

corrupted party bigwigs and high level individuals of the army. These were people who had acquired privileges and financial advantages and who were prepared even to collaborate with Nazi Germany to keep them. These were people who did not mind stepping on the base members and who readily threw out those who did not accept the transgressions. In 1937 party functionaries and officers with inclinations to the West and a bourgeois thinking were kicked out. They lost their position of power, were thrown out from the party and brought to trial. We can understand the hatred of the bourgeoisie against the Soviet year of 1937. …The struggle was aimed at bureaucracy and treason and not against party cadres in leading position in general.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

IN 1938 PARTY EXPULSIONS WENT DOWN AND ADMISSIONS WENT UP

During the first seven months of 1938, some 37,000 people were expelled from the Party–only half as many as were expelled during the last six months of 1937. During the rest of 1938, the number diminished further. In carrying through the examination of complaints, proclaimed by the Plenum, during 1938 some 77,000 people were restored to Party membership, compared with 46,000 during 1937. Moreover, the Party began admitting new members on a large scale, a process that had been interrupted during 1937. Whereas during 1937 only some 32,000 members and 34,000 candidates had been admitted, in 1938 these numbers were approximately 148,000 and 437,000, respectively. All this testifies to a gradual restoration of the traditional practice of the Party function and of a relative stabilization of its personnel.
Jansen, Marc & Petrov, Nikita. Stalin's Loyal Executioner: Yezhov, Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution Press, c2002, p. 129.

But it was Stalin's tactic not to appoint Beria as Interior People's Commissar immediately but rather to put him in as first deputy only, thus, by degrees, paving the way for Ezhov's removal.
There were no more mass arrests and persecutions of Party members
in the summer of 1938 like those during the second half of 1937. After the January 1938 Central Committee Plenum, the NKVD terror against the Party was carefully monitored by Stalin and rigorously supervised by the Party organs. During the summer and autumn of 1938, the arrests of leading Party functionaries of course continued, but they were always approved by Stalin. The regional Party leadership appreciated the "healthier" atmosphere. In June the third secretary of the Party committee of Rostov province, M. A. Suslov, reported to a Party conference that the situation in the province had improved compared with half a year ago: "The practice of indiscriminate expelling from the Party has ceased. An end has been put to impunity for a various number of slanderers. Gradually the situation of general suspiciousness is breaking down. The provincial committee leadership has thoroughly and attentively investigated the appeals of those expelled."
Jansen, Marc & Petrov, Nikita. Stalin's Loyal Executioner: Yezhov, Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution Press, c2002, p. 152-153.

Military Purges

TUKHACHEVSKY AND OTHER GENERALS WORKED WITH HITLER

The Moscow press announced that they [the primary Generals on trial] had been in the pay of Hitler and had agreed to help him get the Ukraine. This charge was fairly widely believed in foreign military circles, and was later substantiated by revelations made abroad. Czech military circles seemed to be especially well informed. Czech officials in Prague bragged to me later that their military men had been the first to discover and to complain to Moscow that Czech military secrets, known to the Russians through the mutual aid alliance, were being revealed by Tukhachevsky to the German high command.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 134

CHUEV: Now some think you appointed such untrained people as Pavlov, but if it had been Tukhachevsky….
MOLOTOV: Take someone like Tukhachevsky. If trouble started, which side would he have been on? He was a rather dangerous man. I doubted he would have been fully on our side when things got tough, because he was a right-winger. The right wing danger was the main danger at the time.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 26

The right wing already had a channel to Hitler even before this. Trotsky was definitely connected to him, that's beyond any doubt…. Many of the ranking military officers were also involved. That goes without saying.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 275

Nevertheless, he [Tukhachevsky] organized an anti-Soviet group in the army.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 279

CHUEV: He [Tukhachevsky] was accused of being a German agent.
MOLOTOV: He hurried with plans for a coup. Both Krestinsky and Rosengoltz testified to that. It makes sense. He feared he was at the point of being arrested, and he could no longer put things off. And there was no one else he could rely on except the Germans. This sequence of events is plausible.
I consider Tukhachevsky a most dangerous conspirator in the military who was caught only at the last minute. Had he not been apprehended, the consequences could have been catastrophic. He was most popular in the army.
Did everyone who was charged or executed take part in the conspiracy hatched by Tukhachevsky? Some were certainly involved….
But as to whether Tukhachevsky and his group in the military were connected with Trotskyists and rightists and were preparing a coup, there is no doubt.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 280

MOLOTOV: Take Tukhachevsky, for example. On what grounds was he rehabilitated? Did you read the records of the trial of the right-wing and Trotskyist bloc in 1938? Bukharin, Krestinsky, Rosengoltz, and others were on trial then. They stated flat out that in June 1937 Tukhachevsky pressed for a coup. People who have not read the record go on to say that the testimony was given under duress from the Chekists.

But I say, had we not made those sweeping arrests in the 1930s, we would have suffered even greater losses in the war.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 285

CHUEV: At the 22nd Congress Khrushchev alleged that Molotov, Voroshilov, and Kaganovich recognized the court's ruling on Tukhachevsky and others to be incorrect and welcomed the rehabilitation of Tukhachevsky and others….
MOLOTOV: Emphatically no.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 286

Bolstering Khrushchev's version of this affair, that Stalin swallowed German disinformation designed to destroy Tukhachevsky, is a legend that Stalin was warned of a conspiracy with the Germans. In 1939 the Soviet defector Krivitsky, who had worked for the NKVD and GRU in Western Europe, published his book In Stalin's Secret Service, in which he claimed that the NKVD received secret information about such a conspiracy from Czech President Benes and from its agent Skoblin,…. Krivitsky accused Skoblin of providing the Soviets with disinformation from the Germans about secret contacts with Tukhachevsky. Later General Schellenberg, chief of Hitler's foreign intelligence service, in his memoirs also claimed that the Germans fabricated documents pointing to Tukhachevsky as their agent. Before the war, he said, they passed these documents to the Czechs, and Benes reported the information to Stalin.
For me, this is a self-serving fairytale. The documents have never been found in the KGB or Stalin archives. The criminal case against Tukhachevsky is based entirely on his confession, and there's no reference to any incriminating evidence received from German intelligence. If such documents existed, I, as deputy director and the man responsible for the German desk in the intelligence directorate, would have seen them or found some reference to their existence.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 90

The case of the generals was different from that of the accused civilians. Not only was it held in camera, but the "Court" of a presiding judge and two assistants was reinforced by eight of the highest officers in the Red Army. In addition, more than 100 high-ranking officers from all over the country were summoned as spectators, in order later to give an eye-witness account of proceedings to the troops under their command. It is a matter of record that none of them ever expressed doubts about the genuineness of the charge or the justice of the verdict. In this case at least, there was no possibility that the accused had been "worked on" during a long period of preliminary examination, as they were tried within three days after their rest, confessed their guilt, were condemned by unanimous verdict, and shot without delay.
…The charges against them, and the exact nature of their offense, had never been made public officially, but they can be surmised with a reasonable degree of accuracy. The night before Tukhachevsky and the others were arrested, Marshall Gamarnik, Vice Commissar of War and chief of the Political Department of the Red Army, committed suicide, which gives the key to the puzzle. The Political Department had been originally intended by Lenin as a means of civil control over the Army, but in the course of time it had gradually become a part or appanage of the General Staff, owing allegiance to the Army rather than to the Kremlin. The danger of war, and perhaps doubts provoked by the murder of Kirov and subsequent investigation, led Stalin to decide that a radical change should be made in the status of the

Political Department, that it must henceforth revert to its original function as an instrument of civilian control. The Army leaders resented this “interference,” and finally decided to prevent it by violent action…. Accordingly, Tukhachevsky, Gamarnik, and their colleagues appealed to the German General Staff for support in their projected coup d’etat or “palace revolution” against Stalin. They hoped to affect the coup through the Kremlin Guard and the students of the military academy in the Kremlin, who, they believed, would obey their orders; but they had the gravest doubts about the mass of the Army and the nation as a whole, which prompted them to seek German aid in return, it is said, for an offer of territory and for economic and political advantages in the Ukraine and North Caucasus.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 220

I gave him [Spiegelglass] the contents of a brief confidential dispatch from one of my chief agents in Germany. At a formal reception tendered by high Nazi officials, at which my informant was present, the question of the Tukhachevsky affair came up. Captain Fritz Wiedemann, personal political aide to Hitler –appointed subsequently to the post of Consul-General at San Francisco –was asked if there was any truth in Staliin’s charges of espionage against the Red Army generals. My agent’s report reproduced Wiedemann’s boastful reply:
“We hadn’t nine spies in the Red Army, but many more. The 0GPU is still far from on the trail of all our men in Russia.”
Krivitsky, Walter G. I was Stalin’s Agent, London: H. Hamilton, 1939, p. 242

But how could generals of the Red Army have envisaged collaborating with Hitler? If they were not good Communists, surely these military men were at least nationalists?
This question will first be answered with another question. Why should this hypothesis be any different for the Soviet Union than France? Was not Marshal Petain, the Victor at Verdun, a symbol of French chauvinist patriotism? Were not General Weygand and Admiral Darlan strong defenders of French colonialism? Despite all this, these three became key players in the collaboration with the Nazis. Would not the overthrow of capitalism in the Soviet Union and the bitter class struggle against the bourgeoisie be, for all the forces nostalgic for free enterprise, be additional motives for collaborating with German `dynamic capitalism’?
And did not the World War itself show that the tendency represented by Petain in France also existed among certain Soviet officers?
General Vlasov played an important role during the defence of Moscow at the end of 1941. Arrested in 1942 by the Germans, he changed sides. But it was only on September 16, 1944, after an interview with Himmler, that he received the official authorization to create his own Russian Liberation Army, whose first division was created as early as 1943. Other imprisoned officers offered their services to the Nazis; a few names follow.
Major-General Trukhin, head of the operational section of the Baltic Region Chief of Staffs, professor at the General Chiefs of Staff Academy. Major-General Malyshkin, head of the Chiefs of Staff of the 19th Army. Major-General Zakutny, professor at the General Chiefs of Staff Academy. Major-Generals Blagoveshchensky, brigade commander; Shapovalov, artillery corps commander; and Meandrov. Brigade commander Zhilenkov, member of the Military Council of the 32nd Army. Colonels Maltsev, Zverev, Nerianin and Buniachenko, commander of the 389th Armed Division.
What was the political profile of these men? The former British secret service officer and historian Cookridge writes:

“Vlasov’s entourage was a strange motley. The most intelligent of his officers was Colonel Mileti Zykov (a Jew)…. He had a been a supporter of the “rightist deviationists’‘ of Bukharin and in 1936 had been banished by Stalin to Siberia, where he spent four years. Another survivor of Stalin’s purges was General Vasili Feodorovich Malyshkin, former chief of staff of the Far East Army; he had been imprisoned during the Tukhachevsky affair. A third officer, Major-General Georgi Nicolaievich Zhilenkov, had been a political army commissar. They and many of the officers whom Gehlen recruited had been “rehabilitated’‘ at the beginning of the war in 1941.’…”
E. H. Cookridge, Gehlen: Spy of the Century (New York: Random House, 1972), pp. 57–58.

So here we learn that several superior officers, convicted and sent to Siberia in 1937, then rehabilitated during the war, joined Hitler’s side! Clearly the measures taken during the Great Purge were perfectly justified.
To justify joining the Nazis, Vlasov wrote an open letter: “Why I embarked on the road of struggle against Bolshevism.”
What is inside that letter is very instructive.
First, his criticism of the Soviet regime is identical to the ones made by Trotsky and the Western right-wing.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 169 [p. 155 on the NET]

Towards Tukhachevsky he was said to have harbored resentment and jealousy because of disagreements during the Civil War. He had, however, recognized his ability and instead of sending him to some distant command, he had appointed him to high office in 1935 making him a Marshal of the Soviet Union. But then, suddenly, he became convinced that Tukhachevsky was a traitor.
On May 1, 1937, Tukhachevsky stood at Stalin’s side on the Lenin Mausoleum, reviewing the parade on Red Square. He was nearing the peak of his career, for in the event of war with Germany–and he was convinced that it was eminent–he would probably be made deputy to the Commander-in-Chief. He had been appointed to represent the Soviet government in London at the coronation of King George VI. A few days before he was to depart, however, his appointment was canceled He was relieved of office as Deputy Commissar of War on May 20 and sent to command the Volga military district. He arrived there on May 25 and was arrested the next day.
Pravda announced on June 11, 1937, that he and seven others with the rank of general were to be tried in secret. The military court, which took only one day to hear the evidence and find them guilty, included four Marshals of the Soviet Union…. Their crime, according to the press, was that they had spied on behalf of Germany and Japan and had conspired to surrender Soviet territory in the Ukraine and the Far East in return for military support to overthrow Stalin and his regime.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 280

There are many rumors and speculations about the Tukhachevsky Affair. In the absence of primary sources, speculations of memoirists and politicians have variously accused Hitler and Stalin of framing Tukhachevsky. Others have suggested that the generals were actually plotting a coup against Stalin, who beat them to the punch. With no credible sources and so many contradictory rumors, the entire affair must remain mysterious.

Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 167

[Stalin said in a June 1937 speech], Gamarnik. Although he did not spy, he was the organizer of the spying program, overseeing Uborevitch, Yakir, Tukhachevsky who were involved in gathering systematic information for the German High Command.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 109

STALIN [In a June 1937 speech]: Further, Tukhachevsky. You read his statement?
VOICE FROM AUDIENCE: Yes, we read it.
STALIN: He gave away our operative plan–our sacred plans for defense of our Motherland; he gave it to the German High Command. He always met with the representative of the German Reich Intelligence Agency. A spy? Yes, a spy! The Western countries, so-called "civilized countries," call these people "informers," but we in Russia know that this is an outright spy. Yakir –systematically informed the German High Command. He pretended that he had this sickness "kidney ailment." He traveled to Germany to get treatment.
Uborevitch… singly informed Germans about our defense potential.
Karakhan–German spy.
Eideman–German spy.
Karakhan–informed the German High Command, starting from that time when he was our Military Attache in Berlin, Germany.
Rudzutak–I already spoke about this that he admitted that he was a spy, but we have all the information about his activities. We know to whom he gave the secrets. There is one Secret Agent in Germany, in Berlin. If sometimes you will have the opportunity to be in Berlin, Dzhosefina Genzi is the lady that will charm you. Maybe some of you here know this charmer. She is a first class intelligence agent with much experience. She ensnared Enukidze. She helped to ensnare Tukhachevsky. She holds in her hands Rudzutak. She is a very clever agent… Dzhosefina Genzi. She is supposed to be a Dutch national working in Germany. Beautiful, and she's willing to go to all lengths on all proposals made by men, and then she buries you. You might have read an article in "Pravda" about some covert operations which included this lady. Well, she is one of the most efficient, masterfully getting you into her clutches, the best that German intelligence has. Here, you have people! Nine spies and three organizers who were involved in supplying the German High Command with the plans that were made for saving our Motherland. These are the people!
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 110-112

[In a June 1937 speech Stalin said], They [the Soviet traitorous generals] did not depend on their own strength, they depended on the might of Germany. The Germans told them that they will help them. But the Germans in the end did not help them. The Germans thought: you fellows cook the porridge, we'll just look. The Germans wanted these traitors to show them concrete results;…
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 133

Stalin maintained that ten of the 13 leaders of the conspiracy he had named, that is all of them except Rykov, Bukharin, and Gamarnik, were spies for German intelligence, and some

for Japanese intelligence. Talking of Tukhachevsky and other commanders under arrest, Stalin charged: “He handed our operations plan–the operations plan, that holy of holies–to the German’s Reichswehr. A spy? Yes, a spy…. Yakir provided systematic information to the German staff…. Uborevitch personally, as well as with his friends, his cronies, supplied information. Karakhan is a German spy, Eideman is a German spy. Kork had been informing the German staff since he was military attache in Germany.”
In Stalin’s words, Rudzutak, Karakhan, and Enukidze had been recruited by Josephine Hensie (Jensen), a German spy of Danish origin who was on the payroll of the German Reichswehr. She had “helped to recruit Tukhachevsky.”
… He [Stalin] accused them of spying and told the Military Council: “This is a military-political conspiracy. It was created by the hands of the German Reichswehr’s hands. The Reichswehr wanted a conspiracy to exist here, and these gentlemen built up a conspiracy. The Reichswehr wanted these gentlemen to systematically supply them with military secrets and these gentlemen did supply them with military secrets. The Reichswehr wanted the present government to be ousted and slaughtered, and they attempted to do so but failed. The Reichswehr wanted everything to be ready, in the event of war, for the army to engage in sabotage and be unprepared for defense; the Reichswehr wanted that and they prepared for it. These are agents, the guiding nucleus of the military-political conspiracy in the USSR, consisting of 10 patent spies and three patent instigators of the spies. They are agents of the German Reichswehr. This is the main thing. The conspiracy, therefore, is rooted not so much in domestic soil as in external conditions. It is not so much a policy in our country’s domestic line as a policy of the German Reichswehr. They wanted to make another Spain out of the USSR, so they found and recruited spies who operated in this matter. Such is the situation!”
Stalin said that 300 to 400 military men had already been arrested and charged with military conspiracy, that “we overlooked it and exposed too few of the military ourselves.” He said Soviet military intelligence was doing a poor job, it was contaminated with spies, and inside the Cheka intelligence a group had worked for Germany, Japan, and Poland. Having voiced dissatisfaction that no exposure signals were coming from local authorities, and having demanded that there be such signals, Stalin said: “Even if this were 5% true, it would be business enough.”
… Primakov and Putna, who had indeed supported Trotsky’s views prior to 1927, were included in this group.
Political Archives of the Soviet Union (Vol. 1, No. 2) Commack, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1990, p. 227

The indictment claimed that in April and May 1937 the NKVD had uncovered and eliminated a military Trotskyite conspiracy in Moscow, which have been led by Gamarnik, Tukhachevsky, and others. The military Trotskyite organization, to which all the accused had belonged, had been formed in 1932-1933 on direct instructions from the German general staff and Trotsky. It had been in contact with the Trotskyite center, and the rightist group of Bukharin and Rykov. It had engaged in sabotage, subversion, and terrorism, and had planned to overthrow the government and seize power with a view to restoring capitalism in the USSR.
Political Archives of the Soviet Union (Vol. 1, No. 2) Commack, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1990, p. 228

The scope of the repressive measures in the Red Army can be judged from Voroshilov’s speech to his Military Council on Nov. 29, 1938: “When a group of contemptible traitors to

our country and the Red Army led by Tukhachevsky was uncovered and wiped out by a revolutionary court last year, none of us could have imagined, and unfortunately did not imagine, that this filth, this rot, this treachery had penetrated our army so widely and so deeply; in 1937 and 1938 we had to ruthlessly purge our ranks, mercilessly severing the contaminated parts of the body from the living and healthy flesh, ridding ourselves of that filthy, treacherous rot….
Political Archives of the Soviet Union (Vol. 1, No. 2) Commack, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1990, p. 230
Altogether the Military Collegium of the USSR Supreme Court tried 408 high-ranking officials and commanders of the Army and Navy, of whom 386 were party members; 401 were sentenced to death and 7 to various terms in labor camps.
Political Archives of the Soviet Union (Vol. 1, No. 2) Commack, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1990, p. 231

I was to meet Tukhachevsky for the last time on the day after the funeral of King George V. At a dinner at the Soviet Embassy, the Russian general had been very conversational with Politis, Titulescu, Herriot, Boncour, Potemkin, and Madame Potemkin. On that occasion his eyes had been alive, and his melancholy had disappeared in constructive talk. For he had just returned from a trip to Germany, and was heaping glowing praise upon the Nazis. Seated at my right, he said over and over again, as he discussed an air pact between the great powers and Hitler's country: "They are already invincible, Madame Tabouis!"
Why did he speak so trustfully? Was it because his head had been turned by the hearty reception he had found among German diplomats, who found it easy to talk to this man of the old Russian school? At any rate, I was not the only one that evening who was alarmed at his display of enthusiasm. One of the guests–an important diplomat– grumbled into my ear as we walked away from the Embassy: "Well, I hope all the Russians don't feel that way!"
And two years later, when the Soviets were to accuse and convict Tukhachevsky of complicity in a military plot hatched by Germany, my thoughts often reverted to his attitude during that dinner.
Tabouis, Genevive. They Called Me Cassandra. New York: C. Scribner's sons, 1942, p. 257

As time passed, however, there came a change in the relation of the Political Department, as it was now termed, to the Red Army, and in 1937 the matter of military versus civilian control grew into a sharp and perilous issue. By then, after 17 years of peace, the Political Department was little more than an appanage of the General Staff. The commissars still looked after the education and morale welfare of the troops, and still held classes for Communist instruction, but they no longer regarded themselves as civilians, and the head of their Department, Gamarnik, was a marshal, a soldier every inch of him.
This change had occurred gradually, but sometime in 1935-1936 its importance and implications were brought to Stalin's attention, I was told, by Voroshilov himself. He is said to have asked for a special meeting of the Politburo to discuss conditions which he described as alarming and in direct contradiction to Lenin's view that the Political Department should be the channel and instrument of civilian control over the army. Without much noise or fanfare steps were taken to divert the political Department back from the General Staff to the Kremlin. In the lower echelons this was not so difficult, but it met stiff and obstinate resistance at the top. Military commands invariably and traditionally dislike a division of powers or "interference" by civilians in the workings of an army….

A powerful group of Red Army leaders, headed by the brilliant Marshal Tukhachevsky, resented Stalin's "interference" and after several months of increasingly acrimonious controversy, decided to prevent it by violent and conspirative action. During the 10 years between the Treaty of Rapallo (1922) and rise of Hitler, relations between the Russian and German armies had been intimate and friendly. On one occasion in the late twenties the Chief of the German Reichswehr, General von Hammerstein, is said to have conducted Red Army maneuvers in the region of Kiev. Accordingly, Marshals Tukhachevsky and Gamarnik and the militarist clique in the army appealed to the German General staff for support in a coup d'etat, or "Palace revolution" against Stalin. They hoped to effect the coup through the Kremlin Guard and the students of the Military Academy in the Kremlin, whose commanders belonged to their clique. But they had grave doubts about the mass of the army and the nation as a whole, which prompted them to seek German aid, in return, it was said, for an offer of territory and for economic and political advantages in the Ukraine and North Caucasus.

The Kremlin acted with speed and vigor. Tukhachevsky and seven other generals were arrested early in June, 1937, and put on trial within three days, in sharp contrast to proceedings in other treason trials where the accused were held for preliminary examination during a period of weeks or months. The night before the arrests Marshal Gamarnik committed suicide. Like other treason trials, this was a court-martial, judged by the Supreme Military Tribunal of the USSR, but there were two important differences. First, this case was tried in camera whereas the others were public. Second, the court of three judges was reinforced by eight high-ranking officers of the Red Army. More than 100 prominent soldiers were summoned from various parts of the country to attend the trial. All the accused confessed their guilt and were condemned to death. Their sentences were carried out within 48 hours….

I was told by Troyanovsky, former Ambassador to the United States, who had many friends among the spectators, that none of them had any doubts about the guilt of the accused. From other sources I received an explanation of the whole affair which I believe to be reasonably authentic, although I have not been able to confirm it in detail. It appears that the GPU first got wind of treasonable conversations between the German General Staff and Tukhachevsky, who had just visited Prague and Berlin, from information supplied by the Czech Secret Service. In Prague, Tukhachevsky had a meeting with Foreign Minister Benes, the Czech Commander in Chief, General Sirovy, and one other Czech leader, to discuss measures for the defense of the country in case Hitler should attack it. Although no secretaries were present at the meeting and no minutes were kept, the Czech Secret Service in Berlin, where Tukhachevsky stayed for two days after leaving Prague, reported that high German military circles were fully informed about the Tukhachevsky-Benes-Sirovy conversations. The report gave facts and details which Mr. Benes recognized as correct, and he was therefore forced to the conclusion that no one but Tukhachevsky could have conveyed this information to the Germans. There was no suggestion that Mr. Benes was aware of any conflict between Tukhachevsky and the civil authorities in the Kremlin, but he was so angry that Tukhachevsky had given the Germans the substance of the ultrasecret talks in Prague that he promptly passed the report on to Moscow. Tukhachevsky had been scheduled to leave Berlin for London to attend the coronation of King George VI, but was promptly recalled to Moscow and arrested on arrival.

As a result of this trial and the ruthless purge of high military officers which followed, the Politburo control over the army was completely reestablished, though at heavy cost in army efficiency and prestige. For a term of years, the position of the political commissars in Red

Army units was restored to something near the level of Civil War days, so that they had the same authority as that of equivalent regimental ranks and, in the event of death or disablement of the commanding officer, he would be succeeded, at least temporarily, by the commissar.
Duranty, Walter. Stalin & Co. New York: W. Sloane Associates, 1949, p. 214-217

TORTURE NOT USED ON GENERALS

The G.P.U. has always disclaimed — I think truthfully — the use of Gestapo forms of torture, and even of the American third degree. (Gedye, Prague correspondent for the New York Times, also cabled on June 18, 1937, that " two of the highest officials in Prague told him they had definite knowledge for at least six months that secret connections between the German General Staff and certain high Russian generals had existed ever since the Rapallo treaty.")
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 134

(Harold Denny, in the New York Times, January 15, 1939, wrote: "In almost five years residence, trying to learn the facts, I have found no evidence which I consider trustworthy that physical torture is applied to prisoners. I am convinced that there does not occur, unless in isolated and exceptional instances, the sadistic cruelties reported from German prison camps or even the beating with rubber hoses bestowed, as every American police reporter knows, in the back rooms of many American police stations.")
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 134

In the majority of historical works devoted to the Tukhachevsky case, these confessions are explained exclusively by the use of physical torture. However, such an explanation is inadequate for a number of reasons.
First of all, the defendants at the trial of the generals were strong and healthy people, most of whom had only recently crossed the threshold of their 40th birthday. Unlike the main defendants at the open trials, they had not spent long years before their arrest engaged in endless acts of self-deprecation and humiliation. For this reason, one might expect significantly greater resistance from them, than, for instance, from Zinoviev or Bukharin.
Second, the stunning speed with which the confessions were obtained draws our attention. The majority of the defendants at the open trials did not give such confessions for several months. The trial of the generals, however, was prepared in record-setting time. From the arrest of the main defendants to the trial itself, slightly more than two weeks passed. Such a time period was clearly insufficient to break these courageous men who had many times looked death in the eye.
Third, unlike the defendants at the open trials, where the judges were faceless bureaucrats, the defendants at the trial of the generals were appearing before their former comrades-in-arms. This fact should have filled them with hope that the truth, if spoken in their presence, would inevitably make it beyond the courtroom's walls.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 446

MILITARY TRIAL KEPT SECRET BECAUSE OF SECRET INFORMATION

Because of the confidential military character of the testimony to be heard, the trial was held behind closed doors.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 305

WHY THE GENERALS' TRIAL WAS NOT PUBLIC

This perhaps is the answer to the question that has been raised abroad, why, if the "Generals" were guilty beyond cavil, did the Kremlin not make public the full story? I think, however, that there is another answer, that some of the facts must have been grave enough and far-reaching enough to involve not merely a "Palace Revolution" or coup d'etat, but the safety of the State itself.
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, Inc., 1941, p. 67

Little is known about the trial of the marshals and generals; it was a secret one….
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 294

ELIMINATING TRAITOROUS GENERALS WAS WISE AND THEY WERE SENSIBLY REPLACED

Though the purge had deprived the Red Army of many capable soldiers, Stalin had retained the services of the best known. They were eventually to justify his faith by their devotion to the USSR in its war against Hitlerite Germany.
Prominent among them are: Voroshilov,… Budenny,…Yegorov,… and Shaposhnikov,… To this core of tried and reliable soldiers, the post revolutionary military academies have added many younger figures whose worth was proved for the first time in action against the Nazis. Best known of these is the 46 year old Timoshenko.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 107

On July 4, 1937, Ambassador Davies wrote in his diary, "Litvinov was very frank. He stated that they had to 'make sure' through these purges that there was no treason left which could co-operate with Berlin or Tokyo; that someday the world would understand that what they had done was to protect their government from 'menacing treason.' In fact, he said they were doing the whole world a service in protecting themselves against the menace of Hitler and Nazi world domination, and thereby preserving the Soviet Union strong as a bulwark against the Nazi threat. That the world someday would appreciate what a very great man Stalin was.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 167

Everything was strained to the breaking point. In that period it was necessary to act mercilessly. I believe our actions were fully justified…. But if the Tukhachevskys and the Yakirs, with the Rykovs and the Zinovievs, had started an opposition during the war, there would have been cruel internal strife and colossal losses. Colossal!
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 275

In June, 1919, an important fort called "Krasnaya Gorka" (The Red Hill), in the Gulf of Finland, was captured by a detachment of Whites. A few days later it was recaptured by a

force of Red marines. Then it was discovered that the chief of the staff of the Seventh army, Colonel Lundkvist, was transmitting all information to the Whites. There were other conspirators working hand-in-glove with him. This shook the army to its very core.
Trotsky, Leon. My Life. Gloucester, Massachusetts: P. Smith, 1970, p. 423

THE GENERALS WERE GUILTY

On June 28, 1937, Ambassador Davies wrote to Sumner Wells, “The judgment of those who have been here longest is that conditions are very, very serious; the best judgment seems to believe that in all probability there was a definite conspiracy in the making looking to a coup d’etat by the army–not necessarily anti-Stalin, but antipolitical and antiparty, and that Stalin struck with characteristic speed, boldness, and strength.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 160

As to the alleged to guilt of these army generals of overt acts –actual conspiracy with the German government…it should be said that two very well-informed ambassadors, with whom I have discussed the matter, have stated it to be their belief that there was probably some truth in the allegations.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 192

Facts are not now available, and it is doubtful whether they will be for a long time to come, which would justify a statement as to exactly what happened and just what constituted the “offense” of these officers of the Red Army. Opinion must be based largely on deductions from known facts and these are few. The press reports here are practically bare of anything, except allegations. The same applies to Voroshilov’s manifesto to the army. About all that has been stated is the position of the government, i.e., that these men were guilty of treason in the Red Army, had conspired with Germany to overthrow the government, had admitted their guilt, had been tried by the cream of the Red Army–their own peers–and that the evidence of their guilt was submitted, prior to the trials, to representative officers of all military districts of the Soviet Union. That such a conference was in fact held and that a very large number of officers were present here in Moscow at that time seem to be confirmed by foreign military observers who saw many of these Red Army officers whom they had met in different parts of the Soviet Union.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 200

In view of the character of the accused, their long terms of service, their recognized distinction in their profession, their long-continued loyalty to the communist cause, it is scarcely credible that their brother officers–Voroshilov, Egorov, Budenny, Blucher, and the many other district military commanders–should have acquiesced in their execution, unless they were convinced that these men had been guilty of some offense.
(Footnote: The Bukharin trial six months later developed evidence which, if true, more than justified this action. Undoubtedly those facts were all fully known to the military court at this time.)
It is generally accepted by members of the Diplomatic Corps that the accused must have been guilty of an offense which in the Soviet Union would merit the death penalty.
From the facts which we have, certain deductions can be reached as to what the situation probably was. It would have been quite natural for strong-minded man, such as these men

were, to have criticized political bureaucratic control of industry when it handicapped the army. It is also reasonable to assume that a group of men, such as these, would resent vigorously the imposition of an espionage system over them, through the instrumentality of a secret police system, under the control of politicians. It would also be quite natural for men of this character, and particularly with this training, to have resented bitterly the possible destruction of the fine military organization which they had built up, by the imposition of political control over the military command in each military district. It is quite fair to assume that these men would not permit the party, of which they were members, to adopt this course of conduct as a matter of "party principle," without vigorous opposition. It is possible that they continued to voice such opposition.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 201

However, if after the 17th of May, when political control of the army was established as a result of a party decision, the opposition on the part of these officers continued, even though it were simply through discussions among themselves, their action would be treasonable and a felony under Bolshevik rules of behavior. It is a fundamental of party government that once a party action is established by a vote of the majority, any further opposition thereto constitutes treason.
Under all of the conditions it can also be quite reasonably considered that the party leaders responsible for the conviction of these defendants had convinced themselves that these Red Army generals had outgrown their creators and were a serious threat to the party organization and dominance. It is possible also that these party leaders found but little difficulty in spelling out of the conduct of the defendants an overt conspiracy to impose the will of the army over the party, and failing therein to engage in a conspiracy with a foreign enemy to overthrow the state.
(I don't think any of these are the real reasons)
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 202

Another factor that led to general acceptance of their [the military officers] treason by the rank-and-file was that the "traitors" were said to have been tried by a military tribunal of high-ranking officers, albeit in secret, which was normal for serious military crimes.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 205

But quite a few non-Stalinist sources maintain that the generals did indeed plan a coup d'etat and did this from their own motives, and on their own initiative, not in contact with any foreign power. The main part of the coup was to be a palace revolt, following an assault on the headquarters of the GPU and culminating in Stalin's assassination. Tukhachevsky was regarded as the leader of the conspiracy. A man of military genius, the real modernizer of the Red Army, surrounded by the glory of his feats in the civil war, he was the army's favorite, and was indeed the only man among all the military leaders of that time who showed a resemblance to the original Bonaparte and could have played the Russian First Consul. Generals Yakir, commander of Leningrad, Uborevitch, commander of the western military district, Kork, commander of Moscow's Military Academy, Primakov, Budienny's deputy in the command of the cavalry, Gamarnik, the chief Political Commissar of the army who presently committed suicide, and other officers were supposed to have been in the plot. On May 1, 1937, Tukhachevsky stood at Stalin's side at the Lenin Mausoleum, reviewing the May Day

parade. Eleven days later he was demoted. On June 12 the execution of Tukhachevsky and his friends was announced.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 379

By May 29, 1937, Marshall Tukhachevsky was confessing to espionage, links with the Germans, and recruitment by Yenukidze into Bukharin's conspiracy.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 200

The least interesting chapter in the book [The Secret History of Stalin's Crimes by Orlov] was the chapter devoted to the "Tukhachevsky affair," which Orlov treated hastily and in many ways inaccurately. Only at the end of this chapter does he let slip an enigmatic phrase: "When all the facts connected with the Tukhachevsky case become clear, the world will understand that Stalin knew what he was doing."
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 469

Even in The Secret History of Stalin's Crimes, Orlov had carefully served notice that an attempt at a military-political coup had actually taken place.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 474

In light of the statements, we can place a certain amount of confidence in Molotov's words which we cited earlier: "We even knew the date of the conspiracy."
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 475

Yet another relevant article, "The Soviet Union on the Road to Bonapartism," appeared in the semiofficial German military journal of Deutsche Wehr, but only after the event. Its author had no doubt that Tukhachevsky had indeed plotted against Stalin but was betrayed at the very last moment. His article, which attracted much attention and was widely translated and disseminated, was by one "A. Agricola "–none other than Russian-born Alexander Bauermeister, who, during World War I, was the most effective German spy master on the Eastern Front.
Agricola said that every true Soviet expert knew that the conspiracy had not been just a matter of espionage; it aspired to be a truly enormous military coup. The commanders of the most important military districts were involved in the plot. Tukhachevsky had made his first preparations in 1935, and zero hour was fixed for June 1937. Only because of General Skoblin's betrayal had the coup been averted.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 87

After Khrushchev's "secret speech," it became the practice to accuse Stalin of murdering the "flower of the Red Army." At the same time, mitigating circumstances were adduced: Stalin had fallen victim to the forgeries of the Nazi Secret Service…. [They ignore the fact that] Above all, it has been known for a long time that the first arrest (of Generals Putna and Primakov) took place almost a year before the Nazi forgeries reached the Kremlin. Furthermore Tukhachevsky had already been incriminated during the second Moscow show trial of former leading Bolsheviks (Pyatakov, Radek, et al.), which took place in early 1937.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 89

… the organs of state security began preparations for the trial of Soviet generals nine months before the German forgeries reached Moscow. Pavlenko had it on the authority of

Major General Golushkevich (who was present at the 1937 trial) that the Heydrich documents were never once brought up in the course of the proceedings.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 90

But investigation, so far as investigation was possible, began to disclose a number of enlightening details. Tukhachevsky, brilliant and ambitious, wanted power for himself; he and Voroshilov were on bad terms, it was said; a general impression in military circles is that Tukhachevsky planned a "palace" coup d'etat to get rid of Stalin and set up a dictatorship himself. Stalin got him first.
All eight of the generals had close relations at one time with the German Reichswehr. The Red Army and the German army worked intimately together before 1932, it should be remembered; every year Russian officers went to Germany for training and study; even after Hitler, the two general staffs had a cordial respect for each other. Generals Kork and Feldman, with obviously German names, were Baltic Germans; General Uborevitch attended the German maneuvers after the Nazi party congress last year; both Kork and Putna had been military attaches in Berlin.
Few people think that Tukhachevsky could have sold out to Germany, or promised the defeat of his own army in the event of war; but it is quite possible that he envisaged some arrangement with the Reichswehr independently of Stalin. He wanted the Red Army and the German army to work together; politics prevented this. He was known to be an opponent of the Franco-Soviet pact, and the French distrusted him.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 560

Some of this analysis cannot be dismissed. It seems not impossible that Tukhachevsky and other high army officers had in 1937 made a plot to depose him [Stalin]. In fact, it is a priori likely.
Snow, Charles Percy. Variety of Men. New York: Scribner, 1966, p. 262

Diary of October 24, 1936:
The French Ambassador had engaged the Calvet Quartet to play for his guests, but the real entertainment took place when the Russian diplomats arrived and the German officials tried to avoid greeting them. Neurath and Dieckhoff were icy cold. Madame Franois-Poncet was equal to the situation, however, and ushered the Russian guests to the very first row of seats.
Henry, one of the French staff, was indignant. He said, "This is preposterous. The Nazis snub the Russians in public, but I know that privately they have been in close contact with an extensive clique of Russian army officers. Quite a plot, too. Involves some of Marshal Tukhachevsky's highest staff officers. The clique entered into an agreement to effect the removal of Stalin. Afterward, a pact with Germany against the world. 'Send us a list of your most reliable men,' the generals were told."
The generals returned to Russia and sent the list. It was promptly placed in Stalin's hands. An example of Nazi diplomacy as practiced by Count Werner von Schulenberg, German Ambassador to Moscow. It accounts, if you believe it, for the torture and execution of so many high civil and military officials in Russia.
Fromm, Bella. Blood and Banquets. New York: Carol Pub. Group, c1990, p. 231

It is along the same lines that the failure of a "conspiracy" of "traitors" and "spies" among leaders of the Red Army was announced on June 11, 1937 together with their forthcoming

trial which supposedly indicated the “crisis of bourgeois intelligence services.” The eight accused were all officers of the highest ranks–seven generals and a marshal…. The most illustrious of them, the first deputy of the people’s commissar of defense, Tukhachevsky. For about six months, rumors had been persistently circulating in diplomatic circles about his alleged intention to stage a coup as well as about his purported secret contacts with the Nazi high command, and it is improbable that they were unknown in Moscow. One month before his fall, ranking officials of the NKVD who had been already in the hands of their former colleagues, accused him and three of his prospective codefendants of “criminal contacts,” at the same time also implicating a general, Shaposhnikov, (who would never be arrested). Moreover, in the first days of May the president of Czechoslovakia, Benes, transmitted a message with documents of German origin, which he did not suspect to be forgeries, that seemed to establish the marshal’s “guilt.” But the material was not used during the investigations or at the trial and no step was taken immediately after its receipt in Moscow. All that happened was Tukhachevsky’s demotion from his post of deputy People’s Commissar and his transfer to head a military district. This was hardly the usual treatment of dangerous conspirators, and nevertheless two codefendants of the marshal were also merely reassigned at the same moment, one of them, Yakir, even twice in 10 days.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 139

All those who headed the Red Army during the Stalinist period– Tukhachevsky, Yegorov, Bluecher, Budenny, Yakir, Uborevich, Gamarnik, Dybenko, Fedko, [Kork, Putna, Feldman, Alksnis, Eidemann, Primakov, and many others],–were each in his time advanced to responsible military posts when I was at the head of the War Department, in most cases advanced personally by me during my tours of the fronts and during my direct observation of their war work. However bad, therefore, my own leadership was, it was apparently good enough to have selected the best available military leaders, since for more than 10 years Stalin could find no one to replace them. True, almost all the Red Army Leaders of the Civil War, all those who subsequently built our army eventually proved to be “traitors” and “spies.”
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 269

LOSS OF THE GENERALS WAS NO BIG LOSS

It is generally considered here that the liquidation of the older and experienced generals has weakened the army very materially. Personally, I agree with our Military Attache, Colonel Faymonville, that while this is measurably true, it is much exaggerated.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 409

Stalin has also been held guilty of bringing upon Russia the disasters of 1941-42 by his purge of the Red Army. Although tragic and wasteful, the purge probably had little effect, and certainly less than is often stated. Although many senior army commanders were purged, it was in this category that the Red Army was generally superior to the Germans, even in the years 1941-42. Germans superiority was marked among junior officers and NCOs.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 421

Reese also shows that newly released statistics on the military purges indicate that at most 9.7% of the officers at the height of the terror in 1937 were “repressed,” in contrast to earlier

estimates by Conquest and Erickson that 25-50% of the officer corps fell victim to arrest in 1937 and 1938.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 9

The destruction of the cadres of young officers around the reformer Tukhachevsky is usually taken as evidence that the Soviet Union took a giant step backward in military effectiveness and levels of military preparedness. This is a superficial conclusion….
Any argument which suggests that the purges weakened the Red Army (and navy) rests on a prior assumption that the pre-purge army must have been a more effective instrument. Such an assumption is clearly open to question. For all of Tukhachevsky's enthusiasm for mass tanks and aircraft, there existed a wide discrepancy between theory and practice. Soviet forces had made poor progress in "command and control," the critical dimension of fast-moving aircraft and tank combat. Communications systems were rudimentary or nonexistent. Tanks and aircraft were not equipped with radios and could not easily communicate with each other. Commanders had no way of coordinating air and ground action, nor of holding a large group of tanks and armored vehicles together. These deficiencies rendered the concept of "deep operations" almost impossible. At most levels of junior command there existed a lack of flexibility and tactical awareness. German soldiers who watched their Soviet counterparts in training and on maneuvers were unimpressed by what they saw. "The weak point of the army," wrote a German army adjutant in 1933, "is that all commanders from platoon to regiment commander, are not yet efficient enough. Most of them are capable of dealing with problems only at the level of a non-commissioned officer." The German military attache in Moscow the same year detected throughout the army "a fear of responsibility." Many of those liquidated after 1937 were men who had little military education and had achieved office on the grounds of their Civil War experience. In 1937 thousands of younger man, trained in military academies since the 1930s, were ready to take their place. By the mid-1930s there were 16,000 officers a year training in the military academies. By 1941 over 100,000 officers were entering the Soviet armed forces each year. The purges certainly removed many military men of talent, but it is questionable whether the aggregate effect was to make the average performance of the officer corps much worse than it had been beforehand or to make the tank and air war any less capable of realization. The army had significant technical and human weaknesses both before and after 1937.
Overy, R. J. Russia's War: Blood Upon the Snow. New York: TV Books, c1997, p. 50

RADEK IMPLICATES TUKHASHEVSKY AND IMPLIES HE WORKS WITH TROTSKY

… Radek in his testimony hinted that a conspiracy existed within the Red Army which involved Marshall Tukhachevsky, a high commander. I had personal reasons for feeling no surprise when Radek pled guilty. I had interviewed him in his apartment in Moscow in 1935, knowing that he was in the opposition group. In the course of the conversation Radek remarked that he considered Foreign Affairs the best periodical in America. This seemed a strange comment for a man of his views, until I learned that Trotsky had just published an article there. From further conversation I received the distinct impression, which he possibly wished to convey, that Radek was in closest contact with Trotsky in exile.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 29

While the other accused spoke flatly and drearily, he [Radek] put real feeling into his evidence. He developed the post-1927 history of Trotskyism, and the complex links between those now accused and the Zinoviev group. He then listed a number of fresh terrorist bands, implicated Bukharin, spoke of the "Bonapartist" regime Trotsky intended, which would in fact be under fascist control, and added that Trotsky was already prepared to sacrifice the Ukraine and the Far East to the aggressors.
On the whole, Radek was a most co-operative and convincing defendant.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 152

YEGOROV WAS HIDING THE ACTIONS OF THE GENERALS

[February 9th, 1938 Politburo decision "On Comrade Yegorov"]
a) Comrade Yegorov, first deputy of the people's commissar for defense of the USSR had acquitted himself very unsatisfactorily during his tenure as chief of staff of the Workers'-Peasants' Red Army, throwing the work of the general staff into disarray by delegating power to Levichev and Mezheninov, inveterate spies working for the Polish, German, and Italian Intelligence agencies.
b)…As is evident from the testimonies of Belov, Grinko, Orlov, and others, all spies now under arrest, Comrade Yegorov obviously knew something concerning the existence of an army plot headed by the spies Tukhachevsky, Gamarnik, and other scoundrels who were formerly Trotskyists, right Socialist-Revolutionaries, White officers, and so on.
Judging by these materials, Comrade Yegorov attempted to establish contact with conspirators through Tukhachevsky, a fact mentioned by the spy Bepov, a former socialist-Revolutionary, in his testimony.
c) Comrade Yegorov, unjustifiably dissatisfied with his position in the Red Army and knowing something concerning the existence of conspiratorial groups in the army, decided to organize his own antiparty group, into which he inveigled Comrade Dybenko and tried to inveigle Comrade Budenny.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 521-522

TUKHACHEVSKY WAS NOT QUALIFIED TO LEAD THE GOVT

CHUEV: …if a palace revolution had been carried out in 1937 it would have placed at the head of the country intelligent people such as Tukhachevsky; they would have coped both with the country and with fascism.
MOLOTOV: That is absurd. Where is the evidence that Tukhachevsky could do something useful for the country… . Where is it? What kind of data?
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 219

The point is, Tukhachevsky did not know where he was going. It seems to me that he would have veered to the right. He was closer to Khrushchev.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 220

THERE WAS A RIGHT-WING MILITARY UNDERGROUND IN MOSCOW

… These were the work of the leaders of the united right-wing military underground of Moscow under the general directive of a man whose name is familiar to most of my readers.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 42

[Footnote: Likhachev editor of Posev was in the Far Eastern Red Army in 1937-38 and describes a genuine military plot against the Stalinist leadership, which Stalin smashed in a countercoup].
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 267

This affair [the military officers] began more or less in August 1936, just days before the first Moscow show trial opened, with the arrest of two senior officers. The first, detained on Aug. 14, was Primakov, a Bolshevik since 1914, a cavalry commander during the Civil War, and corps commander since 1935. Then on Aug. 20 Putna, the corps commander and Soviet military attache to London mentioned earlier, was arrested. He had been a Bolshevik since 1917. Both men had taken part in the Trotskyist opposition in 1926-27.

Until May 1937 Primakov categorically denied any kind of counter-revolutionary activity, though he wrote to Stalin that after breaking with Trotskyism in 1928 he “had not completely severed personal contacts with Trotskyites.” Putna, on the other hand, quickly admitted to participation in current “Trotskyist-Zinovievist centers” and an organization within the Soviet military. He named Primakov as a member…. Meanwhile one of the defendants at the August show trial referred to Putna as an “active participant” in terrorist work.

The major event occurred in April 1937. Marshall Tukhachevsky, one of the best-known officers in the Soviet Union, a colonel under the tsarist regime, and then a Civil War hero for the Reds, had been scheduled to travel to London for the coronation of George VI. But now Yezhov wrote to Stalin claiming that a “foreign source, worthy of complete confidence,” had informed him that the Germans were planning to assassinate Tukhachevsky during his stay in Britain, with the goal of stirring up international trouble. The Politburo responded by removing Tukhachevsky from the Soviet delegation. So far there was no hint of a lack of confidence in him; the decision was taken for his own protection.

But then several officers being held…by the NKVD named Tukhachevsky as a plotter against the government….

The accounts of two NKVD men therefore show that Yezhov personally drove the generals’ affair forward. Of course, Stalin may well have been behind him, issuing orders. But the impression these reports make is one of Stalin reacting to information as it came to him, not initiating matters. During the investigation he met with Yezhov almost daily, and from May 21 to 28 he also met regularly with Frinovsky [one of Yezhov’s aides]. Such close attention to a case that would never come to public trial suggests that Stalin wanted not to manufacture evidence but to learn what the police had found. He might have pushed Yezhov forward in this case in order to investigate something he feared. That Stalin and the Politburo reacted to Yezhov’s report about a plot to murder Tukhachevsky in London suggests that the Gensec did not have a plan to proceed against the officers; indeed, the whole picture of long investigations, NKVD behavior, and Yezhov’s role is one of material making its way up to Stalin.

Another variant was offered by the ex–NKVD officer Almazov. In one of his manuscripts in the Hoover Archives, he claimed that a real military conspiracy against Stalin existed. Planning to rely on several army units and on political prisoners as their main forces, Tukhachevsky and his followers intended to surround the Kremlin, arrest key leaders, and kill Stalin in one quick blow. But they were discovered in 1936, when Putna was recalled to Moscow. Sensing danger, he left a packet of incriminating materials in the Soviet capital with someone he thought he could trust, his brother-in-law. Instead the latter immediately took the documents to the Central Committee. Putna was arrested and quickly confessed–this point is not quite accurate, as we have seen–naming Tukhachevsky and others as his co-conspirators.

It must be noted that Almazov offered different versions of the background to the “generals’ plot.” Yet he was not alone in claiming that a real conspiracy against Stalin existed in the armed forces. Likhachev, a Red Army officer who served in the Far Eastern military district for six years prior to his ouster from the service in 1937 or 1938, also maintained that such a plot was under way and provided extensive details about it. He insisted that he was not directly involved but that he knew many officers who were. They told him that Tukhachevsky and Gamarnik had begun to lay plans in 1932 (that fateful year once again). The affair centered in the Far East, where most of the plotters had served. Putna was stationed there for several years in the early 1930s. High-ranking civilians in places like Leningrad, Smolensk, Kalinin, Tula, the North Caucasus, and Siberia were also involved. Gamarnik, trusted completely by the Kremlin, often traveled as its emissary to outline military districts; he maintained communications among the conspirators.

The chief plotters did not feel that they could trust their troops to follow them against Stalin (an interesting comment on popular loyalties), so they planned to stir up the men by announcing that foreign infiltrators had taken over the NKVD headquarters in Khabarovsk, the administrative center of the Far Eastern Army. Once the troops had attacked the building and blood had been shed, it might be possible to turn them against the regime. (How? Why?) In another version of the plan, an attack on the leadership was to take place inside the Kremlin simultaneously with the Khabarovsk action. But all was in vain; although Likhachev does not say how, the plot was discovered before it could unfold. His account is indirectly supported by an ex-Soviet officer who said that his brother had been involved in a “Tukhachevsky group” in 1935.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 50-53

There was, moreover, always a grain of truth to the accusations of the show trials: the Trotskyist bloc had existed in the USSR, and Bukharin did know of a center, albeit a small one, organized against Stalin. At least one of Bukharin’s followers spoke of killing the vozhd. Putna was probably guilty of treason. The Germans fed the Gensec information incriminating Tukhachevsky, and evidence from various sources points to a plot in the army. Yezhov relayed damaging material on officers to his boss. With some justification, Stalin saw dangerous opposition developing around him.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 57

The principal line of the Generals appears to have been that a conflict with Germany must be avoided at all costs and that the necessary territorial concessions must be made in order to buy the Germans off, and as this was clearly impossible without a change of Government, the Generals were prepared to steer for that in peace or in war. Just as reactionaries in Western Europe are prepared to divert Germany from attacking in Western Europe by offering it a free hand in the East, so the renegade Generals were prepared to offer it a free hand in the West. But from the German point of view, this policy had to be backed by something more than promises. The Generals had not only to declare their willingness to make territorial concessions, but also to prove the genuineness of their attitude by giving the German General Staff information as to the military position in the Soviet Union.
Campbell, J. R. Soviet Policy and Its Critics. London: V. Gollancz, ltd., 1939, p. 225

On May 24, 1937 the following document, signed by Stalin, was circulated to members of the Central Committee requiring their vote:

“On the basis of facts which expose Central Committee member Rudzutak and candidate member Tukhachevsky as participating in an anti-Soviet Trotskyite-Right conspiratorial bloc and espionage work against the USSR for Fascist Germany, the Politburo of the Central Committee puts to the vote the proposal to expel Rudzutak and Tukhachevsky from the party and to hand their case to the commissariat of internal affairs.”

The vote was unanimously in favor. No one had any doubts, no one came to the victims’ defense…. Some members went even further than Stalin’s resolution. For instance, Budenny wrote on the voting slip ‘Definitely yes. These scoundrels must be punished.’ Mekhlis as usual underlined his ‘yes’ several times. Neither Voroshilov, nor Yegorov, who had both served with Tukhachevsky, nor Khrushchev and Mikoyan, who were later to condemn this act… found the courage to abstain from writing the fateful ‘yes’. For unexplained reasons, Stalin as usual left his voting slip blank.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 319

[Footnote]: That the officers had, at least, discussed a coup d’etat is authenticated. A former German Communist, Schutz, was imprisoned in Kharkov during 1937 and told the authorities that among the prisoners were high-ranking officers accused of belonging to the group of conspirators, who stated that it had been planned to force Stalin to agree to Polish partition, in order to secure the Soviet frontier against Germany. When the Zinoviev-Kamenev trial heralded the frustration of these moves they decided to resort to force. But Stalin struck first, with the aid of the “proofs.”
Alexandrov, Victor. The Tukhachevsky Affair. London: Macdonald, 1963, p. 149

[1929] Our military people have told their German counterparts that they are prepared to collaborate with them against the Communist Party and that at a chosen moment they could seize power and set up a pro-German government in the USSR. Therefore nothing should be done against the present Soviet government, and Stresemann’s plans for the creation of a unified bloc against it should be thwarted. The overthrow of the present Soviet government would lead to the setting up of a new government under the wing of France and England, while a military coup d’etat in the Kremlin would bring a pro-German government into power and ensure for Germany the inexhaustible markets of a Russia ruled by a military dictatorship….

Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 105

MILITARY OFFICERS WHO PLANNED TO OVERTHROW STALIN TURNED IN HIS FAVOR

In short, as the war drew to its close, those of us who or were still anti-Stalinist and had kept our sense of the objective facts, found ourselves more and more isolated. This had some ironical results. The Air Force officers who in 1941 had tried to get me to join them in an anti-Stalin coup tried as passionately in 1944 to convince me that there could now be no reason to object to Stalin's rule. 'Stalin has opened the churches,' said one of them, 'he has dissolved the Comintern, he has set of the All-Slav Committee, his allies are the most democratic nations in the world, he relies loyally on the Russian people, he is restoring the true Russian traditions…. What more do we want?' In 1943 and 1944 I do not think that there was a trace of opposition in the USSR. Men who had been in opposition to Stalin were even ashamed of what they had done.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 253

THOUSANDS OF ARMY COMMANDERS WERE REHABILITATED AND SERVED IN WWII

In late 1939 and early 1940 several thousand Red Army commanders were rehabilitated because of the extreme shortage of officers and the incompetence demonstrated during the Soviet-Finnish war. Generally officers up to the level of divisional commanders were rehabilitated. The rehabilitated included many future heroes of the Great Patriotic War, such as: Rokossovsky, future marshall; Meretskov, future marshall; Gorbatov, future army general; Bogdanov, future commander of the Second Tank Army; Kholostyakov, future vice-admiral; Rudnev, future commissar of partisan units in Ukraine–all of whom were later named Heroes of the Soviet Union. Also, Ozeryansky, hero of the defense of Leningrad, awarded two Orders of Lenin and three Orders of the Red Banner;…
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 466

A few survivors were released from the camps; several had already been freed in 1940-41, such as Gorbatov, Rokossovsky, and Meretskov, who rose to fame during the war.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 92

MILITARY UNFAIRLY TREATED AT THE LOCAL LEVEL ARE FAIRLY TREATED BY THE CENTER

(Roger Reese)
Thousands of officers were expelled from the party as a result of independent actions by primary party organizations, and subsequently discharged from the army in an orgy of denunciations at the local level out of Moscow's control…. Simultaneously, thousands of officers were reinstated and tens of thousands of new officers commissioned, more than making up for the purged officers numerically, but not in experience, and making it extremely difficult to assess the impact of the Ezhovshchina on military cadres. This new information suggests a need to re-examine our understanding of the purge of the Red Army, because before the publishing of the aforementioned materials and documents, it was assumed that

all officers removed from the armed forces in the years 1937-39 had been arrested and either executed or imprisoned by the NKVD. Table 9.1 from a report by Shchadenko, Chief of the Commanding Personnel section of the People's Commissariat of Defense, however, shows that a minority of army officers and political leaders were removed from the army by arrest, and the majority were discharged from the army through expulsion from the party. Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 198

He [Stalin] replaced all his military leaders at one time or another, often with good cause, but he also gave them the opportunity to show that their previous mistake had been accidental. Giving them this chance, however, did not mean that he had forgotten the earlier fault. Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 468

NUMBERS PURGED FROM THE MILITARY ARE EXAGGERATED & MANY WERE READMITTED

All told, 34,301 army, air force, and Political Administration of the Red Army (PUR) leaders were discharged from the army either through arrest or expulsion from the party during the Ezhovshchina. Of these, 11,596 were reinstated by May 1940….
The numbers also show a more limited impact on the military than previously thought. Before the publication of the figures in Table 9.1, it had been variously estimated that between 25% and 50% of the Red Army officer corps were repressed in the Ezhovshchina. Conveniently, Shchadenko's office gave the percentage of the leadership permanently discharged in the purge, which allows a calculation of the total strength of the nachal'sostav (the military leadership) in the purge years. In 1937, [the military leadership] numbered 144,300, of whom 11,034 discharged for political reasons remained discharged as of May 1940, equaling 7.7% of the [military leadership]. In 1938 there were 179,000 leaders, of whom 6742 political dischargees were still discharged in May 1940, which equaled 3.7% of the [military leadership]; and in 1939 the Army had 282,300 leaders, 205 or .08% of whom were discharged for political reasons and remained discharged in May 1940. Because the Army stepped up officer procurement during the Ezhovshchina, and at a rate that outpaced discharges, it is extremely difficult to invent a statistic to describe the cumulative impact of the purge on the military, and Shchadenko's annual figures are probably the most definitive we will ever have. We face the same situation with the Red Air Force, which in 1937 had approximately 13,000 officers, lost 4724 in the purge, but had about 60,000 officers in 1940. Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 199

The reason for the earlier high estimates of the percentage of repressed officers and PUR men by Western historians was not so much the erroneous estimates of the number of repressed officers, but tremendously low estimates of the size of the [military leadership]. John Erickson and Robert Conquest estimated the officer corps to number 80,000 and 70,000 respectively, so whereas Erickson's estimates of between 20,000 and 30,000 men discharged is very near the mark, his estimate of the impact is very far off, as is Conquest's estimate of 35,000 arrested officers out of a corps of 70,000. His estimate of a minimum of 20,000 arrested PUR men is 300 percent off. Both these historians considered the majority

of victims of the Ezhovshchina to have been arrested, not expelled and discharged, and did not realize how quickly and in what large numbers men were rehabilitated.
[The number arrested is much higher than the number actually expelled or discharged]
…On orders from Moscow, the Communist Party purged itself frequently between 1921 and 1939. Some chistki (purges) were conducted on a unionwide basis, others were restricted to selected areas, all were to rid the party of self-serving opportunists, people from social classes ineligible for party membership, the politically unreliable, those of a bad moral character, and even those incompetent at their posts.

In the years of the Ezhovshchina, 34,301 Red Army and Red Air Force officers and political personnel were removed from the military for political reasons. As of May 1, 1940, 11,596 victims of arrest and expulsion in the army and air force had been reinstated in rank, but as a rule not to their former positions, leaving as a direct result of the purge 22,705 personnel of the [military] (of which about 13,000 were from the army, 4700 from the air force, and 5000 from PUR) either dead, in the Gulag, or cast into civilian society in disgrace. Although in its worst year approximately only 7.7% of the Red Army's leadership was discharged for political reasons, versus the 20% to 25% suggested by John Erickson and 50% claimed by Robert Conquest, this does not diminish the seriousness of the purge;…
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 213

In 1937 the Soviet Armed Forces readmitted 4661 ousted men. At the direction of the party Central Committee, the Commissariat of Defense created a board in August 1938 to receive complaints from dismissed officers. More than 30,000 appeals and petitions came to it. As a result, 6333 officers regained their old status in the services in 1938, and 184 in 1939, totaling 11,178 in three years. In addition, 2416 won changes in the terms of their dismissals, presumably from political to less serious grounds. By 1939, more Air Force officers were reinstated (867) than arrested (344).
The impact of these dismissals on the armed forces is hard to determine. To begin with, the percentage of officers permanently removed for any reason is unclear, since the number of officers was growing extremely rapidly as new graduates poured out of military schools in preparation for war. But two frames from this moving picture are available: 6.9% of all infantry officers in the ranks as of 1936-37 had been dismissed but not reinstated by May 1940; the figure for the officers active in 1938-39 was 2.3%. Older works commonly suggested that 50 percent of all officers had been purged, with most shot. This number resulted from overestimating the number arrested and greatly underestimating the size of the officer corps.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 123

The repressions of 1937-38 inflicted significant losses on military cadres. During the Yezhovshchina 24,000 men were arrested and "discharged for associating with plotters." In addition, more than 4000 commanders of Polish, Latvian, and other "undesirable nationalities" were purged. As a result, the army lost 8 percent of its commanders. The condemnation of the Yezhovshchina seems to have pertained primarily to army cadres. By May 1, 1940 12,000 repressed individuals had been reinstated.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 274

Over 40,000 soldiers were freed from arrest after it was found out that Yezhov and others, under their command, falsified their “criminal anti-State activities.” Altogether, there were let out of jail, for lack of evidence, after Stalin started the process of these Investigative Commissions–over 320,000 people… because they were innocent.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 79

There was much talk at the Congress of rehabilitating the unjustly condemned. Indeed, thousands were rehabilitated in 1939 and 1940, including many military commanders; many future military heroes of World War II were restored to their positions during these two years.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 240

PURGES IN THE MILITARY HELPED AS THEY DID IN CIVILIAN LIFE

Chistki should not be viewed as antimilitary actions on the part of the party, or as attempts to subvert the leadership of the army; in fact, they reflected a genuine concern for the moral health of the Red Army just as civilian chistki were to strengthen, not punish, those party organs. In the military chistki men were expelled not only for political reasons; failure in one’s military duties could also result in being booted out of the party. In the 1933 chistka, for example, the particular stress was on discipline. Those who did not maintain it in their units, or were personally undisciplined, were subject to expulsion from the party.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 203

PARTY & MILITARY LEADERS REPRESSED MORE THAN INTELLIGENTSIA & SCIENTISTS

Table 11.9 shows, those who worked in the central party and state apparatus, the military, and economic administration were most vulnerable. But those who were members of the artistic and creative intelligentsia or who worked in scientific research were relatively safe. …The most surprising finding, however, is that members of the artistic, creative, and scientific elites were far less vulnerable. These findings offer no support to the assertion that the terror struck the intelligentsia “with particular force.”… Statistically, though, it seems that the vast majority of the elite intelligentsia escaped repression.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 239

But the most striking finding is that the elite members of the intelligentsia working in intellectual/artistic/scientific activities in 1936 were safest from arrest. Party leaders were five times as likely to be arrested, and military officials were more than seven times as likely to perish as were intelligenty. The risk for the creative intelligentsia was even lower than that for other miscellaneous groups. Although there is no doubt that members of the intelligentsia suffered during the repression, these findings make it clear that compared to members of the party, economic, and military elite–or even to other groups–the intelligentsia was much less likely to have perished.

Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 242

PRIMAKOV CONVICTS THE OTHER MILITARY LEADERS OF WORKING FOR GERMANY

As we have seen, in 1926 Tukhachevsky had headed a Soviet military delegation to Berlin. Yakir had been on military courses in Germany in 1929. Kork had been the military attache there. Many others had met German representatives at diplomatic receptions, maneuvers and various talks. All of them, with the exception of Primakov, vigorously denied any 'spy link' with Germany.

Primakov's last words introduced a dissonant note into the proceedings. He fully confirmed the official charges and stated that 'all the conspirators were united by the banner of Trotsky and dedication to Fascism.' He said he had given the investigators the names of 70 people whom he personally knew to be involved in the military-Fascist conspiracy. According to him, the leaders of the plot had a 'second motherland': Putna, Uborevitch and Eideman had close relatives in Lithuania . Yakir had family in Bessarabia, and Eideman had his in America.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 322

TUKHACHEVSKY WAS GIVEN A FREE HAND BY STALIN PRIOR TO 1937

Until 1937 he had allowed Tukhachevsky a free hand in matters concerned with strategic and tactical conceptions and with the modernization of the Armed Forces….
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 494

Absolute dictator as he was after 1930, he [Stalin] could easily have consigned Tukhachevsky to obscurity or exile, but he kept him in high posts and in 1935 promoted him to Marshal of the Soviet Union.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 190

KEY PEOPLE SAY TUKHASHEVSKY WAS INVOLVED IN THE PLOT

But he [Rykov] also, backed by Krestinsky and Rosengoltz, confirmed the participation of Tukhachevsky in the bloc.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 355

TUKHACHEVSKY CONDUCTS HIS OWN FOREIGN POLICY

[Stalin stated to Voroshilov], "Tukhachevsky has dared to make all sorts of approaches involving our foreign policy, without authorization from the foreign affairs branch, without even informing them, in fact."
Alexandrov, Victor. The Tukhachevsky Affair. London: Macdonald, 1963, p. 60

STALIN ASSURES TUKHACHEVSKY THAT RADEK MENTIONING HIS NAME IS JUST UNFORTUNATE

Tukhachevsky's telephone rang. When the caller announced himself the marshal was startled.
"At your service, Comrade Joseph Vissarionovich."
"How are you?" asked Stalin, pleasantly enough.
"I'm well–at least as far as my health is concerned."
"I see what you mean," said Stalin, so warmly that Tukhachevsky could imagine him smiling at the other end. "I have just heard about today's confidential report," Stalin went on, "and that is one reason for my call. I think Mekhlis has gone too far."
"If not further, Comrade Stalin."
"I've made myself plain to him, you can be sure. What foolishness to bring up that meeting at Volna. We know quite well, Mikhail Tukhachevsky, that you have acted according to the spirit of the Party."
"I think so, Joseph Vissarionovich."
"You are quite right. That absurd Radek business. And the nonsense of Mekhlis into the bargain. But what is one to do? I am surrounded with incompetents; you must understand the difficulties."
"I understand them very well, Joseph Vissarionovich."
"Your name has certainly come up in an unfortunate context. But what can we do except regret it? In the existing atmosphere I think the best thing would be to prevent the rumor spreading. There must not be too much of this. Of course I know it is nothing but lies and foolishness, but while waiting for better times, what would you say to a change of air beside the Volga?"
"What's that, Comrade Stalin?"
"You will be released from your duties as Vice-Commissar for Defense and posted as Commandant of the Volga military region. That is a decision of the Council of Commissars."
"As you wish, Joseph Vissarionovich."
"Only do not, I beg you, see any disgrace in this. It looks like a step down but in fact I intend to keep you in reserve for the difficult days ahead when I shall need your military flair badly. You understand me?"
Alexandrov, Victor. The Tukhachevsky Affair. London: Macdonald, 1963, p. 153

STALIN COVERS FOR TUKHACHEVSKY WHEN YEZHOV PRESENTS EVIDENCE AGAINST HIM

[On May 18, 1937, Yezhov visited Stalin]. He opened the file and displayed the proofs of the guilt of Tukhachevsky, the paid spy.
Stalin did not take any notice. Nor did he ask Yezhov to sit down, but walked to and fro exclaiming so that all the secretariat could hear through the door that he had left open on purpose: "Sergo Ordjonikidze [who had just died] was the conscience of the party. An incorruptible tested during thirty years of struggle. As blameless as anyone could be, our Sergo."
Yezhov was silent: mechanically leafing through his file he waited for the chief to recover his composure.
Stalin, however, continued to rage. "Soon there may be war. That will be a great settling of accounts and some bad ones among them. We may well suffer for having tarnished the heritage of our master, Lenin, Sergo should have outlived us, whatever happened. Everyone

loved him; even our enemies would have hesitated to touch him. Unlike you, Nikolai Ivanovitch! There would have been no lack of volunteers for the job of getting rid of you."…
Yezhov felt he was in quicksand. Stalin's words resounded and were lost in the high room, with a menacing effect that even his staff in the next room had noticed. The "cannibal" trembled with fear. He had dropped his file on the desk, but Stalin went on pacing the room and ignored it. Finally he brandished the letter under Yezhov's nose.
"Let me tell you what Sergo wrote before his death. It should interest you. He accused you of dishonoring the Party and me of dishonoring myself by employing you. He said that you isolate me and make me hated. Also that I am forgetting Marxism and running the risk of being cut off at the summit, in a personality cult."
Yezhov was dumbfounded. The file obtained at such cost seemed to interest the chief no longer. Instead of well-deserved praise he was getting this….
Then, calmer, he sat down and told Yezhov to check the file before passing it on to Vyshinsky for a double check. He must then destroy it, make an official report of this, and then meet the Commissar for Defense to try to convince him of the authenticity of the documents.
"He's the one who will need convincing," Stalin concluded. "Party business, particularly at the top, must follow definite procedures. Only the members of Lenin's old guard knew how to do this as it should be done. You, Yezhov, could never manage it. There can be no trial until Comrades Voroshilov, Molotov, and Kaganovich have signed this report."
Alexandrov, Victor. The Tukhachevsky Affair. London: Macdonald, 1963, p. 157-158

GENERALS HAD STALIN AND SOVIET GOVT CONFIDENCE RIGHT UP TO THE LAST

Right up until May of 1937, other future defendants in the "Tukhachevsky affair" felt themselves, as before, to be people enjoying full trust. On August 10, 1936, i.e., immediately before the Trial of the Sixteen, the Politburo approved Voroshilov's proposal to remove from a number of generals, including Kork, the severe party reprimands which they had received in 1934-35. A month and a half before that, also at the request of Voroshilov, the party reprimands which had been made in 1932 were removed from another group of generals, including Kork and Uborevitch. In September-October 1936, the Politburo passed a resolution to send Eideman on an official trip abroad. At the VIIIth Extraordinary Congress of Soviets (November-December 1936), a group photograph was taken showing Tukhachevsky sitting in the front row alongside Stalin and other members of the Politburo.
On March 17, 1937, a sugar factory in the Kiev area which had previously borne Pyatakov's name was now given Yakir's name. On April 27, 1936, Gamarnik was confirmed as a candidate member of the newly formed Defense Committee of the USSR, which included Stalin and other members of the Politburo.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 412

TUKHACHEVSKY AND OTHER GENERALS ADMIT THEIR GUILT

Tukhachevsky's behavior at the investigation appears more enigmatic. He was arrested on May 22, brought to Moscow on May 24 and interrogated for the first time on May 25. On the day following the first interrogation, he wrote a statement to Yezhov, in which he acknowledged the existence of a "military-Trotskyist conspiracy" and promised "to present

the investigation independently with everything concerning the conspiracy, hiding none of its participants, nor a single fact or document." "The beginning of the conspiracy," Tukhachevsky writes, "goes back to 1932. Those participating in it were Feldman, Alafuzo, Primakov, Putna, and others, and I will testify about it in detail later."
A few days after this statement, Tukhachevsky sent Stalin a letter which was called, "Plan of Defeat." An analysis of the contents of this document fully excludes the possibility that it was dictated to Tukhachevsky by the investigators. The document displays the author's profound knowledge of the international political situation of the time, high professionalism and erudition in military questions. It is written in the language of military-scholarly literature, which was obviously inaccessible to the incompetent investigators of the NKVD. The letter, which is written in a calm and businesslike tone, includes many references to German military theoreticians and to the experience of previous wars. The basic ideas of the letter are illustrated with maps that are appended to it.
From the contents of the letter it is clear that at the time it was written, Tukhachevsky was familiar with the testimonies of other military leaders about "wrecking activity" in the army.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 435

Before the trial [of the generals], it was proposed that the defendants appeal in a written statement to Stalin. In a statement written on June 9, Yakir wrote: "All my conscious life has proceeded in honest and self-sacrificing work in plain sight of the party and its leaders–then came the descent into a nightmare, into the incorrigible horror of treachery…. The investigation is over. I have been charged with state treason, I have confessed my guilt, and I have fully repented. I unreservedly believe in the correctness and wisdom of the decision made by the court and the government…. Now each word I speak is the truth–I will die with words of love for you, the party, and the country, and with unbounded faith in the victory of communism".
This letter was read aloud by Zhukov at the June Plenum of the Central Committee in 1957, and then by Shelepin at the Twenty-Second Congress of the CPSU. However, both times it was presented in a deliberately truncated and therefore falsified form. The words shown above in italics were omitted. This omission consciously gave the impression that after he had been falsely charged, tortured, and humiliated, and sensing his unavoidable execution, the completely innocent Yakir was trying to accomplish one thing, to convince Stalin of his personal loyalty.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 439

Although many commanders contemptuously denied the absurd charges against them, others confessed and turned against their comrades. Among them was General Primakov, commander of the Red Cossacks in the civil war, the recipient of three Orders of the Red Banner. He named no less than 70 senior officers who he said had been members of the "military-fascist conspiracy." In his final speech, Primakov said, "Neither in the history of our country nor in the history of other revolutions had there ever been such a plot, as far as its extent, means, and ends are concerned.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 92

Archive materials from the investigation show that the behavior of Tukhachevsky, that is, denying involvement in a plot, was very short-lived.
On May 29, 1937, Yezhov interrogated Tukhachevsky. As a result of that interrogation, "direct testimony" was obtained from Tukhachevsky: "Back in 1928 I was recruited by

Yenukidze into a rightist organization. In 1934 I had personal contacts with Bukharin, and I had espionage links with the Germans from 1925, when I traveled to Germany for training and maneuvers…. During a trip to London in 1936, Putna arranged a meeting for me with Sedov [the son of Trotsky]…. I maintained clandestine links with Feldman, Kamenev, Yakir, Eideman, Yenukidze, Bukharin, Karakhan, Pyatakov, Smirnov, Yagoda, 0sipyan, and a number of others."
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 318

On May 29, 1937, when Tukhachevsky was questioned by Yezhov, he made a "confession." He stated: "Back in 1928 Enukidze drew me into a rightist organization. In 1934 I established personal contacts with Bukharin. I became a spy for the Germans in 1925, when I went to Germany for exercises and maneuvers. When I visited London in 1936, Putna arranged a meeting for me with Sedov [Trotsky's son]…. I acted in conspiracy with Feldman, Kamenev, Yakir, Eideman, Enukidze, Bukharin, Karakhan, Pyatakov, Smirnov, Yagoda, 0sipyan, and some others."
Political Archives of the Soviet Union (Vol. 1, No. 2) Commack, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1990, p. 224

On June 11, 1937, the Special bench met in camera to consider the case against Tukhachevsky and the others. After the indictment was read out, all the accused, in answer to questions from the chairman of the court, pleaded guilty.
Political Archives of the Soviet Union (Vol. 1, No. 2) Commack, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1990, p. 228

Ulrich asked Tukhachevsky: You claim that you joined in anti-Soviet activities in 1932, and, concerning your spying, which you consider anti-Soviet, did begin much earlier?" To this Tukhachevsky replied: "I don't know if it would be considered spying…."
Political Archives of the Soviet Union (Vol. 1, No. 2) Commack, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1990, p. 229

Tukhachevsky deposed that the conspiracy had been led by himself, Tukhachevsky, and Feldman, whom he had allegedly recruited in 1932 together with Smolin and Alafuzo.
But no charges concerning the "military-fascist conspiracy" were brought against Alafuzo, and Smolin has now been rehabilitated.
Furthermore Tukhachevsky deposed that he had drawn Efimov, Putna, Eideman, and Vakulich into the conspiracy in 1933, and Primakov, Gorbachev, Vasilenko and others, in 1934.
Tukhachevsky's depositions to the effect that back in 1925 he had given intelligence about the state of the Red Army to the Polish spy Dombal, and that in 1931 he had established an espionage relationship with General Adams, Chief of the German General Staff, and a staff officer, Niederneyer…and that Niederneyer, at the time indicated by Tukhachevsky, was an official representative of the Reichswehr in the USSR, and, in accordance with the agreements of those years, liaised not only with Red Army commanders but with the NKVD.
Political Archives of the Soviet Union (Vol. 1, No. 2) Commack, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1990, p. 234

A few days later, as Yezhov buzzed in and out of Stalin's office, a broken Marshal Tukhachevsky confessed that Yenukidze had recruited him in 1928, that he was a German

agent in cahoots with Bukharin to seize power. Tukhachevsky's confession…survives in the archives….
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 223

THE TOP GENERALS OF THE 20'S WERE SEEN AS POTENTIALLY SUBVERSIVE

…In 1925 Frunze completed all this by making personnel appointments and switches that placed competent military men at the head of military districts, corps, and divisions. These men were selected on the basis of their military qualifications, not their devotion to the party. By this time I was already secretly anti-communist. Looking at the lists of Frunze's senior officers, I asked myself, "If I were in his place, and anti-communist, who would I have selected to run the army?" I would have had to respond to myself, "The same men." They were a group who would have been perfect for a coup d'etat in case of war. They were, of course, in appearance merely excellent military officers.
I never discussed this matter with Stalin, and naturally I had no wish to draw his attention to it. But when the occasion presented itself I asked Mekhlis if he had heard Stalin say what he thought of the new military appointments. I asked it innocently, "Stalin is always interested in military matters." "What does Stalin think? [He replied,] "Nothing good. Look at the list: men like Tukhachevsky, Kork, Uborevitch, Avksentiev, are they good Communists? They're good for an 18th Brumaire, but not the Red Army." I wanted to know more, "is that your opinion, or Stalin's?" Mekhlis puffed himself up and said conceitedly, "His, and mine too, of course."
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 100

This tendency to see conspiratorial linkages among those who were not on his side was detectable in a note he [Stalin] sent to Ordzhonikidze in 1930. The OGPU had conducted interrogations of a large number of former Imperial Army officers and discovered that several have put their political hopes in Tukhachevsky….
[In the same September 1930 notes to Molotov] Stalin stated:
"At any rate, Tukhachevsky has turned out to be captive to anti-Soviet elements and has been especially worked over by anti-Soviet elements from the ranks of the Rightists. That's what comes out of the materials [of the interrogations]. Is this possible? Of course it's possible once it has failed to be excluded. Obviously the Rightists are ready to go to the lengths of a military dictatorship if only this would free them from the Central Committee, from kolkhozes, and sovkhozes, from Bolshevik rates of development of industry."
…Stalin was in no doubt: Tukhachevsky, Kondratev, and Bukharin were leading figures in this disloyal "camp' of the Rightists.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 279-280

PRIMAKOV ADMITS HIS GUILT AND TESTIFIES AGAINST OTHERS

Arrested on Aug. 14, 1936, Corps Commander Primakov had been held in the Lefortovo prison in Moscow for nine months; he refused to admit he was guilty…. However,…on May 8, 1937, in the Lefortovo prison, he wrote the following statement to Yezhov:

“For nine months I have refused to speak about the affair of the Trotskyite counter-revolutionary organization. In this refusal I have resorted to such insolence that even in the Politburo before Comrade Stalin I continued to refuse to speak and tried in every way possible to mitigate my guilt. Comrade Stalin was right when he said “Primakov is a coward, for to refuse to speak in such a matter is cowardice.” In fact, for my part this was cowardice and false shame for the purpose of deception. I now state that when I returned from Japan in 1930, I made contact with Dreitzer and Putna with Mrachkovsky and started Trotskyite work about which I shall provide full testimony for the investigation.
Already at the interrogation on May 14, 1937, naming his “accomplices,” he had reported the following about Yakir: “The Trotskyite organization thought that Yakir was most suitable for the post of people’s commissar to replace Voroshilov…. They thought that Yakir was a strictly clandestine Trotskyite and allowed that he, Yakir, was linked personally with Trotsky and would possibly carry out top-secret independent tasks unknown to us.”
Continuing the “treatment” [there’s no justification for putting quotes around the word treatment] on Primakov on May 21, 1937, the NKVD organs managed to obtain from him “his own testimony” that Tukhachevsky, who had links with Trotsky, led the conspiracy. In addition, at this interrogation, Primakov named 40 eminent Soviet workers as participants in a military Trotskyite plot in the army. In particular, he offered testimony that compromised eminent military figures such as Shaposhnikov, Kamenev, Gamarnik, Dybenko, Uritsky, and others.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 314-315

Corps Commander Primakov was arrested on Aug. 14, 1936. He was put into Lefortovo Prison in Moscow and for nine months denied all charges. Stalin’s archives contain several statements from him, in which he protested his illegal arrest. But he failed to stand the ordeal and on May 8, 1937, wrote a statement in Lefortovo prison, addressed to Yezhov: “For nine months I have withheld from the investigators the truth about the Trotskyite counter-revolutionary organization. In this I became so impudent that even in the Politburo before Comrade Stalin I continued to hold back and belittle my guilt in every way. Comrade Stalin rightly said that ‘Primakov is a coward, it is cowardice to hold back in a case like this.’ Indeed, it was cowardice and a pretense of shame for the deception on my part. I hereby state that after I came back from Japan in 1930 I got in touch with Dreitzer & Schmidt, and through Dreitzer & Putna, with Mrachkovsky, embarked on Trotskyite work, about which I will testify to the investigators in full.”
… Interrogated on May 14, 1937, he named his accomplices and testified against Yakir: “The Trotskyite organization considered Yakir the best man for People’s Commissar instead of Voroshilov…. We believe that Yakir was a most thoroughly concealed Trotskyite, and admitted of the possibility that he, Yakir, maintained personal contacts with Trotsky and, possibly, was carrying out absolutely secret missions, of which we were not aware.”
On May 21, 1937… the NKVD got Primakov to “make a deposition in his own hand” that the conspiracy was headed by Tukhachevsky, who was linked with Trotsky. At the same interrogation he named 40 prominent officers as members of the alleged military Trotskyite conspiracy in the army. He testified against such noted military leaders as Shaposhnikov, Kamenev, Gamarnik, Dybenko, and Uritsky.
Political Archives of the Soviet Union (Vol. 1, No. 2) Commack, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1990, p. 223

KORK ADMITS HIS GUILT AND TESTIFIES AGAINST OTHERS

New arrests of eminent military workers took place in mid-May 1937. Those arrested included the chief of the Frunze Academy, Army Commander 2nd Rank Kork, and Corps Commander Feldman, who had been appointed deputy commander of the Moscow Military District.
During the first interrogations of Kork, who was arrested on the night of May 14, 1937, he denied involvement in anti-Soviet activity, but on May 16 his resistance was broken, and he signed two statements addressed to Yezhov. Kork reported that he had been recruited into a rightist organization by Yenukidze and that the military rightist organization also included a Trotskyite military group made up of Putna, Primakov, and Turovsky. Tukhachevsky was supposedly also connected with the rightist organization. Kork wrote further that the group's main task was to effect a military coup in the Kremlin and that he led a military organization of rightists headquarters people for the coup made up of himself along with Tukhachevsky and Putna.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 316

New arrests among the military were made in the middle of May 1937. Those arrested include Kork… and Feldman….
At the first interrogations following his arrest on the night of May 13, 1937, Kork denied any involvement in anti-Soviet activities, but on May 16 his resistance was over-powered, and he signed two statements addressed to Yezhov. He said he had been drawn into a right-wing organization by Enukidze, and that their military organization included a Trotskyite military group consisting of Putna, Primakov, and Turovsky. Tukhachevsky was said to have been connected with the military organization of the right. Kork wrote that the group's main aim was to carry out a military takeover in the Kremlin, and that the military organization was led by a take-over headquarters consisting of himself, Tukhachevsky, and Putna.
Political Archives of the Soviet Union (Vol. 1, No. 2) Commack, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1990, p. 223

In a statement to the NKVD, Kork maintained that he had been drawn into the conspiracy by Enukidze, and that the "take-over headquarters" comprised Tukhachevsky, Putna, and himself, Kork. He had entered into a criminal relationship with Tukhachevsky in 1931. Later Kork changed his testimony, saying that the leading center of the conspiracy had consisted of Tukhachevsky, Yakir, Uborevitch, Eideman, and himself, Kork.
Political Archives of the Soviet Union (Vol. 1, No. 2) Commack, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1990, p. 233

FELDMAN TESTIFIES AGAINST ABOUT 40 ACCOMPLICES

Corps Commander Feldman was arrested on May 15, 1937. In his statement he requested that he be able to familiarize himself with the available material in the investigation, and he expressed his readiness to provide testimony concerning that material.
When he presented the record of the interrogation to Stalin, Molotov, Voroshilov, and Kaganovich on May 20, 1937, Yezhov asked them to discuss the question of the arrest of "the remaining participants in the plot" named by Feldman.

The “remaining participants in the plot” who had not been arrested at that time were Tukhachevsky, Yakir, Eideman, and other commanders. They were arrested after May 20. In the records of Feldman’s interrogations on May 19, 21, and 23, 1937, more than 40 army commanders and political workers were named as participants in the military Trotskyite organization.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 317

… According to the records of Feldman’s interrogations on May 19, 21, and 23, 1937, he named 40-odd army commanders and political officers as members of the alleged military Trotskyite organization.
Political Archives of the Soviet Union (Vol. 1, No. 2) Commack, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1990, p. 224

At first Feldman deposed that he had been drawn into the conspiracy by Primakov. At subsequent interrogations he deposed that he had been recruited by Tukhachevsky, who allegedly back in 1932 had told him that Putna, Primakov, Efimov, Vasilenko, Garkavy, Turovsky, and others were involved in the conspiracy.
Political Archives of the Soviet Union (Vol. 1, No. 2) Commack, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1990, p. 233

VOROSHILOV REASSIGNS AND DEMOTES COMMANDERS DEEMED QUESTIONABLE

On May 9, 1937, Voroshilov sent a letter to the All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) Politburo confirming new appointments. On May 10, 1937, the All-Union Communist Party Politburo adopted the following: “The following appointments are confirmed: (1) marshal of the Soviet Union Comrade Yegorov as first deputy people’s commissar of defense; (2) commander of the Leningrad Military District Commander 1st Rank Comrade Shaposhnikov as RKKA chief of General Staff; (3) commander of the Kiev Military District Army Commander 1st Rank Comrade Yakir as commander of the Leningrad military district… (8) marshal of the Soviet Union Comrade Tukhachevsky as commander of the Volga Military District, relieving him of his duties as deputy people’s commissar of defense.”
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 317

PUTNA ADMITS HIS GUILT

When he was interrogated for the first time on August 24-25, 1936, Putna admitted that he had participated in the Trotskyite-Zinovievite Opposition in 1926 and 1927, but said he had completely broken with it and had not engaged in any counter-revolutionary activity. But at the next interrogation, on August 31, 1936, he testified to the existence of a “nation-wide,” a “parallel,” and a ” Moscow center of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite bloc” and his involvement, jointly with Primakov, in a military Trotskyite organization.
Political Archives of the Soviet Union (Vol. 1, No. 2) Commack, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1990, p. 220

COMMANDER MEDVEDEV TESTIFIES AGAINST THE OTHER GENERALS

On May 6, 1937, the NKVD administration for the Moscow Region arrested M. E. Medvedev, retired brigade commander, who prior to 1934 had been head of the Red Army's Air Defenses and had been expelled from the party for squandering public money. That same day he testified against some of the Air defense officers. The interrogation record stated that he had "doubted their sincerity and loyalty." On May 8, 1937, he stated that he had participated in a "Trotskyite military organization," which had been headed by Feldman, deputy commander of the Moscow Military Areas. Interrogated on May 10, 1937, Medvedev spoke of a "military counter-revolutionary organization" in the Red Army, whose aim was to "overthrow the Soviet system, and establish a military dictatorship with the restoration of capitalism, which was to be carried out with armed assistance from invaders." He alleged that the organization's leaders included Tukhachevsky (the potential dictator), Yakir, Putna, Primakov, and Kork.
Political Archives of the Soviet Union (Vol. 1, No. 2) Commack, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1990, p. 222

UBOREVITCH ADMITS HIS GUILT

A short while later Uborevitch signed two statements addressed to Yezhov, in which he confessed to having played a role in a military conspiracy. He also signed the minutes of the interrogation at which he had admitted his guilt.
Political Archives of the Soviet Union (Vol. 1, No. 2) Commack, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1990, p. 225

YAKIR ADMITS HIS GUILT AND SAYS TUKHASHEVSKY GOT HIM INVOLVED

Like Uborevitch, Yakir at first denied any part in the conspiracy, but after a confrontation with Kork, he wrote Yezhov a statement admitting that he had been a member of the conspiracy and that he had been drawn into it by Tukhachevsky in 1933.
Political Archives of the Soviet Union (Vol. 1, No. 2) Commack, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1990, p. 233

SOME TOP GENERALS TESTIFY AGAINST GAMARNIK

Later Yakir changed his depositions and said that back in 1936 he had informed Gamarnik of the sabotage that he, Yakir, and Tukhachevsky and Uborevitch had committed in border areas to weaken the nation's defense capability, and that Gamarnik had said that similar work had been done in the Soviet Far East. Yakir maintained that Gamarnik had not been a member of the military conspiracy's center and that he had not maintained counter-revolutionary contacts directly with Tukhachevsky, Kork, or others but had maintained these contacts through Yakir. Yakir could not cite any instance of Gamarnik's alleged counter-revolutionary activities, saying that Gamarnik had engaged in sabotage in the Soviet Far East and that he himself had known little of the Far Eastern Theatre. Uborevitch did not testify to Gamarnik's role in the military conspiracy but said that Tukhachevsky had spoken very highly of him and that in turn Gamarnik had kept in touch with Tukhachevsky and others on some matters, and therefore he supposed that Gamarnik had been a member of the military conspiracy's center.

Tukhachevsky testified more specifically to Gamarnik's part in the conspiracy. He deposed that its center had consisted of Tukhachevsky, Gamarnik, S.S. Kamenev, Uborevitch, Yakir, Feldman, Eideman, Zarem, Primakov, and Kork.
Tukhachevsky maintained that Gamarnik had joined the center in 1934, had held a leading position in it, and had been in charge of sabotage in the Soviet Far East.
Kork, who was also convicted as a member of the center, deposed: "The center consisted of Tukhachevsky, Yakir, Uborevitch, Eideman, and myself. Tukhachevsky didn't tell me then or later about any other persons, including Gamarnik."
Political Archives of the Soviet Union (Vol. 1, No. 2) Commack, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1990, p. 237

Yezhovshchina

NO RED TERROR

March 1, 1933–the outer world is beginning to talk about a new red terror in Russia, but, as explained previously, neither the Bolsheviks themselves nor leading sections of the Russian people consider it anything but "repressive measures" against class enemies and opponents of the socialization program.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 309

CLASS ENEMIES ARE NOT KILLED BUT RELOCATED

They [those opposing collectivization] are class enemies, and anyway we [the Bolsheviks] do not kill them; we take and put them to work somewhere else because their opposition where they are hampers the development of our socialist system.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 310

STALIN ARGUED WITH SECRET POLICE OVER THEM HAVING MORE POWERS

Not all the details are yet known of the strange struggle which Stalin carried on for years against his own secret police….
The leading members of the secret police, which had become a separate caste, were bound neither to any ideology nor to any party policy. What they wanted–in the name, of course, and for the benefit of, the party–was far-reaching powers and also certain material advantages. They wanted to remain what they had been in the civil war, a privileged class in the matter of power and of material conditions. They therefore kept up a continual struggle against any limitation of their authority. When Stalin sought to impose certain restrictions on their right to pronounce death sentences, they simply secured that the new courts which were to hear certain cases with the public excluded, should be formed from their own members, that is to say members of the police caste. Stalin's continual pressure for more rigid supervision by organs of the party was just what drove Yagoda and his colleagues into opposition and later into conspiracy.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 236

PEOPLE UNJUSTLY ACCUSED AND DENOUNCED OTHERS TO GET AHEAD

In the capitals of almost all the federal republics there were further trials, but in the inverse direction. Everywhere now there were prosecutions of people who during the purge had denounced other people, traducing them out of excess of zeal or in order to advance themselves.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 312

Unbalanced by the relentless propaganda and by exhortations to show vigilance and fearing for their own safety, people denounced neighbors, colleagues, even members of their own families. Lines formed outside NKVD offices, as people waited patiently to file their denunciations. Terror degraded the whole nation.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 272

… various kinds of careerists and adventurers took advantage of the spy-and wrecker-phobia.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 437

Of course different prisoners behaved in different wayss. Some immediately complied with the desires of the investigators; without any sort of resistance they gave false testimony not only about themselves but about dozens and hundreds of their comrades…. Some of these weak-willed people went even further than the investigators demanded; they gained cruel satisfaction out of voluntarily denouncing co-workers and friends, demanding their arrest, though they had no doubt about their innocence.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 493

A denunciation to the NKVD was an easy way to get rid of athletic rivals.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 611

Under these conditions all sorts of careerists and scoundrels tried to use slander to destroy their enemies, to get a good job, an apartment or a neighbor's room, or simply to get revenge for an insult. Some pathological types crawled out of their holes to write hundreds of denunciations…. The usual NKVD response to a denunciation was to arrest the victim and only later to bother about "checking" the charges made against him.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 612

The assertion is sometimes made that people denounced others to settle personal scores, to advance in their careers, or to gain their apartments. Inevitably such behavior did take place. But the evidence presented here, and a good deal more besides, shows that much more commonly people acted to denounce others because they believed in danger from saboteurs.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 151

"I have seen," says Ehrenburg, "how in a progressive society people allegedly dedicated to moral ideas committed desirable acts for personal advantage, betrayed comrades and

friends, how wives disavowed their husbands and resourceful sons heaped abuse upon hapless fathers."…
Individual denouncers operated on an extraordinary scale. In one district in Kiev, 69 persons were dennounced by one man; in another, over 100. In Odessa, a single Communist denounced 230 people. In Poltava, a Party member denounced his entire organization.
At the 18th Party Congress, when the "excesses" of the Purge period were being belatedly and peripherally criticized, one was now made to confess his methods, which had involved removing 15 local Party Secretaries.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 253

Such prodigious denouncers must have been a rarity compared to the far larger number who denounced but not in a wholesale way. Among these, motives varied widely. Some denounced for fear of being denounced if they failed to turn in someone who had told a political anecdote in a group conversation. Some denounced persons they disliked. Some wanted to gain possession of the room or apartment of the person they denounced, whose family would likely be evicted once he was arrested. Some wanted to eliminate rivals for athletic glory or other desired goals. And not a few were actuated by career ambition to denounce persons senior to them who stood in their way.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 460

Beck and Godin note the zeal with which many students denounced their professors, junior officials those higher up, rank-and-file party members those in responsible posts; and describe this ambition-driven "revolt of subordinates" as a most significant feature of the period.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 461

STALIN WAS TOLERANT AND NOT BLOODTHIRSTILY ELIMINATING HIS ENEMIES

The animosity of the world press has created a picture of a ruthless and bloodthirsty Stalin murdering his erstwhile colleagues, presumably for no better reason than to strengthen his own personal power….
In reality, Stalin hesitated for many months before embarking on the famous "Purges." He was too deeply conscious of the seriousness of Lenin's deathbed warning as to the dangers which would arise if one section of the Party condemned its opponents to death. Even when Zinoviev had whispered his plan to assassinate Trotsky, Stalin had refused to embark on that fatal policy of self-murder which had destroyed the French revolutionary Jacobins….
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 98

Many embittered attacks have been made against Stalin for his treatment of the Opposition leaders and the blood-letting which followed the treason trials. He has been accused of seeking personal aggrandizement by eliminating his colleagues in the Bolshevik Central Committee and of treachery towards those who gave him their support in his campaign against Trotsky.
Impartial study of the years 1936 to 1938, however, disproves this thesis. Stalin was never the friend of Zinoviev, Kamenev, and the others. He worked with them for his own purposes and because they shared his views on the danger of Trotskyism. He did so with full

knowledge that they were planning to turn against him when he had served their purpose. He regarded them as they regarded him and dealt with them as they would have dealt with him in different circumstances.
Whenever the Opposition confined its activity to attacks upon the views of the majority, Stalin permitted them to do so. They brought destruction upon themselves when they passed from attacks on Stalin to subversive maneuverings against the foundations of Soviet rule.
To those who have served Russia faithfully, Stalin has always been a loyal friend and generous colleague. He does not remove a man at the first sign of heterodoxy like Hitler did Roehm nor does he kill by stealth as Mussolini destroyed Balbo.
Kalinin still stands beside Stalin though he supported the pro-kulak theories of Bukharin in 1936. Voroshilov was in error on the question of Army discipline in 1937, but he lives in freedom and devotes his life to the defense of Russia. Ordjonikidze opposed Stalin on several occasions and did not hesitate to say so, but he occupied high office in the Government until Yagoda's poisoners murdered him.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 128-129

GOLOVANOV: Some people believe he [Stalin] was a sadist.
But I knew him well. He was no bloodthirsty tyrant. A struggle was raging. There were various political currents and deviations. The building of socialism required firmness. Stalin had more of this firmness than anyone else. Was there a fifth column? There was no question about that. And they were prominent leaders, not underlings….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 295

The most common explanation of the police atrocities in that infamous year [1937] points to a well-planned action by the NKVD, at the instigation of Stalin who wanted to eliminate all his real, potential, or imagined opponents on a national scale, whatever their position in the socio-political hierarchy. But having examined the decidedly tortuous meanderings of political maneuvers and counter-maneuvers during 1936, we must conclude that the likelihood of such an undertaking is very low….
In the last chapter we saw how improbable it is that the political moves which ushered in the crescendo of terror could have been the product of a single strategy put into effect by an absolute controlling and decision-making centralized power. Similarly, the fact that the police action of 1937 continued for so long, in company with equally self-contradictory political acts, makes it unlikely that we are dealing here with a victorious punitive expedition being carried through by the praetorian guard of an all-powerful dictator.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 113

STALIN WAS FAIR IN CHECKING CHARGES AGAINST PEOPLE

It speaks highly of Stalin's sense of justice that he did not hesitate to double check the charges made against the accused, lest place-seeking politicians should seek advancement by falsely informing against an inconvenient superior.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 101

CHUEV: So Stalin treated people altogether mercilessly?

MOLOTOV: What do you mean, mercilessly? He got reports; they had to be checked out.
CHUEV: People would slander one another….
MOLOTOV: We would have been complete idiots if we had taken the reports at their face value. We were not idiots. We could not entrust accused individuals with jobs of responsibility, because they could have reverted to type any time.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 276

CHUEV: If Stalin knew everything and did not rely on bad advice, he bears direct responsibility for the executions of the innocent.
MOLOTOV: That conclusion is not entirely correct. Understanding the idea is one thing, applying it is something else. The rightists had to be beaten, the Trotskyists had to be beaten, so the order came down: punish the vigorously. Yezhov was executed for that. If tough measures are rejected, the great risk is always that at the critical moment the nation may be torn apart and the devil knows how it may end–leading only to greater losses. Millions may die, and that may mean total collapse or at least a very deep crisis.
CHUEV: That's true. Yezhov was executed, but the innocent were not released.
MOLOTOV: But, when all is said, many of the verdicts were justified. The cases were reviewed and some people were released….
MOLOTOV: A commission on Tevosian was set up after he was arrested. Mikoyan, Beria, myself, and someone else worked on that commission. Tevosian was a Central Committee member, a most upright man, an excellent specialist in metallurgy. An extremely competent man. A report came in that he was a saboteur and that he was working to damage our steel industry. He had intensive training in Germany with the Krupp works, and upon returning home he most perseveringly and effectively worked in our steel industry. But soon a lot of evidence given by specialists and managers was received. At Stalin's initiative, a special commission was set up to review his case thoroughly. We went to the NKVD building to examine the evidence. We heard out one engineer, two, three. Each one insisted Tevosian was a wrecker because he had issued such and such instructions. Tevosian was in the same room and listened to all those accusations. He easily exposed and rejected all the charges. We compared the evidence with the facts and concluded that the charges were absurd. Sheer slander. Tevosian was acquitted. He remained a member of the Central Committee, and then he continued to do his job. We reported to Stalin, and he agreed with our conclusion.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 294

GOLOVANOV: Stalin also tried to find out from me who had me expelled from the party. I realized that if I indicated that person to him, the next day the man would be out of the Politburo. I never divulged the name to him….
MOLOTOV: Khrushchev brought his lists of enemies of the people to Stalin. Stalin doubted the numbers reported–"They can't be so many!" "They are–in fact, many more, Comrade Stalin. You can't imagine how many they are!"
GOLOVANOV: I have a friend who used to work with me as a flight engineer when I was a pilot in civil aviation. He studied at the political academy, switched to research work, and taught at the general staff academy. As the campaign of exposures and denunciations was launched, he was transferred to the Institute of Marxism-Leninism to pour over documents in search of execution orders and so forth signed by Stalin. He did not find a single paper of that kind bearing Stalin's signature.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 296

MOLOTOV: The Central Committee was also to blame for running careless checks on some of the accused. But no one can prove to me that all those actions should never have been undertaken. That claim could only come from someone who had never been a Bolshevik with prerevolutionary experience….
…Not all the lists were signed by the Politburo members. In many cases the verdicts arrived at by the security agencies were taken on trust.
GOLOVANOV: On trust, of course.
MOLOTOV: Not all the cases could be checked out….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 297

Wholesale expulsions based on this "heartless attitude" alienated party members and therefore served the needs of the party's enemies. According to Stalin, such embittered comrades could provide addit___Yional reserves for the Trotskyists "because the incorrect policy of some of our comrades on the question of expulsion from the party and reinstatement of expelled people… creates these reserves."
Large numbers of members have been incorrectly expelled "for so-called passivity." Such passives were expelled because they hadn't mastered the party program. "If we were to go further on this path, we should have to leave only intellectuals and learned people in general in our party." Acceptance of the program is sufficient, especially for those working on mastering the program.
Stalin stated, "It is necessary to put an end to the present blockheaded interpretation of the question of passivity…. The fact is that our comrades do not recognize the mean between two extremes. It is sufficient for a worker, a party member, to commit some small offense…and in a flash he is thrown out of the party.
No interest is taken in the degree of his offense, the cause of his non-appearance at the meeting…the bureaucratism of this is simply unparalleled…. And was it impossible, before expelling them from the party, to give them, or administer a reprimand…or in the extreme case to reduce to the position of candidate, but not to expel them with a sweep of a hand from the party?
"Of course it was possible.
But this requires an attentive attitude toward people…. And this is exactly what some of our comrades lack.
It is high time to put a stop to this outrageous practice, comrades."
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 147

Lastly, one more question. I have in mind the question of the formal and heartlessly bureaucratic attitude of some of our Party comrades towards the fate of individual members of the Party, to the question of expelling members from the Party, or the question of reinstating expelled members of the Party. The point is that some of our Party leaders suffer from a lack of concern for people, for members of the Party, for workers. More than that, they do not study members of the Party, do not know what interests they have, how they are developing; generally, they do not know the workers. That is why they have no individual approach to Party members and Party workers. And because they have no individual approach in appraising Party members and Party workers they usually act in a haphazard way: either they praise them wholesale, without measure, or roundly abuse them, also wholesale and without measure, and expel thousands and tens of thousands of members

from the Party. Such leaders generally try to think in tens of thousands, not caring about "units," about individual members of the Party, about their fate. They regard the expulsion of thousands and tens of thousands of people from the Party as a mere trifle and console themselves with the thought that our Party has two million members and that the expulsion of tens of thousands cannot in any way affect the Party's position. But only those who are in fact profoundly anti-Party can have such an approach to members of the Party.
As a result of this heartless attitude towards people, towards members of the Party and Party workers, discontent and bitterness is artificially created among a section of the Party, and the Trotskyite double-dealers cunningly hook onto such embittered comrades and skilfully drag them into the bog of Trotskyite wrecking.
Stalin, Joseph. Works, Vol. 14, Speech in Reply to Debate, 1 April 1937, Red Star Press, London, Pravda 1978, pp. 292-296.

Taken by themselves, the Trotskyites never represented a big force in our Party. Recall the last discussion in our Party in 1927. That was a real Party referendum. Of a total of 854,000 members of the Party, 730,000 took part in the voting. Of these, 724,000 members of the Party voted for the Bolsheviks, for the Central Committee of the Party and against the Trotskyites, while 4,000 members of the Party, i.e., about one-half per cent, voted for the Trotskyites, and 2,600 members of the Party abstained from voting. One hundred and twenty-three thousand members of the Party did not take part in the voting. They did not take part in the voting either because they were away, or because they were working on night shift. If to the 4,000 who voted for the Trotskyites we add all those who abstained from voting on the assumption that they, too, sympathised with the Trotskyites, and if to this number we add, not half per cent of those who did not take part in the voting, as we should do by right, but five per cent, i.e., about 6,000 Party members, we will get about 12,000 Party members who, in one way or another, sympathised with Trotskyism. This is the whole strength of Messieurs the Trotskyites. Add to this the fact that many of them became disillusioned with Trotskyism and left it, and you will get an idea of the insignificance of the Trotskyite forces. And if in spite of this the Trotskyite wreckers have some reserves around our Party it is because the wrong policy of some of our comrades on the question of expelling and reinstating members of the Party, the heartless attitude of some of our comrades towards the fate of individual members of the Party and individual workers, artificially creates a number of discontented and embittered people, and thus creates these reserves for the Trotskyites.
For the most part people are expelled for so-called passivity. What is passivity? It transpires that if a member of the Party has not thoroughly mastered the Party program he is regarded as passive and subject to expulsion. But that is wrong, comrades. You cannot interpret the rules of our Party in such a pedantic fashion. In order to thoroughly master the Party program one must be a real Marxist, a tried and theoretically trained Marxist. I do not know whether we have many members of our Party who have thoroughly mastered our program, who have become real Marxists, theoretically trained and tried. If we continued further along this path we would have to leave only intellectuals and learned people generally in our Party. Who wants such a Party? We have Lenin's thoroughly tried and tested formula defining a member of the Party. According to this formula a member of the Party is one who accepts the program of the Party, pays membership dues and works in one of its organizations. Please note: Lenin' s formula does not speak about thoroughly mastering the program, but about accepting the program. These are two very different things. It is not necessary to prove that Lenin is right here and not our Party comrades who chatter idly about thoroughly

mastering the program. That should be clear. If the Party had proceeded from the assumption that only those comrades who have thoroughly mastered the program and have become theoretically trained Marxists could be members of the Party it would not have created thousands of Party circles, hundreds of Party schools where the members of the Party are taught Marxism, and where they are assisted to master our program. It is quite clear that if our Party organizes such schools and circles for the members of the Party it is because it knows that the members of the Party have not yet thoroughly mastered the Party program, have not yet become theoretically trained Marxists.

Consequently, in order to rectify our policy on the question of Party membership and on expulsion from the Party we must put a stop to the present blockhead interpretation of the question of passivity.

But there is another error in this sphere. It is that our comrades recognise no mean between two extremes. It is enough for a worker, a member of the Party, to commit a slight offence, to come late to a Party meeting once or twice, or to fail to pay membership dues for some reason or other, to be kicked out of the Party in a trice. No interest is taken in the degree to which he is to blame, the reason why he failed to attend a meeting, the reason why he did not pay membership dues. The bureaucratic approach displayed on these questions is positively unprecedented. It is not difficult to understand that it is precisely the result of this heartless policy that excellent, skilled workers, excellent Stakhanovites, found themselves expelled from the Party. Was it not possible to caution them before expelling them from the Party, or if that had no effect, to reprove or reprimand them, and if that had no effect, to put them on probation for a certain period, or, as an extreme measure, to reduce them to the position of candidates¸ but not expel them from the Party at one stroke? Of course it was. But this calls for concern for people, for the members of the Party, for the fate of members of the Party. And this is what some of our comrades lack.

It is time, comrades, high time, to put a stop to this disgraceful state of affairs. (Applause.)

Stalin, Joseph. Works, Vol. 14, Speech in Reply to Debate, 1 April 1937, Red Star Press, London, Pravda 1978, pp. 292-296.

The Central Committee gathered in yet another plenum at the end of February 1937….

But once again Molotov specifically and firmly disdained a campaign aimed at everyone who had ever opposed the party line, including Trotskyites. He cited a telegram that Stalin had sent the previous December to the municipal party committee in Perm. There the director of an aviation motor factory, a former Trotskyite, was being persecuted “because of his former sins.” But in view of the fact that he and his subordinates, who were also suffering, “now work with a good conscience and enjoy the full confidence of the Central Committee,” Stalin asked the city secretary to protect them and “create around them an atmosphere of complete trust.” He requested the secretary to let the Central Committee know quickly of measures taken to help the group. It is hard to imagine a more direct and forceful statement that every oppositionist was to be evaluated on his or her merits and record; there was to be no witch-hunt.

Molotov’s recommendations for action were along the same lines. More Bolshevik tolerance for objections was needed: “We must prove our ability to cope with criticism,” even the unpleasant sort. The way to deal with enemies was through selection of employees, and methods of leadership. In short, Molotov did not assign a prominent role to the police.

Stalin was mild and supportive toward Kossior, first secretary of the party in Ukraine. Kossior admitted that in his area there had been a lot of “familyness,” meaning that he had created a network of people connected directly to himself and had sometimes resisted central

directives. Such practices were now condemned as likely to let in enemies. Kossior regretted not having enough “Bolshevik sagacity and decisiveness.” Stalin interjected: “If you had told us, we would have helped.” When Kossior dwelled further on his errors, Stalin said, “No matter, people learn from mistakes.”
KOSSIOR: That’s true. But the price is too high.
STALIN: A good product is not bought cheaply. (General laughter).
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 43-44

At last Stalin took the floor. On March 3 he presented an address entitled “On Shortcomings of Party Work and Measures of Liquidation of Trotskyite and Other Double-Dealers.” He began by charging that sabotage and espionage, in which “Trotskyites have played a fairly active role,” had occurred in almost all government and party organizations. The agents of this nefarious work had reached not just lower levels but “some responsible posts” as well. Many leaders at the center and in the provinces had been “complacent, kindhearted, and naive” toward the wreckers, which had help them get into high positions. Often the enemies were masked as Bolsheviks.
Still, Stalin did not call for massive purges of the party, even for those guilty of complacency and indirect aid to the wreckers…. Stalin’s emphasis in coping with the danger was on reeducation, not on mass arrests. There was no point in retraining anyone not deemed basically trustworthy.
On the same day Stalin spoke, the central committee resolved that, at a minimum, Bukharin and Rykov knew of the terrorist activity of the Trotskyite-Zinovievite center and hid it from the party, thereby aiding terrorism. They also knew of other terrorist groups organized by their “pupils and followers.” Far from struggling with the terrorists, the two rightist leaders encouraged them. The Central Committee voted to expel Bukharin and Rykov from the party and to turn their case over to the NKVD.
Stalin now changed his tone, though why is not clear. His speech of March 5 was considerably milder than his first remarks,…
It was necessary to hunt down active Trotskyites but not everyone who had been casually involved with them, Stalin announced. In fact, such a crude approach could “only harm the cause of the struggle with the active Trotskyist wreckers and spies.” Even more surprising given his first set of remarks, but paralleling his December 1936 telegram in defense of a former Trotskyite, Stalin allowed that some people had long ago left their fellows and now “conduct the fight with Trotskyism no worse, but even better than some of our respected comrades…. It would be stupid to discredit such comrades.” Each case of expulsion from the party for connections with the former oppositions should be dealt with carefully.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 47-48

[At a January 1938 meaning of the Central Committee] Malenkov emphasized that the Commission of Party Control, still headed by Yezhov, had discovered that “very many” of the appeals for reinstatement “correctly objected” to expulsion. In the majority of cases the commission examined from 40 to 60 percent of those thrown out of the party had been reinstated. Malenkov reminded the Central Committee of Stalin’s objection in March 1937 to a “heartless bureaucratic” approach to communists.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 107

Several episodes recounted by Khrushchev show how the selection of candidates took place at the Moscow conferences. The first episode was connected with the head of one of the departments of the Moscow Committee, Brandt, who before the conference told Khrushchev that he always was having to explain whether he was the son of the colonel in the tsarist army named Brandt who headed the anti-Soviet uprising in Kaluga in 1918. Although Brandt would always say that his father had truly been a colonel, but another, who had never disgraced himself before the Soviet regime, he was sure that this time they would begin to slander him with particular cruelty, and therefore he was entertaining thoughts of suicide. Imagining all too well the atmosphere which would dominate at the conference, Khrushchev understood that it "might prove to be fatal for Brandt," and decided to tell Stalin himself about this case, in order to save his comrade and colleague. After he had received assurances from Khrushchev that Brandt was "a person who had been tested," Stalin ordered that "he not be subjected to insults." As a result, Brandt was selected a member of the Moscow committee.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 300

After the break, Kaganovich delivered a brief but vicious speech. Evidently, he had "reconsidered" and begun to believe not only the "whore" Sokolnikov instead of Bukharin but also the forced testimony of Zinoviev and Kamenev. Molotov competed with Kaganovich in the ardor of his attacks on Rykov and Bukharin….
No one rose to defend the two. Ordzhonikidze did interrupt Yezhov to ask questions, trying to make sense out of the ongoing nightmare, thereby becoming the one person to indicate a certain distrust in the new people's commissar [Yezhov]….
Finally, Stalin took the floor. I report from memory what Bukharin told me:
"No need to make a hasty decision, Comrades. Look, the investigative organs also had material against Tukhachevsky, but we sorted it out, and Comrade Tukhachevsky may now work in peace….
I think Rykov might have known something about the counterrevolutionary activity of the Trotskyists and did not inform the Party. But in respect to Bukharin, I still doubt this. [Here, he was purposely splitting Bukharin off from Rykov.] It is very painful for the Party to speak of the past crimes of comrades as authoritative as Bukharin and Rykov were. Therefore, we will not hurry with the decision, Comrades, but continue the investigation.
Larina, Anna. This I Cannot Forget. New York: W.W. Norton, 1993, p. 301

LEGAL SYSTEM OF THE SU IS JUST

The sharpest test of the conscience remaking of human character is found in the Soviet policy for handling law-breakers. The Soviet criminologist holds neither of the theories on which the prevalent systems of prison regime in capitalist countries are based. He does not believe in the existence of "born criminals" whose will must be broken by brutal suppression nor does he rely on emotional appeals to the "better nature" of the criminal, for he knows that this better nature exists as yet only in rudimentary form. "We don't assume that a man of anti-social habits will be at once reclaimed by gifts of chocolate, nice bathrooms, and soft words," a leading Soviet penologist told me. "Men are made over by a new social environment and especially by their work done collectively."

Soviet law aims to make over social misfits while protecting society from their attacks. Punishment as vengeance has no place in such an aim: revenge merely incites revenge in return. To make prisoners sit in solitude and think of their sins produces a fixation on crime. To "break a man's will" or lessen his human dignity in any way injures him as material for a creative socialist society. Soviet justice therefore aims to give the criminal a new environment in which he will begin to act in a normal way as a responsible Soviet citizen. The less confinement the better; the less he feels himself in prison the better…. "We have a double approach," said Attorney-General Vyshinsky in an interview. "Active, confirmed enemies of our Soviet power who stick at nothing to injure us must be ruthlessly crushed…. But if we had tried to apply the idea of absolute humanitarianism to bitter enemies we wouldn't be here today."
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 254

The labor camp is the prevalent method for handling serious offenders of all kinds, whether criminal or political…. The labor camps have won high reputation throughout the Soviet Union as places where tens of thousands of men have been reclaimed. They have, however, been the center of some of the most spectacular attacks on the Soviet Union in recent years. Allegations of brutal treatment and even of torture have found their way widely into the foreign press. While it is clearly impossible to check every one of these accusations, they are contradicted by every competent observer who has ever seen the camps. Dr. Mary Stevens Callcott, the American penologist who has studied prisons all over the world, and who has had the unique experience of visiting the larger part of the Soviet camps, including those for the worst–and for political–offenders, has commented both in her book Soviet Justice and in conversations with me personally, on the "amazingly normal" life that differentiates these camps from prisons in any other part of the world.
She notes the freedom of movement over large areas of territory, the very small amount of guarding, the work done under normal conditions–7 hours for ordinary labor to 10 for men whose tasks, such as driving a truck, permitted frequent rests during work. She could find no speed up; laws of labor protection operated as in factories. Wages were the same as those outside, with deductions for living expenses; all above this could be sent by the prisoner to his family, saved, or spent as he chose. "No uniforms with their psychological implications, no physical abuse; isolation only in extreme instances. Privileges and special rewards replace the system of special penalties." Among these special rewards are the two weeks' vacation in which the prisoner may leave the camp, and the opportunities given for his family not only to visit him but even to live with him for extended periods. Normal human association goes on; men and women meet and may even marry while serving sentence, in which case they are given separate quarters.
What most impressed Dr. Callcott, however, was the type of men in charge of these camps, and the relation they had to the prisoners. She tells of going through the Moscow-Volga Canal camp with its director. Prisoners hailed him with obvious pleasure and informality. A girl rushed up to detain him by seizing the belt of his uniform lest he get away before she could tell him something. A teacher whose term was about to expire expressed a wish to stay on and work under him. There were only five officials in the central administration office of this camp of many thousand prisoners; all the work, including most of the guarding, was done by the convicted men themselves. "In fact," said Dr. Callcott, "I can never see what kept men in this camp unless they wanted to stay there. No convicts I have known would have any difficulty if they wanted to break away."

Both prisoners and officials, of whom Dr. Callcott asked this question–she talked with prisoners freely without the presence of officials–replied that they didn't run away because it they did, "nobody in my working gang would speak to me when I came back. They would say I had disgraced them." There are, however, a certain number of incorrigibles who run away repeatedly, and these are given somewhat closer guarding for a time. Political prisoners, she noted, were treated like everyone else, except that those who had been persistent and dangerous in their attacks on the government were sent away from the possibility of connection with their past associates. In all her conversations with these "politicals," she was unable to find one who had been sentenced merely for expressing anti-Soviet views. All were charged with definite action against the government.

"I did everything I could to destroy this government," one such man frankly told her, "sabotage of the most serious kind. But the way they have treated me here has convinced me that they are right."

Another prisoner, who had been in Sing Sing, San Quentin, as well as in jails of England, Spain, and Germany, before he was picked up by the Soviets for grand larceny, had been reclaimed by the Baltic-White Sea Canal. He had done a bit of engineering in his youth, and was promptly given a chance to work at this specialty. He won a metal, pursued his studies further, and was doing brilliant work on the Moscow-Volga Canal when Dr. Callcott met him. To her query about his reformation he replied:

"in the other countries they treated me like a prisoner, clapped me in jail and taught me my place. Here they clapped me on the back and said "what can we do to make you into a useful citizen?" Dr. Callcott conversed with many men now high in Soviet industry who had previously been reclaimed by the labor camps. Nothing in their attitude or that of those about them showed any stigma remaining from their prison life. "Of course, when it's over, it's forgotten," one of them said to her. "That," says Dr. Callcott, "is real restoration."

Information from many other sources and from my own observation corroborates Dr. Callcott.

Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 256

The Communists point out that in so-called democratic countries, while justice pretends to be impartial as between all citizens, and to guarantee individuals certain declared rights, in practice the propertied classes get the benefit of any doubt; private property has a superior claim.

Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 61

III. ON REDUCING THE POPULATION OF PLACES OF CONFINEMENT

1) the maximum number of persons that may be held in custody in places of confinement attached to the People's Commissariat for Justice, the 0GPU, and the Chief Directorate of the Police, other than in camps and colonies, is not to exceed 400,000 persons for the entire Soviet Union.

The 0GPU, the People's Commissariat for Justice of each of the Union republics, and the Procuracy of the USSR are to proceed immediately to reduce the population of places of confinement. The total number of those confined is to be reduced within the next two months from the current figure of 800,000 to 400,000 persons.

2… The superintendents of places of confinement are prohibited from taking prisoners in excess of the maximum number that has been established.

3… The maximum period for holding a person in custody in police lockups is to be three days. Those incarcerated are to be provided with bread rations without fail.
Signed: Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, Molotov and Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, J. Stalin.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 117

…Moreover, according to the new regulations, the NKVD did not have the power to pass death sentences (as the 0GPU and its predecessors the GPU and Cheka had) or to inflict extralegal "administrative" punishments of more than five years. Treason cases, formerly under the purview of the secret police, were, along with other criminal matters, referred to the regular courts or to the Supreme Court.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 121

…A number of key events between 1934 and 1937, including the assassination of Politburo member Kirov, dramatically changed and hardened the political landscape.
…In September a memo from Stalin proposed the formation of a Politburo commission (chaired by Kuibyshev…) to look into 0GPU abuses. Stalin called the matter "serious, in my opinion," and ordered the commission to "free the innocent" and purge the 0GPU of practitioners of specific "investigative tricks" and punish them regardless of their rank….
Thus, in response to Stalin's recommendation, the Kuibyshev Commission prepared a draft resolution censuring the police for "illegal methods of investigation" and recommending punishment of several secret police officials.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 122

[June 17th, 1935 decree by the Council of People's Commissar's of the USSR in the Central Committee of the Communist Party]
1. In modification of instructions of May 8th, 1933, henceforth organs of the NKVD may make arrests only with the consent of the appropriate procurator. This applies to all cases without exception.
2. If arrests must be made at the site of the crime, officials of the NKVD authorized by law are obligated to report the arrest immediately to the appropriate procurator for his confirmation.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 188

[From Protocol # 38 of the Politburo on April 20th 1936]
Regarding: Dependents of persons deported from cities in the USSR subject to special measures.
…Residence in localities in the USSR subject to special measures is to be permitted to dependents of persons removed from these localities: to dependents whose family is engaged in socially useful work, or to students–that is to those people who are in no way personally to blame for anything.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 220

"Decree of the Narkomvnudel. Whereas Peter Kleist, engineer, age 29, and a former employee of the Cotton Trust, has been examined on the suspicion of engaging in political espionage and whereas the examination has shown that he did not knowingly engage in such activity, it is decided that he be acquitted of this charge."
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 177

…whereas the aforesaid has been further examined on the suspicion of engaging in economic espionage by the sequestration of data and formulae, and whereas it has been established that secret technical data and formulae were in his possession at the time of his intended departure from the Soviet Union, it is decreed that the said Peter Kleist be forthwith expelled from the Soviet Union. It is further decreed that the charge of illegally exchanging Soviet currency for foreign currency shall not be proceeded with.
Signed. Tanev, Procurator."
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 178

(Others Kleist met in prison). He was a Rumanian called Jonescu [who said],
"I wasn't sorry to be in prison. I got regular food and something to occupy my mind– they gave me work and offered to teach me a trade. I had studied mathematics and so I asked permission to do the work of a planning statistician. I liked the work. It was interesting studying the work of men in relation to machines, output, and all the rest of it. They paid me a wage for my work and I wasn't uncomfortable. I got there everything I wanted in the Lavka. (The Lavka is the prison shop where penal prisoners are allowed to buy from their wages things like tobacco, paper and pencil, newspapers and books.). I began to read again, to look forward to a settled life as a Soviet worker….
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 181

… in August 1936 he publicly rebuffed any idea that in Soviet circumstances children should answer for their parents' sins.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 196

…the government's edict "On Revolutionary Legality," issued on June 25, 1932, swung Soviet jurisprudence decisively toward statutory stability, formality, and correspondingly the professionalization of jurists. The main spokesman for the new approach was Vyshinsky, whose appointment as procurator general of the USSR in 1935 symbolized the ascendance of that philosophy. Taking his cue from Stalin's assertion that "the withering away of the state will come not through a weakening of state authority but through its maximum intensification," Vyshinsky worked tirelessly to make law the cornerstone of the burgeoning bureaucratic apparatus. He clashed repeatedly with the commissar of justice, Krylenko, over what Krylenko considered excessive borrowing of forms and norms from bourgeois legal systems. Vyshinsky engaged in bureaucratic turf battles with both Krylenko's commissariat and the NKVD.
The Constitution epitomized the new Soviet legal thinking. As one Western scholar has noted, it provided for "a strong and stable criminal law for the protection of public property, and a predictable and differentiated civil law for the protection of the…right of 'personal property.' Beyond this, the emphasis on stability and predictability was entirely consistent with a whole series of measures adopted by the regime in 1934 and 1935. These included reconciliation with former oppositionists at the 17th Party Congress, the issuing of a kolkhoz statute, the convocation of a Writer's Union congress and its preaching of literary toleration, and the rejection of the Comintern's "class-against-class" strategy in favor of the more ecumenical antifascist popular-frontism . Together, they constituted a strategy of political moderation that distinguishes the mid-1930s from both earlier and later in the decade.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 159

The authors of the telegram [a telegram sent by the Labor and Socialist International and the International Federation of Trade Unions to the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR just before the trial began] then proceed to demand that "judicial guarantees" or "legal guarantees" be given. The implication must be that unless some powerful outside influence is brought to bear, the trial will be an unjudicial and improper proceeding; and, indeed, one of the authors has since stated that the meaning was that the case "ought to be tried in accordance with the ordinary canons of justice and humanity." I confess that I find this request, and the criticism implied in it, very difficult indeed to justify. The Soviet Union is a civilized country, with a developed legal system, and some very fine lawyers and jurists. Its criminal procedure is at least the equal of that of very many other countries. There was not and is not, in my humble opinion, the slightest ground for fearing that, in any public trial (and it was announced from the outset that this trial would be public), it would deviate from civilized procedure. I am aware that provisions exist in its procedure for secret trials, and for the withholding of counsel and witnesses for the defense in secret trials for counter-revolutionary offenses. I regret the existence of such provisions, and have never concealed my regret. Defenders of the Soviet system can, of course, urge in defense that every country in the world provides in greater or less degree for secret trials, and that the practice of depriving a prisoner, arraigned on charges of high treason or similar offenses, of the right to counsel or witnesses, has prevailed in a great many countries and a great many ages; they could even say that this practice lasted for some centuries in England. But in truth all that is not to the point; for in this public trial there was never any intention of depriving, and I think that there was not even any procedural opportunity to deprive the accused either of counsel or of the right to make their defense or to call witnesses if they desired.

Every foreign critic who has studied the Soviet legal system has reported that, taken as a whole, it is good and fair; everyone who studies it at all knows that year by year it progresses steadily towards greater facilities for the prisoner, greater independence of judges and counsel, and greater technical efficiency. Even with the difficulties which must always exist in securing a fair trial in political cases, where the feelings of everyone must be deeply engaged (difficulties which are, of course, far smaller when the jury system is not in vogue), why should it, once again, be assumed that everything is being and will be done wrong. Such an attitude from a Press lord suffering from acute CommunistPhobia, which is the modern equivalent of the horror felt by our respectable grandfathers in the 1880s when they heard of men who voted Radical, would be quite comprehensible; but it is regrettable to find anything like it in Socialist quarters. To put the matter at its lowest, the self-interest of the Soviet Government would surely insure that a public trial at this time on a charge of the greatest gravity, brought against old servants of the revolution, would be held with the fullest possible degree of fairness.

I must diverge for a moment here to point out that the statement that the defendants were not allowed counsel appeared in several English newspapers, including the one that was obviously the fairest of all in its attitude, whilst the statement also appeared in reputable papers that they were not allowed to make a defense. These two statements, or rather misstatements (for there is clearly no foundation for them), must plainly be bona fide errors, and I can well imagine that they may have colored the whole feelings and attitude of commentators; so, perhaps, once again in journalistic history, a pure error has led people, acting in the utmost good faith, to a line of criticism which they would never otherwise have adopted. In truth, of course, the accused were at liberty to make any defense they liked; two of them did make or attempt a defense as to part of the charges, as I have already stated,

and otherwise they all elected not to do so. They all expressly renounced counsel; and I do not think that counsel, however eminent, could have done more for them than they did for themselves….
Returning to this not unimportant telegram, we find next a request that the accused shall be allowed counsel who shall be "independent of the Government." We are entitled to assume knowledge in the authors that the accused were entitled to counsel, so that the whole emphasis of the request obviously falls on the point of "being independent of the Government." Counsel in the USSR are not government servants, but one must obviously look to substance and not to form, and I take it that the implied or hinted meaning is that, unless some special precautions are taken, any counsel whom the accused might select would, either out of fear of the Government or out of deference to popular feeling, not "pull his weight" for his clients. That suspicion of my much-maligned profession is entertained, I suppose, in every country in every political case, and perhaps in non-political cases too. There is never as much in it as laymen suspect; there is perhaps more in it than honest lawyers believe. Whether there is anything in it in the USSR or not is, of course, not easy to say; all that I can contribute to its elucidation is that I investigated it with care four years ago and came to the conclusion that a political defendant had as good a chance of getting reliable counsel in the USSR as anywhere else.
Pritt, Denis Nowell. At the Moscow Trial, New York City: International Publishers, 1937, p. 23-25

The next request to be found in the telegram is that no death sentences be "promulgated."… But this request is made in a world where most, States still retain the death penalty for some offenses; and if there ever were a case in which any State which still kept upon its statute book provision for inflicting such a penalty would be likely to inflict it, it is a case of treasonable conspiracy to murder the half-dozen principal leaders of the Government. And the regrettable probability, or virtual certainty, that most States would inflict the penalty in such a case would only be increased by the circumstances that most of the men involved were men who had been forgiven and reinstated in the Party and in important posts once, twice, thrice, after expressing regret for past disloyalty and offering the most sweeping assurances as to their future conduct, intending all the time to use the opportunities thus secured to continue terrorist conspiracies against the State.
Pritt, Denis Nowell. At the Moscow Trial, New York City: International Publishers, 1937, p. 27

Now, the critic inquires why the opposition was brutally crushed just at this moment. I have already stated at length the grounds, to my mind overwhelming, for holding that the proceedings can only have been launched for the most genuine and cogent reasons; but I do not understand why the detection and punishment of a conspiracy for multiple assassination should be described as the brutal crushing of the opposition, merely because the conspiracy was opposed to the Government and several of the conspirators had in the past been among the leaders of the opposition. Why are we to assume that men guilty of conspiracy to murder are shot because they are or were in opposition rather than because they are guilty of conspiracy to murder?… It should not be overlooked, either, that if the more important of these men were regarded as "the opposition" which is not unreasonable, they are rather the opposition of the past than of the future. They had been definitely proved to be wrong in the controversy which had made them into an opposition; they had been, instead of being crushed, forgiven over and over again, as if no one wanted to be harsh to them; and as an opposition they were perhaps less to be feared than at any previous time.

Pritt, Denis Nowell. At the Moscow Trial, New York City: International Publishers, 1937, p. 29

In England, our friend remarks, a prisoner indicted for treason is practically forced to go through a legal routine of defense. He pleads Not Guilty; and his counsel assumes for him an attitude of injured innocence, refusing to admit any evidence that is not within certain rules, demanding legitimate proof of every statement and setting up a hypothesis as to what actually happened which is consistent with the prisoner's innocence. He cross-examines the Crown witnesses mercilessly. He puts the prisoner into the witness-box and asks him questions so framed that by simple affirmative answers or indignant denials or at worst by flat perjury (which is considered allowable on such occasions) he may seem to support the hypothesis. The judge compliments the counsel on the brilliant ability with which he has conducted his case. He points out to the jury that the hypothesis is manifestly fictitious and the prisoner obviously guilty. The jury finds the necessary verdict. The judge then, congratulating the prisoner on having been so ably defended and fairly tried, sentences him to death and commends him to the mercy of his God.
May not this procedure, which seems so natural and inevitable to us, very intelligently strike a Russian as a farce tolerated because our rules of evidence and forms of trial have never been systematically revised on rational lines. Why should a conspirator who is caught out by the Government, and he knows that he is caught out and that no denials or hypothetical fairy tales will help him to escape–why should he degrade himself uselessly by a mock defense instead of at once facing the facts and discussing his part in them quite candidly with his captors? There is a possibility of moving them by such a friendly course: in a mock defense there is none. Our candid friend submits that the Russian prisoners simply behave naturally and sensibly, as Englishmen would were they not virtually compelled by their highly artificial legal system to go through a routine which is useful to the accused only when there is some doubt as to the facts or as to the guilt or innocence of the conduct in question. What possible good could it do them to behave otherwise? Why should they waste the time of the court and disgrace themselves by prevaricating like pickpockets merely to employ the barristers? Our friend suggests that some of us are so obsessed with our national routine that the candor of the Russian conspirators seems grotesque and insane. Which of the two courses, viewed by an impartial visitor from Mars, would appear the saner?
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, p. 923-924

FIFTH COLUMN CAUSES INSECURITY AND ARRESTS IN 1930S

A sense of insecurity spread among the Soviet people, replacing that exultant sense of progress they had felt in 1934. It was not due alone, and not even primarily, to personal fear of arrest or to concern for friends. It was due to the knowledge that the enemy had penetrated high into the citadel of leadership, that nobody knew who was loyal. This was the first time any nation came to grips with the deadly efficiency of the Hitler Fifth Column. They felt it as a fight for the nation's survival, but a fight in the dark. This nightmare quality of the struggle affected not only the people, but also, I think, Stalin. He produced the theory that the nearer a country got to socialism the more enemies it would have.
… Those years, and especially 1937, are recalled by all Soviet citizens as a time of great mental distress…. People were taken away at night and never seen afterward. Sometimes they re-appeared. George Andreichine was twice exiled to Siberia and each time came back

fairly soon to a better job. Most people thus arrested were not executed but sent either to a convict labor camp or to residence in a distant place….
My closest woman friend, who had lived with me several years before she married and moved to Leningrad, was exiled with a ten-year sentence. Nine years later, I again met her in Moscow and learned what had happened. Her husband had been arrested; she never learned the details of the charge against him. Believing him innocent, she pestered the offices of the GPU and was herself arrested, charged with being "the wife of an enemy of the people." She was sent, not to a camp but to a small town in Kazakhstan where she got a job as a teacher in the high school. Once a month she had to report to a local GPU official, an intelligent man with whom she had "many interesting discussions." Several times he questioned her about her view of her own arrest and the many other arrests that she knew occurred.
"The way I have figured it," she replied on one occasion, "is that the Nazi Fifth Column penetrated the GPU and got high in it and has been arresting the wrong people." Her questioner replied: "Many people have that view."
… Of the 134 persons [the 1934 Party Congress] elected to the Central Committee, 98–or 70 percent of all–were not only arrested but shot. Those who attribute this to a mad paranoia of Stalin have still to explain why even a paranoiac should eliminate his most successful and loyal supporters. The "Victory Congress" of 1934 was composed precisely of those who had stuck to Stalin's line, and celebrated the triumph of socialism in both industry and farming. Their drastic elimination within three years becomes somewhat more credible as the successful attempt of a Nazi Fifth Column to get rid of the nation's most efficient patriots. Such cases as I myself knew would support the view that it was often "the wrong people" who were arrested, people who seemed almost picked out for the purpose of disorganizing. On our Moscow News staff, three people were suddenly taken. If I had to pick our three most useful, energetic workers, these would have been the ones. They were Party members, always working hard both for the paper and the trade union, always willing to work nights in emergencies.
… Let us now turn to the revelations of what was happening in the parties upper circles, as revealed by Khrushchev's attack on Stalin in 1956…. He reveals that immediately after the Kirov murder, and on Stalin's initiative, directions were issued to the courts to speed up investigations, sentences, and punishments. At that time, Yagoda was chief of the GPU. Stalin found him too dilatory and wired from Sochi on September 25, 1936, that Yezhov should be appointed Commissar of Internal Affairs, since Yagoda showed incompetence. Yezhov's appointment and his plans were approved by the plenary session of the Central Committee in February 1937. The number of arrests at once multiplied….
… Suddenly, Yezhov disappeared from the scene; he was rumored to have been taken to a madhouse.
In fixing the blame for the criminal railroading of innocent people in 1937, Khrushchev makes several statements. "We are justly accusing Yezhov for the degenerate practices of 1937," he says.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 65

I justify the repressions despite the grave mistakes committed in the process. Bear in mind it was not merely overdoing it–not with Yagoda heading state security. He explicitly told the court that the oppositionists had remained in high offices for so long only because he had assisted them.

I have the transcript of his trial. He said, “Indeed, the rightists and the Trotskyists sitting here in the dock were exposed so late because I was the one who prevented that. And now I am condemning them all! Can you guarantee life to me in exchange for that service?” What a skunk! A communist, a people’s commissar. And that scoundrel sat next to Dzerzhinsky! As Dzerzhinsky’s closest aide he was gradually, after Menzhinsky, moved up to take the job of people’s commissar for state security. What kind of man was this? What filth!
I used to know him well in those years, and I regret he was such a close aide to Dzerzhinsky. Dzerzhinsky was a radiant, spotless personality. Yagoda was a filthy nobody who wormed his way into the party and was only caught in 1937. We had to work with reptiles like that, but there were no others. No one! Now you understand why so many mistakes were made. They deceived us, and innocent people were sometimes incriminated. Obviously one or two out of 10 were wrongly sentenced, but the rest got their just desserts. It was extremely hard then to get at the truth! But any delay was out of the question. War preparations were under way. That’s how it was.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 257

STALIN DENOUNCES RULE BY TERROR

“This policy of cruelty.” I answered, “seems to have aroused a very widespread fear. In this country I have the impression that everybody is afraid and that your great experiment could succeed only among this long-suffering nation that has been trained to obedience.”
“You are mistaken,” said Stalin, “but your mistake is general. Do you think it possible to hold power for so long merely by intimidating the people? Impossible. The Czars knew best how to rule by intimidation. It is an old experiment in Europe and the French bourgeoisie supported the Czars in their policy of intimidation against the people. What came of it? Nothing.”
“But it maintained the Romanovs in power for 300 years.”
“Yes, but how many times was that power shaken by insurrections? To forget the older days, recall only the revolts of 1905. Fear is in the first instance a question of the mechanism of administration. You can arouse fear for one or two years and through it, or at least partly through it, you can rule for that time. But you cannot rule the peasants by fear. Secondly, the peasants and the working classes in the Soviet Union are by no means so timid and long-suffering as you think. You believe that our people are timid and lazy. That is an antiquated idea. It was believed in formerly, because the landed gentry used to go to Paris to spend their money there and do nothing. From this arose an impression of the so-called Russian laziness. People thought that the peasants were easily frightened and made obedient. That was a mistake. And it was a threefold mistake in regard to the workers. Never again will the workers endure the rule of one man. Men who have reached the highest pinnacles of fame were lost the moment they had got out of touch with the masses. Plehanov had great authority in his hands, but when he became mixed up in politics he quickly forgot the masses. Trotsky was a man of great authority, but not of such high standing as Plehanov, and now he is forgotten. If he is casually remembered, it is with a feeling of irritation.”
I did not intend to mention Trotsky to Stalin but since he himself had broached the subject, I asked: “Is the feeling against Trotsky general?”
“If you take the active workers, nine tenths speak bitterly of Trotsky.” (We spoke before the Moscow trials, in December 1931.)

… “You cannot maintain that people may be ruled for a long time merely by intimidation. I understand your skepticism. There is a small section of the people which is really afraid. It is an unimportant part of the peasant body. That is represented by the kulaks. They do not fear anything like the initiation of a reign of terror but they fear the other section of the peasant population.
“But if you take the progressive peasants and workers, not more than 15 percent are skeptical of the Soviet power, or are silent from fear or are waiting for the moment when they can undermine the Bolsheviks state. On the other hand, about 85 percent of the more or less active people would urge us further then we want to go. We often have to put on the brakes. They would like to stamp out the last remnants of the intelligentsia. But we would not permit that. In the whole history of the world there never was a power that was supported by nine tenths of the population as the Soviet power is supported.
That is the reason for our success in putting our ideas into practice. If we ruled only by fear, not a man would have stood by us. And the working classes would have destroyed any power that attempted to continue to rule by fear. Workers who have made three revolutions have had some practice in overthrowing governments. They would not endure such a mockery of government as one merely based on fear.”
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam’s sons, 1942, p. 173-175

LUDWIG: It seems to me that a considerable part of the population of the Soviet Union stands in fear and trepidation of the Soviet power, and that the stability of the latter rests to a certain extent on that sense of fear….
STALIN: You are mistaken. Incidentally, your mistake is that of many people. Do you really believe that we could have retained power and have had the backing of the vast masses for 14 years by methods of intimidation and terrorisation? No, that is impossible. The czarist government excelled all others in knowing how to intimidate. It had long and vast experience in that sphere…. Yet, in spite of that experience and in spite of the help of the European bourgeoisie, the policy of intimidation led to the downfall of czarism.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 13, p. 110

Nevertheless, the specific remedies he [Stalin] proposed for the remaining “problems” were in the benign areas of party education and propaganda rather than repression.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 129

“But if in this building you are so democratic,” I objected, “why is your government so cruel at the end of 14 years that everybody in your country fears you?”
To this challenge–for I had made up my mind to be rough and discourteous in the Kremlin–Stalin made a long, quiet reply on the history of the Bolsheviks, whose beginnings were far too mild, and said, at the end of his discussion, that my mistake in this matter was a general one. “Do you really believe a man could maintain his position of power for 14 years merely by intimidation? Only by making people afraid? The Czars were past masters of that art and what has become of them? Fear is a question of the mechanics of administration. You can excite fear for a year or two. But not among our peasants! Our workmen and peasants are not so timid as you think.
You ask about fear? Well, a small part of the peasants, the kulaks, are afraid. They are afraid of the other peasant groups…. Of the adult peasants and workmen 15% at the most keep silence through fear. Besides, our workmen have three revolutions behind them, that is sufficient practice for them to destroy leaders they do not like.”

Ludwig, Emil. Three portraits: Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin. New York Toronto: Longmans, Green and Company, c1940, p. 118

ARRESTS IN THE 1930S WERE NOT NEARLY AS MANY AS FOREIGNERS THINK

Unfortunately, many foreigners left the Soviet Union during 1937 and 1938 for one reason or another, carrying away with them the impression that the purge ended everything, or at least ended something; an epoch, let us say. Everyone worthwhile had been arrested or shot, it seemed. This impression was basically incorrect. The purge caused many arrests, but the Soviet Union was large, and millions of Russians who had not been involved personally in the purge took it more or less as it came without allowing it permanently to influence their attitude toward the Soviet power. So that in the end of 1938 when the purge ended, when hundreds of arrested people were released with terse apologies for 'mistakes' of the investigators, when new arrests stopped or almost stopped, most of the workers in Magnitogorsk had an essentially cheerful and optimistic view of things.
Scott, John. Behind the Urals, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1942, p. 205

STALIN DID NOT SIGN SENTENCING ORDERS ALONE

I was never really in on the case [the Leningrad trial] myself, but I admit that I may have signed the sentencing order. In those days when a case was closed–and if Stalin thought it necessary–he would sign the sentencing order at a Politbureau session and then pass it around for the rest of us to sign. We would put our signatures on it without even looking at it. That's what was meant by "collective sentencing."
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 256

STALIN EXPLAINS WHY THE CHEKA IS NEEDED

His ideas are made even more explicit in an interview with the Foreign Workers' Delegation on November 5, 1927. At that time he said:…
"The GPU or the Cheka is a punitive organ of the Soviet government…. It punishes primarily spies, plotters, terrorists, bandits, speculators, and forgers. The organ was created on the day after the October revolution, after all kinds of plots, terrorist and spying organizations financed by Russian and foreign capitalists were discovered. This organ developed and became consolidated after a series of terrorist acts had been perpetrated against leaders of the Soviet government, after the murder of Comrade Uritsky, member of the revolutionary committee of Leningrad, after the murder of Comrade Volodarsky, member of the revolutionary committee of Leningrad, and after the attempt on the life of Lenin. It must be admitted that the GPU still holds good. It has been, ever since, the terror of the bourgeoisie, the indefatigable guard of the Revolution, the unsheathed sword of the Proletariat.
"It is not surprising, therefore, that the bourgeoisie of all countries hate the GPU. All sorts of legends have been invented about the GPU…. The sworn enemies of the revolution curse the GPU. Hence it follows that the GPU is doing the right thing.
"But this is not how the workers regard the GPU. You can go to the workers' districts and ask the workers what they think of it. You'll find they regard it with respect. Why? Because they see in it a loyal defender of the Revolution….

“I do not mean to say by this that the internal situation of the country is such as makes it necessary to have punitive organs of the Revolution. From the point of view of the internal situation, the revolution is so firm and unshakeable that we could do without the GPU. But the trouble is that the enemies at home are not isolated individuals. They are all connected in a thousand ways with the capitalists of all countries who support them by every means and in every way. We are a country surrounded by capitalist states. The internal enemies of our Revolution are the agents of the capitalists of all countries. The capitalist states are the background and basis for our internal enemies. In fighting against the enemies at home we fight the counterrevolutionary elements of all countries. Judge for yourselves whether under such conditions we can do without such punitive organs as the GPU.”
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 29

This Organ (Cheka) was created on the day after the October Revolution, after all kinds of plots, terrorist and spying organizations financed by Russian and foreign capitalists were discovered. This organ developed and became consolidated after a series of terrorist acts had been perpetrated against the leaders of the Soviet government, after the murder of Comrade Uritsky, member of the Revolutionary Committee of Leningrad (he was killed by a Socialist-Revolutionary), after the murder of Comrade Volodarsky, member of the Revolutionary Committee of Leningrad (he was also killed by a Socialist-Revolutionary), after the attempt on the life of Lenin (he was wounded by a member of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party). It must be admitted that the GPU aimed at the enemies of the revolution without missing. By the way, this quality of the GPU still holds good. It has been, ever since, the terror of the bourgeoisie, the indefatigable guard of the revolution, the unsheathed sword of the proletariat.
It is not surprising, therefore, that the bourgeoisie of all countries hate the GPU. All sorts of legends have been invented about the GPU.
The slander which has been circulated about the GPU knows no bounds. And what does that mean? It means that the GPU is properly defending the interests of the Revolution. The sworn enemies of the Revolution curse the GPU. Hence, it follows that the GPU is doing the right thing.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 231

Stalin described the GPU’s functions as the Communist Party sees them, in response to an inquiry put to him by a visiting delegation in 1927. He said: “…No, comrades, we do not want to fall into the same error as the Parisian Communards fell into. They were all too mild toward the Versaillers, and Karl Marx has accused them of this since.
From the internal standpoint the situation of the Revolution is so absolutely firm and unshakeable that we could easily do without the State Political Administration, but what internal enemies do exist are not isolated individuals, they are connected with the capitalists abroad by a thousand threads, and the latter support them with all means…. We do not want to repeat the mistakes of the Parisian Communards. The State Political Administration is necessary for the Revolution and will continue to exist to the terror of the enemies of the proletariat.”
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 180

Notwithstanding all the horrors associated with the name Cheka during the first years of the Bolshevik Revolution, neither Dzerzhinsky himself nor the majority of his trusted assistants

were motivated by anything except fanatical zeal to serve as the sword of the Revolution. Feared by people, the Secret Police were not then feared by those who worked loyally for the Soviet State.
Krivitsky, Walter G. I was Stalin's Agent, London: H. Hamilton, 1939, p. 153

(Foreign Delegation's Interview with Stalin on November 5, 1927)

QUESTION: Judicial powers of the GPU, trial without witness, without defenders, secret arrests. Considering that these measures are not approved of by French public opinion, it would be interesting to hear their justification. Is it intended to substitute or abolish them?

ANSWER: The GPU or the Cheka is a retributive organ of the Soviet Government. It is more or less similar to the Committee of Public Safety which existed during the Great French Revolution. It punishes primarily spies, plotters, terrorists, bandits, speculators, and forgers. It is something in the nature of a military-political tribunal set up for the purpose of protecting the interests of the Revolution from attacks on the part of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and their agents.
This organ was created on the day after the October Revolution, after all kinds of plots, terrorist and spying organizations, financed by Russian and foreign capitalists were discovered. This organ developed and became consolidated after a series of terrorist acts perpetrated against the leaders of the Soviet Government, after the murder of Comrade Uritsky, member of the Revolutionary Committee of Leningrad (he was killed by a Social-Revolutionary), after the murder of Comrade Volodarsky, member of the Revolutionary Committee of Leningrad (he was also killed by a Social-Revolutionary), after the attempt on Lenin (he was wounded by a member of the Social-Revolutionary Party). It must be admitted that the GPU aimed at the enemies of the Revolution without missing. By the way, this quality of the GPU still holds good. It has become the scare of the bourgeoisie, the indefatigable guard of the Revolution, the unsheathed sword of the proletariat.
It is not surprising, therefore, that the bourgeoisie of all countries have such hatred for the GPU. There is no legend which has not been invented in connection with the GPU. There is no such slander which has not been circulated about the GPU. And what does that mean? It means that the GPU is properly defending the interests of the Revolution. The sworn enemies of the Revolution curse the GPU. Hence, it follows that the GPU is doing the right thing….
But this is not how the workers regard the GPU. You go to the workers' quarters and ask the workers what they think of it. You'll find that they regard it with great respect. Why? Because they see in it a loyal defender of the Revolution.
I understand the hatred and distrust of the bourgeoisie for the GPU. I understand the various bourgeois tourists who, on coming to the USSR inquire before anything else as to whether the GPU is still alive and whether the time has not yet come for its liquidation. This is comprehensible and not out of the ordinary. But I cannot understand some workers' delegates who, on coming to the USSR, ask with alarm as to whether many counter-revolutionaries have been punished by the GPU and whether terrorists and plotters against the proletarian Government will still be punished by it and is it not time yet for its dissolution. Where does this concern of some workers' delegates for the enemies of the proletarian revolution come from? How can it be explained? How can it be justified?
They advocate a maximum of leniency, they advise the dissolution of the GPU…. But can anyone guarantee that the capitalists of all countries will abandon the idea of organizing and

financing counter-revolutionary plotters, terrorists, incendiaries, and bomb-throwers after the liquidation of the GPU? To disarm the Revolution without having any guarantees that the enemies of the Revolution will be disarmed–would not that be folly, would not that be a crime against the working class? No, comrades, we did not want to repeat the errors of the Paris Communards. The Communards of Paris were too lenient in dealing with Versailles, for which Marx rightly denounced them at the time. They had to pay for their leniency, and when Thiers came to Paris tens of thousands of workers were shot by the Versailles forces. Do the comrades think that the Russian bourgeoisie and nobility were less bloodthirsty than those of Versailles in France? We know, at any rate, how they behaved towards the workers when they occupied Siberia, the Ukraine, and North Caucasia in alliance with the French, British, Japanese, and American interventionists.

I do not mean to say by this that the internal situation of the country is such as makes it necessary to have a retributive organ of the Revolution. From the point of view of the internal situation, the Revolution is so firm and unshakable that we could do without the GPU. But the trouble is that the enemies at home are not isolated individuals. They are connected in a thousand ways with the capitalists of all countries who support them by every means and in every way. We are a country surrounded by capitalist states. The internal enemies of our Revolution are the agents of the capitalists of all countries. The capitalist states are the background and basis for the internal enemies of our Revolution. Fighting against the enemies at home we therefore fight the counter-revolutionary elements of all countries. Judge for yourselves whether under such conditions we can do without such retributive organs as the GPU.

No, comrades, we do not want to repeat the mistakes of the Paris Communards. The GPU is necessary for the Revolution and it will continue to live and strike terror into the heart of the enemies of the proletariat.

Stalin, Joseph. The Worker’s State. London: Communist Party of Great Britain. 1928, p. 23-26

TRIALS ACTUALLY INVOLVE ON A VERY SMALL PART OF THE PEOPLE

To the rest of the world it seemed at the time that Russia was enveloped in a smothering atmosphere of plots, murders, and purges. Actually this was a superficial view since, although the rest of the world was morbidly interested in the trials to the exclusion of anything else about Russia, only a tiny percentage of the population was involved and the same years which saw the treason trials saw some of the greatest triumphs of Soviet planning. While the screws tightened on a tiny minority the majority of Soviet people were enjoying greater prosperity and greater freedom.

Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 30

It was easy, reading our newspapers, to believe that the whole of Russia was in the throes of trials and executions. This was not a true picture. Russia was building during this period–industrializing, rearming, educating–faster perhaps that any other country.

Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 31

Reading this tedious catalog of never-ending arrests and trials, we are bound to imagine that the country's state of mind in that terrible year 1937 was one of deep depression. Not a bit of it! The great majority of the population woke up happily to the relentless blare of loudspeakers, sped eagerly to work, participated enthusiastically in the daily public meetings at which their enemies were anathematized, and read skimpy newspaper reports of the trials which showed how very reliable the secret police were.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 386

In the so called Moscow trials 55 people got capital punishment and 7 imprisonment. Most of those prosecuted were persons in high positions in the party, the state apparatus and the army accused of treason, espionage, terrorism, sabotage, corruption or collaboration with the enemy, Nazi Germany. The Moscow trials were followed by trials in other parts of the country against companions of the traitors tried in Moscow, and hundreds of saboteurs, spies and all kinds of traitors were condemned to prison or death. The trials were public except trials against military personnel, which were held behind closed doors because of the secrecy in the defence preparations against Nazi Germany. In Moscow the trials were monitored by the international press and the accredited diplomatic corps, for which seats were reserved in the court room.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

TORTURE NOT USED DURING QUESTIONING

…Reports of brutality by the GPU, particularly of beating and third-degree methods are current, but the evidence to sustain them seems mostly to date back to the days of the Cheka. I have talked with many ex-prisoners in Russia and abroad, and have read also all the published accounts of the prison experiences of others, and from all of them I gathered that police brutality such as we know it in America is now rare in Russia. Long-continued grillings, isolation, and wretched physical conditions are the worst of the evils of preliminary detention. Only in Tiflis did I hear, from what seemed credible sources, of beatings to extort information. One GPU practice, frequently noted because so public, lends color to charges of brutality: the transfer of groups of prisoners on foot through the streets under soldier guard with fixed bayonets. To Americans it should be said that the brutality appears to be insignificant compared with the routine cruelties of the third-degree practiced daily by every sizable police department in the United States.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 186

What than made the prisoners confess? The indictment says that they had long ago lost all shame and conscience, had become hired assassins and diversionists and could hope for no mercy. Almost all of them declared that they had not been tortured or coerced….
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 362

The first and most reasonable supposition is, of course, that the confessions were extracted from the prisoners by torture and by the threat of still worse tortures. Yet this first conjecture was refuted by the obvious freshness and vitality of the prisoners, by their whole physical and mental aspect. Thus in order to explain the "impossible" confessions, the skeptics had to grope around for other causes. The prisoners, they proclaimed, had been given all sorts of poisons; they had been hypnotized and drugged. If this be true, then no one else in the world

has ever succeeded in obtaining such powerful and lasting results, and the scientist who did succeed would hardly be satisfied with acting as the mysterious handy-man of police forces. He would presumably use his methods with a view to increasing his scientific prestige. But those who take exception to the conduct of the trial prefer to clutch at the most absurd backstair hypotheses rather than believe what is under their noses–that the prisoners were properly convicted and that their confessions were founded on fact.
When one speaks to the Soviet people of hypotheses such is these, they merely shrug their shoulders and smile. Why should we, they say, if we wanted to falsify the facts, resort to such difficult and dangerous expedients as spurious confessions? Would it not have been simpler to forge documents? Do you think that, instead of letting Trotsky make highly treasonable speeches through the mouths of Pyatakov and Radek, we could not much more easily have brought before the eyes of the world highly treasonable letters of his and documents which would have proved his association with the Fascists much more directly?
You have seen and heard the accused: did you get the impression that their confessions had been extorted?
Indeed I did not. The men who stood before the court were not tortured and desperate people before their executioner. There was no justification of any sort for imagining that there was anything manufactured, artificial, or even awe-inspiring or emotional about these proceedings.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 121-122

The stories that they [the defendants] were hypnotized or given mysterious drugs may be safely dismissed.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 374

But critics were right in saying that torture alone could probably not have produced the public self-humiliation of a whole series of Stalin's enemies, when returned to health and given a platform.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 123

Please do not think that these confessions were taken under brutal force on the guilty persons. There was nothing of that sort at all. I myself was always present at these processes. Alexiev was also present, keeping a close watch on these culprits and every day, brought these people fresh newspapers. They were held in jail cells with all the necessary conveniences and got fed really well. Even Bukharin in his trial stated this, with foreign correspondents present.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 74

Let us dismiss at the outset some of the fairy tales. Stalin, some whisperers had it, was mortally ill, and was extirpating the last remnants of opposition while he was still alive; according to other "reports" he had suddenly gone "insane." It was said that the prisoners were tortured, hypnotized, drugged (in order to make them give false confessions) and–a choice detail– impersonated by actors of the Moscow Art theater! But the trials occurred soon after the preliminary investigations were concluded, and they took place before hundreds of witnesses, many of them experienced correspondents, in open court. The prisoners testified that they were well-treated during the investigation. Radek, indeed, says that it was he who tortured the prosecutor, by refusing to confess month after month.

Pressure there certainly was, in the manner of police investigation all over the world, but no evidence of torture.
The trials, the Trotskyists assert, were a colossal frame up. The prisoners were induced to confess, they say, on a promise of immunity and a pardon after the trial–if they talked freely–and then double-crossed and shot. This is hardly conceivable from a close reading of the testimony. It could not easily have occurred in the second trial, when the defendants must of known that the first batch, despite their confessions, were sentenced to death and duly executed.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 552

In one of my articles I myself repeated the story that Zinoviev and Kamenev were tortured, and also that Stalin sent for them and used persuasion on them. I got one curious response: a letter amusingly signed NKVD: You are mistaken, Comrade. No torture was used on Zinoviev.
[the same letter says]…Zinoviev was, then, treated throughout with the greatest respect….
There was no torture. The setup was, I repeat, quite different. The prison was more like a clinic. The whole atmosphere suggested that they would surely be pardoned.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 339-340

For, unlike the soldiers, who were tried in camera, Bukharin was to be granted the favor of a magnificent public trial. There are many legends about the tortures which induced him to take part in this ignominious farce. It is a pity to debunk a good legend, but let Bukharin's letters speak for themselves….
[His letter states] "As it is I am perishing here [in prison]. The rules are very strict, you can't even talk loudly in your cell, or play checkers or chess, when you go out into the corridor you aren't allowed to talk at all, you can't feed the pigeons at your window, can't do anything at all. On the other hand, the warders, even the very junior ones, are always polite, reserved, correct. We are well fed. But the cells are dark. Yet the lights are on day and night. I swab floors, clean my slop pail. Nothing new in that."
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 374-375

So the prison regimen was strict, but they were perfectly polite, and the food was good. No, there was no torture. And it seems unlikely that the delicate and hysterical Bukharin would have written so many literary works in the intervals of torture. He tortured himself–with his despair, his fear of being shot, the anguish he felt for his family. He was too delicate an organism for prison life. He was a poet, not a politician.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 377

Even though they were not physically tortured [in prison], the regime of threats and sleeplessness demoralized Zinoviev, suffering from asthma, and Kamenev.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 185

On the question of whether torture was used to gain confessions, remarkably, Western diplomats and journalists attending the open trials, said of the prisoners that they saw no haggard faces, no twitching hands, no dazed expressions, and no bandaged heads.
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 205

POLICE HAVE BROAD POWERS AS IF IN WARTIME

To sum up, the whole system of dealing with political opposition in Russia rests on extraordinarily broad foundations–broader than elsewhere in the world. It rests first on the loose and inclusive legal definitions of political offenses, and second on the extraordinary powers of the GPU in arrests, prosecution, “trial,” imprisonment, and exile. Both the conception of political crime and the discretion of the political police are wider either than under the czar, or than in other countries. They are analogous to other countries in a state of war, in which Soviet Russia regards herself.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 208

Given the conditions out of which this stern discipline of the country grew, together with the inherited habits of government and the continuous struggle against enemies abroad and within, its excesses are understandable. They yield to a far more natural explanation than the romantic interpretation of “Asiatic cruelty” often attached to them.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 209

…The 20 members of the old bourgeoisie shot in June, 1927, in reprisal for the assassination of the Soviet ambassador at Warsaw, were condemned solely by administrative order of the GPU backed up by the Central Executive Committee.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 213

The effect of these summary executions in arousing a storm of protest in the foreign press surprised the Soviet officials…. Even Russians used to the severity of the regime spoke bitterly of it. But the reaction probably typical of the masses was voiced by the peasant president of a village Soviet way out in Moscow province. When I asked him what he thought of such a proceeding, he said slowly, with the far-away philosophical gaze, “Well, if it is necessary to shoot 1000 of those fellows to save what we’ve got, I’m for it.”
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 215

PUNISHMENTS OF POLITICAL OPPONENTS ARE RELATIVELY LIGHT

By far the largest number of political opponents of the Soviet regime against whom action is taken are exiled. Comparatively few are shot; more are imprisoned; most exiled…
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 219

Until 1937, the regime in the labor re-education camps was, usually, relatively liberal and humane. Political prisoners had a privileged status with many special rights denied to ordinary criminals. The workday during the winter was from four to six hours, and in summer ten. Generous pay was provided which allowed prisoners to send money to their families and to return home with money. Goods and clothing was adequate and serious attempts were made to re-educate the prisoners.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 235

STALIN NOT TO BLAME FOR YAGODA AND YEZHOV CRIMES

The sadistic Yagoda and Yezhov, who for a time ruled a state within a state–the GPU, were chiefly responsible for these outrages. By Yagoda's own account his hirelings faked thousands of documents and so mixed up the records that it was impossible to tell a genuine dossier from a bogus one. Curiously the public does not seem to blame Stalin for having permitted such a Frankenstein to develop, but instead gives him credit for having cleaned up the Yagoda gang and brought the secret police back under full control of the Politburo–which he did when the GPU was crushed.
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 148

How can anyone now allow himself the stupidity of criticizing Stalin for repression and crimes? This was a psychosis that was cleverly instituted by Yezhov and other enemies of the State… this psychosis took over the minds of millions of people. Practically all were involved in looking for "enemies." The Central Committee ACP[B] was against this, fought this tooth and nail—Stalin in particular. People got involved in this, and friends were "drowning" friends in the name of getting rid of "enemies." Of course, this cannot all be explained as a mass psychosis! In all the examinations that were conducted into this period, we had 30-40 people going over the same documents, but NOWHERE did we EVER find the name of Stalin, or the command of Stalin, or the resolution to do these things which were undertaken by the REAL ENEMIES of the Soviet people. No directives either of Stalin, Molotov, or Voroshilov were to be found in all of these documents.
According to my way of thinking, Stalin also bears some blame because he was the Head of the Motherland. His fault was that he was always favoring "collective decisions" and thus was fooled by his "comrades-in-arms." Yagoda, Malenkov, Khrushchev, Beria, and others. Yezhov, Stalin spotted from the start and took steps to stop him and get rid of him.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 80

STALIN WAS NOT AS REPRESSIVE TOWARD SUBVERSIVES AS SOME OTHERS

At every step of the way, there were constituencies both within and outside the elite that supported repression of various groups, sometimes with greater vehemence than Stalin did. The terror was a series of group efforts (though the groups changed frequently) rather than a matter of one man intimidating everyone else. This finding by no means takes Stalin off the hook or lessens his guilt. But it does mean that the picture is more complex.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. xiv

[Footnote]: Even on the subject of repression, Stalin sometimes seemed unsure. Although he took a hard-line toward Trotskyists and Zinovievists, he was for a long time undecided on Bukharin and Pyatakov. In the summer of 1936, he actually appointed Pyatakov to be a witness at the first show trials. But less than two weeks before the trial, Pyatakov was removed and himself arrested based on evidence suddenly produced by Yezhov and Yagoda. After receiving for five months Yezhov's written "evidence" denouncing Bukharin, Stalin declined to sanction his arrest. Even at the notorious February Plenum of 1937, photostatic evidence shows that Stalin's first impulse was to simply exile Bukharin, without sending him to trial. Of course, in the end, both Pyatakov and Bukharin were killed, but the road to their demise was not a straight one.

Nove, Alec, Ed. The Stalin Phenomenon. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993, p. 150

On December 30, 1934, during the examination, Khriukin, a member of the Komsomol and a third-year student in the History Department at the Rostov Pedagogical Institute, openly defended Zinoviev and Kamenev. He declared that Zinoviev and Kamenev rendered enormous services to the revolution, were friends of Lenin, and that now all this was being obliterated. Khriukin further declared that Zinoviev had no tie with the terrorists who killed Comrade Kirov, that in general members of the opposition cannot be champions of terror, and that the judicial procedure used to establish an ideological tie between the terrorists and the Zinoviev-Kamenev group was improper.
On Jan. 3, 1935, a Komsomol meeting took place in which Khriukin was admitted even though he had already been expelled from the Komsomol and the institute. The meeting's presidium afforded Khriukin the opportunity to present his counter-revolutionary views despite protests from the Komsomol members present.
After Khriukin's arrest, in the process of the investigation, it was determined that Khriukin was closely connected with the following group of students at the pedagogical institute: Yelin, Chalov, Ustimenko, Gavrilov, and Khriukin. All these individuals (not bona fide party members), the investigation determined, got in the institute by means of forged documents. In 1932, on Elin's and Khriukin's initiative, the individuals named stole from the party committee of the "Comintern" Mine (Shakhty Raion) a large quality of blank associate party member and registration cards, filled them out in their own names and, having prepared false documents about graduating from nine-year schools, gained admission to the institute. In the Rostov Financial and Economics Institute on January 1, 1935 at a conference of party and Komsomol organizers and individuals assigned by the party, student Kondeev (a Komsomol member) declared: "One must also pay attention to the contributions of Zinoviev and others. Why do you only consider their faults? Zinoviev is a great leader. He was president of the Comintern." Having said this, he left the meeting. The same day Kondeev assembled groups of students and passionately defended Zinoviev, Nikolayev [assassin of Kirov, Leningrad party secretary, on December 1, 1934] and other counter-revolutionaries. In the evening at a meeting of the Komsomol group the question of excluding Kondeev from the Komsomol in the Institute was raised. In spite of the fact that Kondeev's counter-revolutionary position was quite clear, he was afforded the opportunity of delivering an unabashedly counter-revolutionary sermon. At the end he said straight out that the purpose of his remarks was "to show the students that the party and government and our party committee in particular had wrongly judged the members of the opposition." After his expulsion from the Komsomol and from the Institute, Kondeev immediately when underground, disappeared. [Accounts follow of "counter-revolutionary agitation" at several Novocherkassk institutes.]
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 135

NUMBERS GIVEN FOR THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE REPRESSED ARE FAR TOO HIGH

…For one thing, the archival evidence from the secret police rejects the astronomically high estimates often given for the number of terror victims.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. xiv

In any event, the data available at this point make it clear that the number shot in the two worst purge years [1937-38] was more likely in the hundreds of thousands than in the millions.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 591

Because of these uncertainties, there is still controversy about the accuracy of these data, and no reason to believe them to be final or exact. One cannot stress enough that with our current documentation, we can posit little more than general, though narrow, ranges. Still, these are the only data currently available from police archives. Moreover, there are good reasons for assuming that they are not wildly wrong because of the consistent way numbers from different sources compare with one another.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 593

…That right-wing opposition was and is even today extremely hard to fight. But no one writes about this or tries to explain it.
Of course we committed a number of grave errors in the matter. But in fact those errors were many fewer in numbers than people think today.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 258

The charge against me [Molotov] is the same: abuse of power. The report written by that commission member…says that 1,370,000 arrests were made in the 1930s. That's too many. I responded that the figures should be thoroughly reviewed and that unwarranted arrests did occur, but that we couldn't have survived without resorting to stern measures.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 285

During the years 1930-1935, the Soviet Union was short of labor, especially in newly developed regions. The regime tried to use all available forces. It is difficult to see why it would have `killed' men who had been working the land in Siberia or Kazakhstan for the previous year or two. Nevertheless, Merl estimates that the 100,000 heads of family of the first category, sent to the Gulag system, are all dead. But the Party only placed 63,000 kulaks in the first category and only those guilty of terrorist and counter-revolutionary acts should be executed. Merl continues:
`Another 100,000 persons probably lost their lives, at the beginning of 1930, due to expulsion from their houses, deportation towards the North and executions'. Then he adjusts the number by another 100,000 persons, `dead in the deportation regions at the end of the thirties'. Once again, no precision or indication.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 96-97 [pp. 80-81 on the NET]

(Arch Getty and William Chase)
In the former USSR, several new studies have sharply narrowed the range of estimates of the aggregate numbers of victims and generally invalidated the highest Western guesses.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 225

Without denying that many individual members of the Soviet elite were victims of the terror during the Ezhovshchina, the fact remains that to date no one has systematically studied the

fate of the elite's members; our understanding of the impact on the elite remains imprecise and anecdotal.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 228

The true number of those falsely accused of counter-revolutionary activities who were executed in the 1936-38 period, is probably between 20,000 and 100,000. Both George Kennan and Jerry Hough concur that the likely number of executions was closer to the former than the latter figure. During the French Revolution about 17,000 people were executed for counter-revolutionary activity in the 1793-94 period of Jacobin Terror, representing about .065% of the French population at the time. If the figure of 20,000 for the 1936-38 Red Terror is accurate, this represents .01% of the Soviet population; if the 100,000 figure is correct, this represents.05%. Any reasonable estimate of executions in the 1936-38 period of the Great Purge indicates that, in relative terms, at most they did not exceed those of the Jacobin Terror, and were probably fewer. Clearly the popular conception of the bloodiness of the Great Purge is a gross exaggeration cultivated by those concerned to discredit developments in the Soviet Union in the 1930s and since, as well as the contemporary or revolutionary process in other countries.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 243

…To say that all the repressions were unwarranted is, I consider, incorrect. There was a sufficiently high number of enemies in the country after the revolution, dissatisfied people–political criminals as well as ordinary criminals. There was also a good deal of banditry going on in the country; on the collective farms they had to put up with murders of activists and people taking up arms. There were victims, of course. The repressions about which so much is written and talked about today were not at all on the scale that is stated now. "Hundreds of millions of repressed", they say. Nonsense! All this idiotic propaganda has brought our country to where it is today, to the lowest level"
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 277

Some Russian anti-communist writers such as Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov, and many US anti-communist liberals, maintained that the gulag existed right down to the last days of communism. If so, where did it disappear to? After Stalin's death in 1953, more than half of the gulag inmates were freed, according to the study of the NKVD files previously cited. But if so many others remained incarcerated, why have they not materialized? When the communist states were overthrown, where were the half-starved hordes pouring out of the internment camps with their tales of travail?…
What of the supposedly vast numbers of political prisoners said to exist in the other "communist totalitarian police states" of Eastern Europe? Why no evidence of their mass release in the postcommunist era? And where are the mass of political prisoners in Cuba? If there were mass atrocities right down to the last days of communism, why did not the newly installed anti-communist regimes seize the opportunity to bring erstwhile communist rulers to justice? Why no Nuremberg-style public trials documenting widespread atrocities? Why were not hundreds of party leaders and security officials and thousands of camp guards rounded up and tried for the millions they supposedly exterminated? The best the West Germans could do was charge East German leader Eric Honecker, several other officials, and seven border guards with shooting people who tried to escape over the Berlin Wall, a serious charge but hardly indicative of a gulag….

Most of those incarcerated in the gulag were not political prisoners, and the same appears to be true of inmates in the other communist states.
Parenti, Michael. Blackshirts and Reds, San Francisco: City Light Books, 1997, p. 81-83

OTHER GROUPS SUPPORTED THE BOLSHEVIKS STRINGENT METHODS

Behind and around them [a small number of authoritative persons], though, were other groups and constituencies–among them, members of religious and political hierarchies, policeman of various kinds, and ordinary citizen-members of “the crowd”–who abetted the proceedings, acquiesced in the process, or simply looked on, conceding that such ruthlessness was necessary, reasonable, or at least acceptable.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 7

ARRESTS BEING MADE BY PEOPLE UNQUALIFIED TO DO SO

Anyone who feels like arresting does so, including those who have, properly speaking, no right whatsoever to make arrests. It is no wonder, therefore, that with such an orgy of arrests, the organs [of state] having the right to make arrests, including the organs of the OGPU and especially of the police, have lost all sense of proportion–Central Committee circular, 1933
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 103

[May 8, 1933 Central Committee decree]
To all party-Soviet officials and to all organs of the OGPU, the courts, and the procuracy.
The desperate resistance of the kulaks in the kolkhoz movement and of the toiling peasants, already in full swing at the end of 1929 and taking the form of arson and terror against kolkhoz officials, has made it necessary for Soviet authorities to resort to mass arrests and harsh measures of repression in the form of mass expulsions of kulaks and their henchman to northern and remote regions.
The continued resistance by kulak elements–taking the form of sabotage within the kolkhozy and sovkhozy, a fact brought to light in 1932, the mass plundering of kolkhoz and sovkhoz property–have made necessary the further intensification of repressive measures against kulak elements, against thieves and saboteurs of every stripe.
True, demands for mass expulsions from the countryside and for the use of harsh forms of repression continue to come in from a number of regions, while petitions by others for the expulsions of 100,000 families from their regions and territories are presently in the possession of the Central Committee and the Council of People’s Commissars. Information has been received by the Central Committee and the Council of People’s Commissars that makes it evident that disorderly arrests on a massive scale are being carried out by our officials in the countryside. Arrests or being carried out by chairmen of kolkhozy, by members of the governing boards of kolkhozy, by chairmen of village soviets, by the secretaries of cells and by district and territorial commissioners. Anyone who feels like arresting does so, including those who have, properly speaking, no right whatsoever to make arrests. It is no wonder, therefore, that with such an orgy of arrests, the organs [of state] having the right to make arrests, including the organs of the OGPU and especially of the police, have lost all

sense of proportion. More often than not, they will arrest people for no reason at all, acting in accordance with the principle: “Arrest first, ask questions later!”
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 114

These comrades apparently do not understand that these tactics of massive deportation of the peasants outside their region has, in the new circumstances, already outlived itself, that such deportation can only be applied on an individual and partial basis and then applied only to the leaders and organizers of the struggle against the kolkhozy.
These comrades do not understand that the method of mass, disorderly arrests–if this can be considered a method–represents, in light of the new situation, only liabilities, which diminish the authority of Soviet power. They do not understand that making arrests ought to be limited and carried out under the strict control of the appropriate organs. They do not understand that the arrests must be directed solely against active enemies of Soviet power.
The Central Committee and the Council of People’s Commissars do not doubt but that all these errors and deviations from the party line and others like them will be eliminated as soon as possible.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 115

…In Byelorussia, for example, party regional secretaries had sought to control railroad personnel through mass arrests. One Control Commission representative said that “Tens, hundreds were arrested by anybody and they sit in jail.” In the Briansk railroad line, 75 percent of administrative-technical personnel had been sentenced to some kind of “corrective behavior.” In Sverdlovsk and Saratov, Control Commission inspectors sent from Moscow reported that locals had “completely baselessly arrested and convicted people and undertaken mass repressions for minor problems, sometimes for ineffective leadership, and in the majority of cases arrested and convicted workers who merely needed educational work.” By insisting on the procurator’s permission in order to make an arrest, the Central Committee was taking unlimited arrest powers out of the hands of regional party leaders.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 188

STALIN HAD TO REIGN IN POLICE EXCESSES

…The vast majority of those executed during the storm of dekulakization and collectivization were victims of police “troikas.” On May 7, 1933 the Politburo ordered the troikas to stop pronouncing death sentences.
The next day a document carrying the signatures of Stalin for the Central Committee and Molotov for the government ordered a drastic curtailment of arrests and a sharp reduction in the prison population. Half of all prisoners in jails…were to be released. The power to arrest was sharply restricted to police organs, and all arrests had to be sanctioned by the appropriate judicial procurator.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 113

The Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party and the Council of People’s Commissars decree:
I. ON DISCONTINUING THE MASS EXPULSIONS OF PEASANTS
All mass expulsions of peasants are to cease at once. Expulsions are to be permitted only on a case-by-case and partial basis and only with respect to those households whose heads

are waging an active struggle against the kolkhozy and are organizing opposition against the sowing of crops and their purchase by the state.
II. ON REGULATING THE MAKING OF ARRESTS
1) All persons who are not fully authorized by law to make arrests, namely, the chairmen of District Executive Committees, district and territorial commissioners, chairmen of village soviets, chairmen of kolkhozy and kolkhoz associations, secretaries of cells, and others, are prohibited from doing so.
Arrests carried out by heads of police are to be sanctioned or revoked by the district commissioners of the OGPU or by the corresponding procuracy within 48 hours after said arrest.
2)… Only persons accused of counterrevolution, terroristic acts, sabotage, gangsterism, robbery, espionage, border crossing and smuggling of contraband, murder, grave bodily injury, grand larceny, embezzlement, professional speculation in goods, speculation in foreign exchange, counterfeiting, malicious hooliganism, and professional recidivism may be taken into preventive custody.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 116

3) The organs of the OGPU are to obtain the prior consent of the directorate of the procuracy in making arrests, except in cases involving terroristic acts, explosions, arson, espionage, defection, political gangsterism, and counter-revolutionary, antiparty groups….
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 117

3. …Permission to arrest leading officials of the People's Commissariats of the [Soviet] Union and Union republics and of the central institutions corresponding to them [heads of administration and directors of departments, managers of trusts and their deputies, directors and deputies of industrial enterprises, sovkhozy, and so on], as well as permission to arrest engineers, agronomists, professors, and physicians employed by a variety of institutions and directors of scholarly, educational, and scientific-research institutions is granted with the consent of the appropriate people's commissars.
4. Permission to arrest members and candidate members of the All-Union Communist Party is granted with the consent of the secretaries of the district, territorial, and regional committees of the All-Union Communist Party, the central committees of the national Communist parties, through the proper channels. Arrests of Communists occupying leading posts in the People's Commissariats of the [Soviet] Union and in central institutions of equivalent rank are to be granted upon receipt of consent by the chairman of the Commission of Party Control.
Signed: Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the Soviet Union, Molotov, and Secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party, Stalin.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 188

BOLSHEVIKS BECAME MORE LENIENT AND LESSENED CONTROLS AROUND 1934

Of course, no one in the Politburo was advocating abandonment of the party-state dictatorship. As Stalin had said at the 17th Party Congress, "we cannot say that the fight is ended and that there is no longer any need for the policy of the socialist offensive." On the other hand, Stalin explicitly joined other Politburo members in proposing some kind of

relaxation of that dictatorship, at least experimentally. The increased repression in later years “should not cast doubt on the intentions of Stalin and his colleagues in 1934.”
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 138

Internally, too, there developed a new policy of conciliation with ex-Oppositionists and even with former class enemies, based on a theory that bygones should be bygones, that henceforth all Russians might unite in support of the Soviet government, now firmly and successfully established at home and abroad.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 209

From 1933 on, the leadership thought that the hardest battles for industrialization and collectivization were behind them. In May 1933, Stalin and Molotov signed a decision to liberate 50 per cent of the people sent to work camps during the collectivization….
The social and economic atmosphere relaxed throughout the country.
The general direction of the Party had proven correct. Kamenev, Zinoviev, Bukharin and a number of Trotskyists recognized that they had erred. The Party leadership thought that the striking victories in building socialism would encourage these former opposition leaders to criticize their wrong ideas and to accept Leninist ones. It hoped that all the leading cadres would apply Leninist principles of criticism and self-criticism, the materialist and dialectical method that allows each Communist to improve their political education and to assess their understanding, in order to reinforce the political unity of the Party. For that reason, almost all the leaders of the three opportunist movements, the Trotskyists Pyatakov, Radek, Smirnov and Preobrazhensky, as well as Zinoviev and Kamenev and Bukharin, who in fact had remained in an important position, were invited to the 17th Congress, where they made speeches.
That Congress was the congress of victory and unity.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 136 [p. 117 on the NET]

This event [the assassination of Kirov] came as a tremendous shock to the Russian people, in a manner difficult for outsiders to understand….
When this assassination occurred, in December, 1934, the country had just begun to settle down fairly comfortably after the painful years which followed the Second Communist Revolution. The authorities had won out in the knock-down and drag-out fight with the groups which they thought stood in the path of socialist development…. Having proved that they were masters in all parts of the country, the Communists had begun to compromise….
The legalizing of prospectors and lessees in the gold industry in the spring of 1933 was the first of a series of compromises. By the beginning of 1934, the small farmers who had thus far resisted attempts to drive them into collective farms were told that they could stay as they were. Those who had joined collective farms were given certain privileges which might have persuaded a lot of the others to join without the use of force if those privileges had been handed out a little sooner. Even the nomads were given the right to own herds again, although not quite so large as those they had previously held.
The country was getting calm again, and the people were losing much of their sense of bewilderment. The police were still busy arranging how to utilize the labor of hundreds of thousands of kulaks, ex–priests, and the like. But they had stopped rounding up others, and those who had escaped liquidation began to feel safe.

Then this assassination came along. Kirov, as the people knew, had been Stalin's right-hand man. The news of his assassination created consternation even in such remote mining settlements as that where I was staying in Kazakhstan.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 194

In the summer of 1934, the Government had announced with a great air of kindness that the federal police powers were to be reduced, that they would no longer have the power to arrest people right and left and send them off into exile for five years without open trial. Now the Government announced the old powers were restored to the police, and the latter began to exercise them with the greatest vigor and enthusiasm….
I can testify that the Russians were terribly disturbed over this Kirov assassination…. conditions had begun to get back to normal, and this assassination had to happen.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 196

If we look at the political history of the early 1930s, we find that the Stalinist leadership frequently pursued initiatives that seemed to run counter to a repressive policy. Beginning with Stalin's 1931 speech rehabilitating the old intelligentsia, a "moderate line" extended into 1933 with a Stalin/Molotov telegram releasing large numbers of prisoners and with a decision to reduce planned industrial targets in the Second Five-Year Plan. It continued in 1934 with the readmission and rehabilitation of former oppositionists at the 17th Party Congress and the abolition of bread rationing at the end of that year. Indeed, at Stalin's initiative a special commission of the Politburo was formed in 1934 to look into excessive arrests and other misdeeds of the secret police. Among other things, the commission, of which Stalin and Yezhov were members, drafted a policy statement limiting the punitive rights of the dreaded Special Conferences of the NKVD. The commission's work was abruptly terminated by the assassination of Kirov at the end of the year.
[Footnote: Within the Russian Federation the number of criminal sentences in 1934 was more than 25 percent lower than the previous year. Verdicts against "counter-revolutionaries" numbered some 4,300 in 1934, a drop of over 50 percent from the previous year.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 50

The pattern of arrests and executions from 1930 to 1936 supports the picture of increasing tolerance. After 1930 the number of executions fell in each of the next six years, as did the number of convictions for all crimes for 1931 and 1932.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 9

The figures for police and judicial action continued to be high into 1936; 91,000 arrests for counter-revolutionary crimes is a great many. But the key issue is how the country was ruled, and in that regard the overall trends were definitely in the direction of less coercion.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 10

The data indicate that as time went on the authorities were less interested in using the counter-revolutionary statutes, the legal weapon that allowed the most scope for arbitrariness and reliance on administrative methods rather than on evidence. There is no

pattern here of increasing terror. During 1936 the whole picture of incarceration began a shift toward fewer political and nonpolitical arrests.
In spite of the sharp increase of in the number of prisoners from 1934 to 1936, judicial practice now became more humane and concerned for individuals' rights. A first major step occurred in May 1933 when Stalin and Molotov ordered the release of half of all labor-camp inmates whose sentences were connected with collectivization. In January 1935, the Supreme Court of the USSR exonerated a group of convicted kolkhoz officials because procurators had mishandled the investigation and examination of evidence. The court even considered criminal proceedings to punish lower judicial bodies for their conduct. In February 1935 the official journal of the Commissariat of Justice, published, with evident satisfaction, the story of eastern Siberian courts that had quashed a series of cases initiated under Article 58. The journal maintained that these cases should not have arisen in the first place.
In August 1935 the government declared an amnesty for all collective farmers sentenced to less than five years if they were working "honorably and with good conscience" on the kolkhozy. Presumably this decree applied to those peasants punished but not sent into distant exile or prison. The directive did not apply to recidivists or those convicted of counter-revolutionary crimes, but sentences in such cases would have been longer than five years.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 11

Yet by 1934 the Stalinist regime had begun to rein in the police and courts and to institute substantial reforms within them, which changed and softened punitive practices.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 15

In the spring [of 1934] he [Stalin] ordered a limited amnesty for rebellious kulaks. In June, however, he authorized a decree which proclaimed the collective responsibility of every family for treason committed by one of its members. People who failed to denounce a disloyal relative to authority were made liable to severe punishment. A month later he abolished the GPU and replaced it by the Commissariat of Internal Affairs. The powers of the political police were limited; and the Attorney-General–an ex-Menshevik lawyer Andrei Vyshinsky was soon to be appointed to that post–was given the right to supervise its activities and to veto them if they conflicted with the law. The leaders of the oppositions were allowed to address public meetings and to write for the press, although not to criticize the powers that be. Hopes for further Liberal measures rose high. The idea of a constitutional reform was vented in the Politburo; and the main leaders of the opposition were invited to co-operate on the projects for a new constitution.
The quasi-Liberal spell was suddenly interrupted when, on December 1, 1934, a young Communist, Nikolayev, assassinated Kirov in Leningrad. Stalin rushed to Leningrad and personally interrogated the terrorist in the course of many hours…. Nikolayev and his friends regarded themselves as followers of Zinoviev, with whom, however, they had had no direct or indirect connection. Probably it was Kirov's liberalism that enabled the terrorist to gain access to his offices in the Smolny Institute, for Kirov had objected to being heavily guarded by the political police. At any rate, the GPU of Leningrad had known about the planned attempt and had done nothing to prevent it. Had Stalin also known about it and connived? Nothing is certain; but he used Kirov's death to justify his conclusion that the time for quasi-liberal concessions was over.

Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 354-355

The Russians have, in fact, several times tried to introduce some measures of real democracy, particularly during the period before the murder of Kirov.
Socialist Clarity Group. The U. S. S. R., Its Significance for the West. London: V. Gollancz, 1942, p. 61

… deportation of rich peasants for actively resisting collectivization stopped in May 1933. The liberal trend peaked in 1934. In this year the security police (The State Political Directorate of the Commissariat of the Interior), the GPU, was abolished and its functions restructured as part of a re-organized People's Commissariat of internal affairs, which reflected a curtailed role for the security police. In July, The Ministry of Justice ordered a halt in the campaign of seeking out and prosecuting engineers and enterprise directors for 'wrecking and sabotage.' In the spring a partial amnesty was offered to rebellious kulaks, and in November the size of the private plots for collective farm peasants was increased. Leaders of oppositional tendencies in the Party were once again allowed to address public meetings. Work began on drafting a new liberal constitution which, in fact, culminated in 1936.
This relative relaxation between 1929-31 and 1932-34 was a result of an improvement in both the industrial and the international situation of the Soviet Union. The technical intelligentsias' resistance to the new rapid industrialization policies decreased as: (1) the new policies proved to be effective in producing rapid rates of industrialization; and (2) a rapidly rising proportion of the technical intelligentsia were recruited from the children of workers and peasants, and trained in socialist institutions….
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 227

Starting in February 1934, step followed step in a steady march of official actions to better the lot of Soviet people. Some were gestures toward the peasantry. A decree published over the signatures of Stalin as Central Committee secretary and Molotov as head of the government canceled unmet grain-delivery quotas for 1933 and spread out over three years the repayment of government loans of grain for feed and food. Pravda's 1st March editorial on this modest measure was blazoned: "In What Other Country Does the Peasantry Receive Such Aid!" In May local Soviet officials were authorized to restore to full citizenship deported kulaks who had worked hard and proved loyal, especially the young. In July Stalin and other Central Committee officials met with a group of regional party secretaries to discuss problems of rural policy. At that time about 70% of the peasant households were collectivized. Speaking for the Central Committee, Stalin cautioned against administrative coercion in collectivizing the remainder, and advocated the subsequently taken steps to raise collective farmers' incomes, limit their delivery quotas, and fix the size of their private plots. A reported further topic of discussion at the July meeting was the dissolution of the political departments that had been created in the machine-tractor stations during collectivization. Kirov, who was present, is said to have spoken strongly on this issue, proposing the revival of Soviet power in the countryside. This proposal was within the frame of the policy Stalin was now pursuing,…
Stalin's internal-detente policy took many other forms. In April 1934 the government issued a decree on the need to spur housing construction in towns and worker settlements. More goods began to appear in the shops, and people started to talk about the advent of a "little

NEP." The November plenum endorsed a Politburo decision–which Molotov said had been proposed by Stalin– to end bread rationing as of 1 January 1935…. Again in November 1935, speaking at the Stakhanovites' congress in the Kremlin, Mikoyan told how Stalin had demanded of him that he produce samples of the high-quality new toilet soap now being manufactured for ordinary people at a Politburo meeting so that the members could look them over–after which "we received a special Central Committee decision on the assortment and composition of soap." Not all expressions of Stalin's new populism were similarly publicized. Khrushchev, then first secretary of the Moscow Party Committee, received a phone call from him one day saying "rumors have reached me that you've let a very unfavorable situation develop in Moscow as regards public toilets. Apparently people hunt around desperately and can't find anywhere to relieve themselves. This won't do. It puts the citizens in an awkward position. Talk this matter over with Bulganin and do something to improve these conditions."

…Measures to alleviate material hardship went along with moves to dispel the piatiletka's (the First Five-year plan) atmosphere of austerity. A lighthearted musical comedy, The Jolly Fellows, the first of a series of its kind, appeared on Soviet screens during 1934. Popular dance halls were opened in Moscow, Leningrad, and other big cities. There and in worker clubs people danced the formerly frowned-upon foxtrot to tunes of once tabooed American jazz. Tennis, previously decried as bourgeois, became respectable. The dining rooms of Moscow hotels, heretofore patronized almost exclusively by foreigners, filled up with decorously dressed young men and women representing, the Times correspondent reported, "all sections of Soviet business and industry."

…Another sphere of the detente policy was law enforcement. Stalin wanted to give professional people and the ordinary man reassurance against arbitrary mistreatment by lower-level authorities. The Procuracy, which had been elevated to the rank of an all-union independent agency in 1933 and given power of supervision over the legality of acts by administrative bodies, including the OGPU, was mobilized for the legality campaign. Many persons convicted for trivial or inflated misdemeanors were released; and the police reportedly received orders not to arrest any engineers or Red Army personnel without a special warrant or consultation with the party Central Committee. The Procuracy was headed then by an Old Bolshevik, Ivan Akulov. He applied himself energetically to exonerating specialists imprisoned on flimsy charges. His deputy, who succeeded him as Procurator in 1935, was Stalin's man Andre Vyshinsky. Stalin's personal backing of the reform policy was clearly shown by Vyshinsky's championship of it. He took justice officials to task for the "prosecutorial deviation" of assuming that every court case must end in a conviction; and sternly lectured them against harming the regime in the eyes of the people through unwarranted arrest, improper confiscation of property, and violation of rights.

Perhaps the most adroit maneuver in the detente policy was a temporary show of preparedness for reconciliation within the party…. some well-known ex-oppositionists publicly recanted, declared fealty to Stalin and the General Line, and petitioned for reinstatement in the party. One was Christian Rakovsky, who had been living in internal exile since 1928 and whose prestige in Left opposition circles was second only to Trotsky's.

… Zinoviev contributed occasional articles to Pravda on international affairs and for about three months, between April and July 1934, was listed in successive issues of Bolshevik as a member of its editorial board. Kamenev also appeared in Pravda and wrote the preface to a volume of Machiavelli's writings published in November.

Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 283-287

In the first months of 1935,…Stalin tried to restore something of the liberal atmosphere of mid-1934.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 284

For the outside world, the beginning of 1935 was the period of the real “Soviet spring.” On reform followed another, and they all tended in one direction: reconciliation with the non-Party intelligentsia, extension of the government’s base by attracting all those who by their work in any department of Soviet development gave practical proof of their abilities and of their devotion to the Soviet state.
Nicolaevsky, Boris. Power and the Soviet Elite; “The letter of an Old Bolshevik.” New York: Praeger, 1965, p. 59

It seems indisputable therefore that following collectivization there was a movement towards measures which, though their efficacy left much to be desired, were intended to put a limit on arbitrariness. There was a clear intention in high places to break with the practices of those troubled years. In fact, while two somewhat symbolic amnesties were granted in 1934 and 1935 to certain groups of peasants who had been convicted, officials who had been found guilty themselves for refusing to use coercion enjoyed a similar dispensation at the same time.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 244

I must now mention an incident from that shadowy period of Bukharin’s life. It was during the brief period of the brightest ‘liberalism’ the regime had known since the death of Lenin-between the Seventeenth Congress in January and February 1934 and the murder of Kirov in December 1934. Stalin was trying to convince the people that the regime had changed its character and that his aim was now to unite all groups and sections of society. One of his devices at this stage was to make use of people who had differed from him in the past, giving them responsible Party jobs. At the height of this ‘liberal’ period, in the summer of 1934, the first Writers’ Congress was held.
Berger, Joseph. Nothing but the Truth. New York, John Day Co. 1971, p. 106

Later that year [1934], there was even a softening of policy toward kulaks. In December 1934 a circular to all NKVD chiefs and procurators allowed the employment of exiles in organizations not having a defense character, and their children were permitted to enroll in educational institutions. Local NKVD chiefs were specifically ordered to inform the exiles of their new rights. A Politburo decree one week later abolished all restrictions on admission to higher educational institutions for persons heretofore excluded because of social origins or previous electoral disenfranchisement.
Getty, J. Arch. “Excesses are not permitted, “Russian Review 61 (January 2002) p. 120.

YEZHOV ADVOCATES GETTING TOUGH AND EVADING THE LAWS

On the other hand, a political hardening and a kind of legal nihilism in the fall of 1935 contradicted many of 1934’s initiatives that had seemed to augur an era of legality and rule of law. In September 1935, Yezhov gave a secret speech to a closed meeting of party

personnel officials from the regions. His remarks advised party officials sharply to restrict the rights of expelled members to appeal, and not to be restrained by procurators' insistence on procedural legality (both a which contradicted written party and state texts). He also encouraged his audience to make use of extralegal bodies to convict "dangerous elements" not guilty of specific chargeable offenses.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 189

Yezhov's machine of terror interpreted Stalin's call of vigilance thus:
"Accuse one another, denounce one another, if you wish to remain among the living."
Krivitsky, Walter G. I was Stalin's Agent, London: H. Hamilton, 1939, p. 257

Russia has produced a number of monsters. The most primitive of them was Yezhov;…
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 158

Yezhov, for example, in a speech to NKVD executives, declared that the Soviet Union was going through a dangerous period, that a war with fascism was imminent, and that therefore the NKVD had to destroy all the nests of fascists in the country. "Of course," Yezhov said, "there will be some innocent victims in this fight against fascist agents. We are launching a major attack on the enemy; let there be no resentment if we bump someone with an elbow. Better that 10 innocent people should suffer than one spy get away. When you cut down the forest, wood chips fly."
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 603

(Boris Starkov)
Yezhov bears great personal responsibility for the destruction of legality, for the falsification of investigative cases.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 29

While he was in the process of carrying out the purge, Yezhov was simultaneously reorganizing the organs of the NKVD. Personnel increased by almost four times. Between October 1936 and October 1937, the central offices of the local organs of the NKVD were continuously restaffed with Communists and Komsomol members who had to be "turned into model chekists in the space to three to four months." These cadres frequently did not have the slightest idea of the character and methods of the work they would engage in. Frequently, far from the best representatives of the cadres of chekists served as their instructors, which could not help but have an effect on the quality of the new reinforcements. This took a particularly heavy toll on the effectiveness of the investigative apparatus. In 1937 and 1938, almost the entire staff of the NKVD was engaged in investigative work, including operational and office workers.
Frinovsky, who later landed in the dock himself, gave the following testimony:
"Yezhov demanded that I select investigators who would be completely bound to him, who had some kind of sins in their past, and who would know that they had these sins in their past, and then that I, on the basis of these sins, kept them completely in line. In my opinion, I would be telling the truth, if, generalizing, I said that often the investigators themselves gave the testimony and not those under investigation. Did the leadership of the People's Commissariat, that is, Yezhov and I, know about this? They knew and they encouraged it. How did we react to it? I, honestly, didn't react all, and Yezhov even encouraged it."

Schneidman, a former investigator in the central offices of the NKVD who was called to account in the 1950s, gave the same kind of testimony:
“Yezhov’s authority in the organs of the NKVD was so high that I, like the other employees, did not doubt the guilt of individuals who were arrested on his direct orders even when the investigator did not have any materials which compromised the given individual. I was convinced of the guilt of such an individual even before the interrogation and then, during the interrogation, tried to obtain a confession from that individual using all possible means.”

During Yezhov tenure, the use of convictions by list came into practice.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 32

Berman, the People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of Byelorussia, created a terrifying reputation for himself. Every week, on Saturday, he organized a review of the work that had been carried out. At these times, the investigators who have brought in the largest number of death verdicts could expect encouragement, whereas those who had completed fewer investigative cases could expect disciplinary penalties and, not infrequently, arrest and repression. Yezhov encouraged all of this.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 34

The political discrediting and then conviction of Bukharin and Rykov, prominent figures in the Communist Party and the Soviet government, was something of a high point of “the great terror, that Yezhov had organized. Bubnov, Rudzutak, and Kossior were compromised and then repressed on the basis of Yezhov’s personal orders.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 35

Other opposition to Yezhov manifested itself at the beginning of 1938. At that time, a large group of NKVD employees complained to the Central Committee about Yezhov. They accused him of illegal use of government funds and also of the secret execution of a number of prominent party members without investigation or a court examination. In January 1938, the Central Committee Plenum produced a resolution criticizing excessive vigilance. Prominent in the movement to criticize Yezhov actions was Zhdanov, who played an important role in drafting the January 1938 resolution.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 36

VYSHINSKY OBJECTS TO REDUCING A DEATH SENTENCE TO 10 YEARS

[November 27th, 1935 Memorandum from Shkiriatov to Stalin on “crude political errors” in the Gagarina case]
Concerning the crude political errors committed by the RSFSR Supreme Court during its review of the case against former princess Gagarina, a counter-revolutionary and terrorist, and her accomplices.

The procurator of the Soviet Union, Comrade Vyshinsky, has notified the Commission of Party Control of the crude political error committed by the Supreme Court of the RSFSR in wrongly commuting the sentence of death by shooting meted out to Gagarina, a flagrant counter-revolutionary and terrorist, to 10 years of imprisonment….
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 193

Gagarina herself confessed to everything at the preliminary as well as at the court investigations. Cynically and flagrantly, she told of her counter-revolutionary activities and terroristic propaganda, declaring that, should an opportunity ever present itself, she would commit any terroristic act whatsoever.
In her last statement, she declared that "she did not intend to justify her actions in any way," and after sentence was passed, she did not submit an appeal to the Supreme Court.
All this attests to the fact that Gagarina is a sworn, irreconcilable enemy of Soviet power, capable of committing any crime whatsoever.
Nevertheless, the Special Collegium of the RSFSR Supreme Court…did commute Gagarina's sentence of death by shooting to 10 years of imprisonment. It is obvious to everyone that the… comrades have committed a crude political error.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 194

Those responsible for this decision have perverted the substance of the matter with their formal and bureaucratic arguments. Was it not obvious to them that they were dealing here with a sworn enemy, to whom no mercy should be shown?
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 195

SECRET POLICE SURVEILLANCE COULD NOT BE AS GREAT AS ALLEGED

[Footnote: Khlevniuk has written (1937: Stalin, NKVD, Moscow, 1992) that eventually more than 200,000 expelled party members were placed under NKVD surveillance…. It is difficult to imagine how this was possible.]
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 209

Evidence on police monitoring of the population as a whole suggests that it was not nearly so extensive as many Western accounts have argued.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 71

LITTLE PROOF STALIN WAS TRYING TO KILL HIS OPPONENTS IN THE 1930'S

…If we set aside the notion of a grand Stalin plan to kill everyone–the evidence for which, aside from our knowing the end and reading backward is quite weak–it is possible to understand the politics of the 1930s as an evolving political history in which self-interested persons and groups jockeyed for position.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 330

Although the findings confirm Brzezinski's belief that the "major effort of the purge was directed against the Communist Party itself," they provide little support for Conquest's assertion that there was a "plan to destroy Old Bolsheviks," or for Armstrong's claim that the "great Purge almost eliminated from the apparatus the Old Bolsheviks, who entered the party before the Revolution. In fact, among party members, the connection between when one joined the party and one's subsequent fate in the purges is an interesting but nonlinear one: Those with the longest party membership were not necessarily the most vulnerable. Those who joined the party during the 1912-20., when party membership swelled, were purged more heavily than those who joined before 1912 or after 1920.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 235

Old Bolsheviks did not suffer disproportionately in the Great Purges and there is little reason to believe that they were singled out as the targets of the Ezhovshchina.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 236

Old Bolsheviks in the present group suffered not because they were Old Bolsheviks, but because they held prominent positions within the party, economic, a military elite, positions they held because they were Old Bolsheviks. When the party seized power in 1917, it placed its most trusted members into the bureaucracy's most important positions. Although the individuals may have changed, Old Bolsheviks as a group retained the most privileged and powerful positions. When the terror erupted in 1936-37, Old Bolsheviks were among the victims because of where they worked rather than because they were Old Bolsheviks. In short, specialty or "position" in 1936, rather than Old Bolshevik status, was the crucial determinant of purge vulnerability.
…Those in the elite outside politics, for example, scientists, educational administrators, and artists, regardless of their "alien" class background, party status, age, or old regime education, were relatively safe from arrest….
So it was neither the Older Bolsheviks nor the "new men," but rather those members of the party, economic, and military elite who belonged to what one might call the "class of 1912-20" who were most vulnerable.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 243

It is therefore hard to use the findings presented here and what we know about the importance of Old Bolsheviks' credentials to support an interpretation that posits that Stalin planned the terror to destroy the revolutionaries as such.
Certain groups within the Soviet elite–high-ranking party, economic, and military officials, former oppositionists, and those who joined the Bolsheviks between 1912 and 1920–were most vulnerable to repression. Other groups–most notably Old Bolsheviks and the intelligentsia–long believed to have been designated targets were not. By showing that Old Bolsheviks were not repressed simply because they were Old Bolsheviks, this study cast considerable doubt on the thesis that the terror's purpose was to destroy them as a category because they collectively represented a threat to Stalin.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 244

If we look at the specific context of the acts of repression it becomes apparent that police violence, rather than proceeding from the realization of the single will and design of an omnipotent center of power by its invincible armed forces, was in fact increasingly chaotic and out-of-control. This violence resulted rather from the lack of any such center and institution,…
The planning and execution of police repression during the “Great Purge” have traditionally been attributed to Stalin’s vengeful tyranny. This view does not stand up to examination of the sources…. Everything points to the conclusion that, far from illuminating the causes and effects of the epoch’s historical events, the tendency to attribute all things to Stalin’s vengeful intentions is likely to obscure the real problems of the period….
As for Stalin’s dictatorial omnipotence, this chapter has shown the extent to which the crisis of 1937 was dominated by the impossibility of controlling the internal workings of the Soviet system, even by means of police terror.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 170-171

It should be said straight away that Sovietologists are quite right to emphasize the crucial impact that the events of 1936-1938 had, both on the history of the USSR and on Stalin’s career. However, they have generally been so misled by the ritual invocation of Stalin’s name to explain and justify every political initiative, that they have rarely suspected that behind the scenes there might be intentions and aims other than those of the supposed despot. They have been too quick to identify the whole inner workings of the regime with his irresistible will. In this way research into Soviet history has commonly attributed to Stalin personally all the designs and schemes that claimed him as their authority, without asking whether these fit neatly into a homogeneous strategy.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 183

However, one only needs to look closely at the source material to see that the schemes–all without exception justified with obsequious references to the same revered authority–do in fact present some notable incongruities. If we look at the abundant and yet little-used material that researchers on this subject might have referred to, we quickly realize that Stalin, for all an important role he played, was in fact far from being always able to dictate the course of the turbulent events of the 1930s and that in fact his personal position on the top of the Party-State emerged shaken rather than strengthened from the “Great Purge.” What one might call in short a “conflict-centered” reading of the available data would conclude that the purges were in no way a punitive exercise delivered in triumph from above, but rather a fierce internal battle within the state apparatus. This struggle arose from the need to ensure regular functioning of the administrative, economic, and political mechanisms, though they were by their very nature uncontrollable, and it brought conflicting strategies into battle for control of the apparatus, strategies of which Stalin’s own–“real Stalinism”–was only one variant and not in fact the one which finally prevailed.
There is nothing easier than to misconstrue the true role played by Stalin in the internal struggles of the apparatus. His name and his utterances were invariably quoted throughout the country by everyone who took part in the confrontations of the “Great Purge,” in order to legitimize any kind of tortuous maneuver, a fact that easily gives the impression that it was he alone who initiated the majority of the actions. The impression is wrong, however, as one discovers as soon as one examines closely the available sources. From them it clearly

emerges that, far from being the prime mover of the process of civil war which was increasingly ravaging and disrupting the Party-State, Stalin was merely the leader, and at times in a quite disadvantageous position, of one of the loose factions that were warring among themselves and against the rest of society.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 184-185

STALIN REMOVED YEZHOV AND HAD MANY PURGERS ARRESTED

…Indeed, at the end of 1938 Stalin removed Yezhov, disavowed the latter's excesses, ordered the arrest of the purgers, and released a number of those "falsely arrested."
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 419

You could say he [Yezhov] overreached himself and committed all kinds of follies. When a man is afraid of losing his job and turns overzealous…that is called careerism. It is tremendously important because it keeps growing and is one of the main defects of our time. By that time Yezhov had sunk to a point of degeneration…. They started to accuse Yezhov when he began to set arrest quotas by regions, on down to districts. No fewer than 2000 must be liquidated in such and such region, no fewer than 50 in such and such district…. That's the reason why he was shot. His official conduct, of course, had not been subjected to oversight…. Closer oversight was needed. Oversight was inadequate.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 262

The lack of clarity in the limit approval process is one of the important lacunae in our knowledge of the mass operations. Was Ezhov authorized to approve increases without the Politburo's or Stalin's confirmation? Why were some increases run through the Politburo and others not? Getty, J. Arch. "Excesses are not permitted, "Russian Review 61 (January 2002) p. 131.

Plans and "control figures" for arrests actually did exist. Local areas received their arrest plans from Moscow. Telegrams in code reported that "in your oblast, according to the information of the central investigating agencies, there were so many terrorists or anti-Soviet agitators. Find them and try them." The NKVD agencies had to fulfill these quotas and wait for a new quota the next month or quarter.
One day in 1937 the chief editor of a Ukrainian newspaper, Babinets, was summoned to the NKVD. He was told to edit the introductory part of an indictment of "a kulak terrorist center." Working at night in the NKVD director's office, Babinets heard the director calling the regional offices of the NKVD, demanding increases in the "index figures" of the fight against "enemies of the people." "How many did you take today?" He would shout. "Twelve! Not enough, far from enough." "And you?" He would say to another raion. "Sixty? Good, great work. Only watch you don't drop off at the end of the month." To a third: "What! You arrested only five people? Have you already built complete communism in your raion, or what?" And then, turning to Babinets, he said, "I have to put pressure on. Soon they'll phone from Moscow, and then what could I tell them, what sort of report could I make?"
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 515

CHUEV: Did Stalin himself have any doubts about 1937? Did he speak of any extremes or excesses?
MOLOTOV: How could he not have had doubts? And not just doubts. Yezhov, chief of state security, was executed by firing squad.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 264

IVANOVICH, SHOTA: Solzhenitsyn writes that Stalin himself placed Yezhov in that job and made him slaughter the party's key workers.
MOLOTOV: That's not so. Yezhov was a rather prominent worker who had been promoted accordingly. Short in stature, slightly built, he was nevertheless a highly energetic, outstanding worker. But when he was placed in a position of enormous power and given sweeping directives, it put a strain on him, and he began to carry out repressions according to a production plan. Before him, Yagoda had paid for this. But overnight a man does not show himself in everything. The trees were felled, the chips began to fly, so to speak.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 294-295

Yezhov had been a rather fine fellow, too. But power intoxicated him and swept him off his feet. He tried to show off and curry favor. That's when careerism begins. False evidence, previously set quotas of enemies: "The numbers of repressed persons are not high enough!" So everyone tries harder. And what kind of work is that?
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 340

In November 1937, after the celebrations of the October Revolution, I was summoned to the office of Yezhov, head of the NKVD, accompanied by Slansky. It was my first meeting with Yezhov, and I was shocked by his unimpressive appearance. He asked incompetent questions about elementary matters of intelligence trade-craft. He didn't know basic techniques of working with a source of information. Moreover, he did not seem to care about splits in the Ukrainian emigre organization. Yezhov was both people's commissar of internal affairs and a secretary of the Central Committee. I sincerely believed I was incapable of understanding the intellectual qualities that had placed him in such high positions. Although a tested professional, I remain naive about what to expect from the leadership, because the ones I had met, Kossior and Petrovsky, Communist party leaders of the Ukraine, were intelligent and sophisticated.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 22

I still regard Yezhov as responsible for grave crimes, but even worse, he was an incompetent criminal. I am sure that the crimes of Stalinism acquired such mad dimensions at least in part due to Yezhov's professional incompetence in intelligence and police matters.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 63

Beria boldly told Stalin that Yezhov, who had succeeded Yagoda the year before as Chief of the Commissariat of the Interior…had passed all bounds of reason and discrimination in his conduct of the Purge;…
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 229

In charge of this stage were young, rough, and ignorant examining prosecutors. These were the Yezhov boys.
Krivitsky, Walter G. I was Stalin's Agent, London: H. Hamilton, 1939, p. 207

Early in 1938, however, Stalin became disturbed by the mounting fury of the Ezhovshchina. His purpose of liquidating the old Bolsheviks and the veterans of the Revolution and the Civil War, and other sources of opposition, had been achieved. But under Yezhov the purge had spread like a malignant plague. Everywhere people were spying and informing against each other and everywhere arrests were on the increase. Terror was raging out of control. Stalin saw the need to call a halt. He showed the same sense of timing and the same authority, which he had displayed nearly eight years earlier with his article "Dizziness From Success."
In January 1938 a central committee passed a resolution which heralded what was to be called the "Great Change." The title of the resolution was "Concerning the Mistakes of Party Organizations in Excluding Communists from the Party, Concerning Formal-Bureaucratic Attitudes Towards the Appeals of Excluded Members of the Bolshevik Party, and Concerning Measures to Eliminate These Deficiencies." The new orders were passed quickly to the party secretaries at every level and to the command points of the NKVD, and emanating from the Kremlin in Moscow. They were promptly obeyed. The new enemy was identified now as the Communist-careerist. He had taken advantage of the purge to denounce his superiors and to gain promotion. He was guilty of spreading suspicion and of undermining the party. A purge of careerists was launched. At the same time mass repressions diminished and the rehabilitation of victimized party members began.
The real halt to the great purge came, however, in July 1938, when Beria was appointed Yezhov's deputy. He took charge of the NKVD at once, although Yezhov was not removed until December 1938, when he was made Commissar for Inland Water Transport. Soon afterwards he was shot.
Many NKVD officers were tried and executed for extracting confessions from innocent people, while others were relegated to labor camps. Loyal party members, emerging from the long nightmare, were relieved by the purging of the NKVD. It confirmed their belief that fascists had insinuated themselves into the security forces and the government and that they were responsible for the cruel persecutions and injustices of the Ezhovshchina. This explanation was encouraged officially, and it absolved Stalin and the Politburo of responsibility.
Directly controlling every branch of Soviet society and deeply involved in the buildup of the armed forces and conduct of foreign policy, Stalin could not maintain detailed control over the purge. He was aware that the NKVD had arrested many who were not guilty and that of the 7 to 14 million people serving sentences of forced labor in the GULAG camps many were innocent of any taint of disloyalty…. He resented this waste of human material. The aircraft designer Yakovlev recorded a conversation with him in 1940, in which Stalin exclaimed: "Yezhov was a rat; in 1938 he killed many innocent people. We shot him for that!"
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 288

Gulag (an acronym for State Administration of Camps).
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 142

In 1939 Garanin, like Kashketin, was shot on charges of "espionage" and "wrecking." Many prison camp directors were removed and even shot. This was a result of Yezhov's ouster from the leadership of the NKVD.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 512

Many of Yezhov's and Beria's torturers were destroyed in the Stalin era,…

Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 518

Yagoda and Yezhov were both “scum,” thought Stalin. Yezhov was “a rat who killed many innocent people,” Stalin told Yakovlev, the aircraft designer. “We had to shoot him,” he confided to Kavtaradze. After the war, Stalin admitted: “One can’t believe a lot of the evidence from 1937. Yezhov couldn’t run the NKVD properly and anti-Soviet elements penetrated it. They destroyed some honest people, our best cadres.”
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 324

Isolated, and with many of his former subordinates arrested in a purge of the NKVD, Yezhov crumbled without a struggle. A few years later Stalin told the aircraft designer Yakovlev that Yezhov stopped showing up for work and was at home, drunk, all day. ‘The wretch, he killed many innocent people in 1938,’ said Stalin, ‘for that we shot him’,…
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 212

Beginning in the summer of 1938 a coalition of Politburo members, reportedly consisting of Zhdanov, Andreev, Kaganovich, Mikoyan, and Molotov, worked to limit Yezhov’s and the NKVD’s powers. In August, Beria was appointed Deputy People’s Commissar of the NKVD without Yezhov’s consent. During the fall, the Politburo restricted the NKVD’s power somewhat and appointed a series of commissions to investigate NKVD operations, arrest procedures, and Yezhov’s performance. The most dramatic move came on 17 November 1938, when it criticized aspects of the NKVD’s work, abolished its troikas that had summarily sentenced so many to death or hard labor, and condemned its excesses. On 23 November 1938, Yezhov submitted his resignation as NKVD chief to Stalin. The Politburo accepted it and replaced him with Beria. Yezhov retained his other party and state positions until he was arrested in April 1939. He was executed on 4 February 1940.
Chase, William J., Enemies Within the Gates?, translated by Vadim A. Staklo, New Haven: Yale University Press, c2001, p. 306.

TROIKAS SENTENCED PEOPLE TO BE SHOT, NOT STALIN

According to official figures released by the Russian government in 1995, of the 681,000 people sentenced to be shot in 1937-38, 92.6% were sentenced by troikas. [It’s not Stalin]
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 470

As had often been the case in the past, local repression outdistanced that envisioned by the center. It is interesting that in nearly all regions, the precise local numbers proposed to be shot after Stalin’s telegram at the beginning of July were higher than the round-number quotas later approved by Moscow at the end of the month.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 471

CC ATTACKS PEOPLE UNJUSTLY REPRESSING OTHERS TO LOOK GOOD

The Central Committee resolution of January 1938 provided such a formulation. It attacked the “false vigilance” of certain careerist Communists who are striving to…insure themselves against possible charges of inadequate vigilance through the indiscriminate repression of

party members." Such a leader "indiscriminately spreads panic about enemies of the people" and "is willing to expel dozens of members from the party on false grounds just to appear vigilant himself."
"It is time to understand," the resolution asserted, "that Bolshevik vigilance consists essentially in the ability to unmask an enemy regardless of how clever and artful he may be, regardless of how he decks himself out, and not in indiscriminate or "on the off-chance" expulsions, by the tens of thousands, of everyone who comes within reach."
Thus the mass depredations in the party were to be blamed (not without some justification) on former parties secretaries who for the most part had already been removed.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 496

MOLOTOV SAYS REPRESSIONS WERE TOO LIGHT AND MISSED SOME KEY PEOPLE

EDITOR: Molotov complained that the terror and not gone far enough. After all, it failed to purge incipient or covert right-wingers such as Khrushchev & Mikoyan.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 160

REPRESSION WAS NECESSARY EVEN THOUGH IT GOT SOME INNOCENT PEOPLE

… many honest Communists perished then. There is no smoke without fire. The security people overdid it. They were overzealous in fulfilling their tasks. But many wavered, and good people often perished as a result.
A great many people cheered "Hurrah!" and were for the party and for Stalin in words but vacillated in deeds. Khrushchev, who was a Trotskyist in his time, presents a striking example….
I bear responsibility for this policy of repression and consider it correct. Admittedly, I have always said grave mistakes and excesses were committed, but the policy on the whole was correct.
All the Politburo members, including myself, bear responsibility for those mistakes.
The allegation persists that the majority of the condemned were innocent and were wrongly punished. But in the main it was the guilty, those who needed to be repressed to one degree or another, who were punished.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 256

CHUEV: Didn't Stalin merely make a scapegoat of Yezhov, thereby placing all the blame on him?
MOLOTOV: Too simplistic. That version is pushed by those who misunderstand the state of the country at the time. Of course the demands originated with Stalin, and of course there were excesses, but all that was permissible, to my mind, for the sake of the main objective–keeping state power!
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 264

CHUEV: Nowadays it is said, "Yes many lives were sacrificed in order to defend Soviet power. But who needs a system that caused so many millions to perish? Wouldn't a monarchy or a constitutional democracy have been better?"

MOLOTOV: Every well-off individual in bourgeois society will talk that way, but those not well off–the worker, the peasant, the poor man–can't agree with this. Lives were sacrificed under the old regime, and if not for Soviet power the number of lives lost would have been greater; there would have been ever more wars without end. That would have been inevitable.
CHUEV: Just try to prove it!
MOLOTOV: It does not require proof. Life will demonstrate it to those who still don't see it. But the masses of workers and peasants do.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 268

We could not pause [in the 1930s] to go into a person's record thoroughly and get the objective facts about him. We did not have the time or the resources to defer action. In certain cases the fate of the cause hung by a thread. I believe we acted correctly, though it entailed certain inevitable, even grave, excesses in repression. But there was no other way during that period…. We can and must be criticized, even charged with excesses. But I don't think we had an alternative then. It was the best of all possible alternatives…. Our mistakes, including the crude mistakes, were justified.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 270

1937 was a very grave year. Had we not done what we did, our losses would have been greater. This I don't doubt. Had the opposition prevailed, we would undoubtedly have incurred even greater losses.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 277

Stalin in my opinion, pursued a correct line…. Yes, mistakes were made. But look, Rokossovsky and Meretskov were freed.
CHUEV: And how many others like them perished?
MOLOTOV: Not many. The terror was necessary, and it couldn't have been completed without mistakes….
Vlasov [a captured Soviet General who voluntarily organized an army from among fellow POWs to fight the USSR] would have been as nothing compared to what might have happened. Many people were wavering politically.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 278-279

CHUEV: Then Stalin is to blame for all that?
MOLOTOV: No. You can't say Stalin is….
CHUEV: Who then?
MOLOTOV: It couldn't have been done without his consent, of course. He was in desperate straits. There were so many people around him who changed….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 282

I would like to see you in our positions then. I wonder how you would've coped.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 283

That policy of repression was the only salvation for the people, for the Revolution. It was the only alternative in keeping with Leninism and its basic principles.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 287

1937–we could not have done without it. The very saints could not have accomplished anything with their sweet talk in those critical periods. They would have failed miserably. You can't do without harsh measures against ferocious enemies.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 289

STALIN AND MOLOTOV NEVER ISSUED ORDER FOR TORTURE

CHUEV: I have heard that Stalin and you issued a directive to the NKVD to apply torture.
MOLOTOV: Torture?
CHUEV: Did you?
MOLOTOV: No, we never did that.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 259

DISTRICT PARTY SECRETARIES COULD SENTENCE PEOPLE JUST BEFORE THE WAR

CHUEV: An individual could be sentenced at the will of a district party secretary.
MOLOTOV: That was possible. The true Bolsheviks could not afford to hesitate on the eve of World War II. It's most important to realize that.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 260

STALIN REPRESSED THOSE WHO NEEDED TO BE REPRESSED

Recently a chauffeur drove me here from Moscow. He was an elderly man whom I had never seen before. I accept any driver they send over to me. I normally listen to the news radio station to get the latest news and enjoy some music. But this time my driver wanted to talk and asked if I would turn off the music. I wondered what he would say….
He remarked, "Isn't it great that in Russia's there is a Siberia!"…
I thought, what was he up to?
"What exactly do you have in mind when you mention the benefits of Siberia?" I asked.
"I think you know what's on my mind. There was the time when all that human scum and rubbish had to be crushed. Stalin was far-sighted; Joseph Vissarionovich was a man of vision. Those who had to be put out of the way were done away with just in time. Just in time because it was necessary to act strongly, resolutely, and mercilessly. Comrade Stalin took the job firmly in hand."
"Right. I agree with you," I told him.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 260

OVERSIGHT OF THE SECURITY AGENCIES WAS INADEQUATE

CHUEV: Didn't the security agencies place themselves above the party?
MOLOTOV: No, that's not so…. There was not enough time. We lacked resources. I did not say that the Politburo was overly trusting, but I did say that insufficient oversight was exercised. I disagree that we were overly trusting. The oversight was inadequate.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 262

I believe there were deficiencies and mistakes. It couldn't have been otherwise with our enemies operating within the security agencies in charge of investigations…. The major deficiencies were that the security agencies had been left without due oversight by the party during certain periods. The negligence was not purposeful. The resources for adequate oversight were insufficient.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 287

…These errors were largely caused by the fact that at certain stages the investigations fell into the hands of people who were later exposed as traitors guilty of heinous, hostile, antiparty acts. These belatedly exposed degenerates–traitors within the security agencies and party organizations–obviously at times, with malice aforethought, pushed certain incorrect measures against honest party members and nonparty people. The party and the Soviet state could not permit delay or postponements in carrying out the punitive measures which had become absolutely necessary…. For crude abuses of power People's Commissar for Internal Affairs Yezhov, guilty of certain crude distortions of party policy, was unmasked and then condemned to the "highest measure of punishment."
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 288

As soon as he arrived in Kiev, Uspensky summoned all NKVD officers and said he would suppress such traditions as synagogue gatherings. Anyone who did not want to work with him could leave, and some of Emma's [Sudoplatov's wife] friends took advantage of the offer. In the presence of a large audience, Uspensky signed their applications for transfer into the reserve for appointments to vacancies at lower levels in other republics. Uspensky was responsible for mass tortures and repressions, and Khrushchev was one of the few top Politburo members who personally joined Uspensky in interrogating prisoners.
During the 1938 purge, when Yezhov, head of the NKVD, lost the confidence of Stalin and the hunt began for "traitorous" chekists, Uspensky tried to escape abroad.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 111

MISTAKENLY RELIED ON GPU'S WORD

In the first place, as chairman of the Council of Ministers, I am accountable for all the repressions. I am responsible for…. I signed most–in fact, almost all–the arrest lists. Of course we debated, then made a decision. In the end, however, the decision was based on trust in the GPU's word. Haste ruled. Could one go into all the details?
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 263

PEOPLE REPRESSED BY STALIN SUPPORT AND COMPLIMENT STALIN

CHUEV: "Stalin himself had to admit in 1938 that something had gone wrong and that things had to be sorted out," said Golovanov. "I am lucky to have had a very close escape then. Later I was expelled from the party, I was nearly arrested, I was out of work. My family starved, with one loaf of brown bread for a week. My sister's husband, a noted security officer, was shot. I wrote about those years in my book. I believe then that Stalin had gone on a rampage to destroy everything. But after I met him and worked for him for a few years, I came to realize he was different. In fact, he was the man I have portrayed in my book of reminiscences. The fact that I or Rokossovsky, who also suffered in 1937–to say the

least!–hold such a high opinion of Stalin and won't allow his name to be trampled into the dust, is especially unpleasant for many people.
"When Khrushchev asked Rokossovsky to write some filth about Stalin, Rokossovsky responded, 'Comrade Stalin is a saint to me.' The next day Rokossovsky comes to his office and finds Moskalenko sitting at his desk, who hands him the orders on his retirement. That was how it was arranged. Rokossovsky says, 'I get up in the morning, stretch a little, and realize I have no job to go to. No one needs us these days. We are merely stumbling blocks for those who wish to portray the past in their own way.'
"At one government reception someone toasted Khrushchev and everyone came up to him with his glass, the lame Meretskov being no exception. At that point Rokossovsky and myself were somewhere in the center of the crowd, and we didn't budge. We just went on with our conversation, which evidently could not have gone unnoticed, since we seemed to be the two tallest men in the crowd. We have never been invited to those reception since….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 290

Look at Rokossovsky. He was tortured, nonetheless he denied all the charges. He implicated no one. And no one else was arrested. He was incarcerated in the Shlisselburg prison. Then he was released. Rokossovsky is still respected for this by the army. Stalin held Rokossovsky in very high esteem. By the way, after the Stalingrad battle he became the second military officer after Shaposhnikov…. He considered Rokossovsky a great military captain. It was no accident that Rokossovsky commanded the victory parade on Red Square. It was to honor service he rendered! Stalin asked, "Rokossovsky, did they beat you up there?" "They did, Comrade Stalin." "We still have a lot of yes-men in our country," Stalin concluded.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 295

MOLOTOV:: She [Molotov's wife] certainly endured great hardship, but I repeat, she never changed her attitude toward Stalin. She always thought highly of him.
IVANOVICH, SHOTA: Once a relation of hers started to assail Stalin at a dinner, and she abruptly put him in his place. 'Young man, you understand absolutely nothing about either Stalin or his times. If only you knew the burden he bore in office!'
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 324

The meeting had lasted about two hours. This time Stalin did not invite us to dinner in his home. I must confess that I felt a sadness and an emptiness because of this, so great was my own human, sentimental fondness for him still.
Djilas, Milovan. Conversations with Stalin. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962, p. 184

And yet, Sakharov's response to the death of Stalin was utterly typical. He heard the news while he was working on the Soviet bomb project and wrote home to his first wife, Klavdia: "I am under the influence of a great man's death. I am thinking of his humanity."
Remnick, David. Lenin's Tomb. New York: Random House, c1993, p. 166

STALIN NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL THE REPRESSIONS BY ANY MEANS

“If you want to to know what I [Golovanov] think of ’37, I will tell you–it was a national calamity. Millions suffered. But it would be wrong to conclude that Stalin was 100 percent responsible. Who did he have as his principal assistants? Mekhlis supervised the Army, Khrushchev supervised non-military matters, the Moscow party organization. Fifty-four thousand people in Ukraine were sent off by Khrushchev when he chaired the notorious troika. It was he who signed the verdicts! Certainly Stalin is politically responsible for all of that in the first place as head of state. But you can’t say all of the individual verdicts were sanctioned by him.”
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 291

Stalin was in a position where, if they gave him documents against a particular person, he himself could not sort out all these matters. He had neither the time nor the capability, due to the structure of state power…. Most of the repressions were not caused by him personally. If a special tribunal found someone guilty, the guilt lies in equal measure on Stalin and the tribunal.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin’s Shadow. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994, p. 277

TERROR IS NECESSARY AT TIMES

I ought to have been punished, true, but expulsion from the party? Punishment, of course, because sometimes the ax must be used without sorting things out. I believe we had to pass through a phase of terror. I am not afraid of that word, because back then we had neither the time nor the opportunity to sort things out, for not only Soviet power in Russia but the international communist movement as well were at risk.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 356

(Sinclair’s comments only)
History knows all about the French terror, and yet it credits that revolution with having broken the feudal system throughout most of Western Europe, and having helped to bring republican ideas to all the world. Historians whom we respect today consider this revolution in its totality one of the great forward steps of humanity.
Sinclair and Lyons. Terror in Russia?: Two Views. New York : Rand School Press, 1938, p. 54

NUMBERS GIVEN FOR NUMBERS EXECUTED ARE FAR TOO HIGH

Finally, on executions, Conquest reports: “It will be seen that no exact estimate of total executions can be given, but that the number was most probably something around one million.” This figure is even more speculative than those on numbers in prison camps, since Commissariat for Internal Affairs budgets, payroll discrepancies, and census statistics give no basis for statistics on executions. The figure one million is based mainly on prisoners’ reports and calculations by former Internal Affairs officers, neither of whom would be likely to give objective estimates and most or all of whom can have known only a segment of the total operation.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 127

Should all Gulag inmates be considered innocent victims of Red repression? Contrary to what we have been led to believe, those arrested for political crimes (“counterrevolutionary offenses”) numbered from 12 to 33% of the prison population, varying from year to year. The vast majority of inmates were charged with nonpolitical offenses: murder, assault, theft, banditry, smuggling, swindling, and other violations punishable in any society.
Total executions in 1921 to 1953, a 33 year span inclusive, were 799,455. No breakdown of this figure was provided by the researchers. It includes those who were guilty of nonpolitical capital crimes, as well as those who collaborated in the Western capitalist invasion and subsequent White Guard Army atrocities. It also includes some of the considerable numbers who collaborated with the Nazis during World War II and probably German SS prisoners. In any case, the killings of political opponents were not in the millions or tens of millions–which is not to say that the actual number was either inconsequential or justifiable.
The three historians who studied the heretofore secret gulag records concluded that the number of victims was far less than usually claimed in the West. This finding is ridiculed by anti-communist liberal Hochschild . Like many others, Hochschild has no trouble accepting undocumented speculations about the gulag but much difficulty accepting the documented figures drawn from NKVD archives.
Parenti, Michael. Blackshirts and Reds, San Francisco: City Light Books, 1997, p. 80

REPRESSION UNDER STALIN WAS GREATER THAN UNDER LENIN BECAUSE OF HIGHER NUMBERS

The repression in Stalin’s time was not in essence different from that in Lenin’s. It was simply on a larger scale; and it was on a larger scale because the enemies of socialism were more numerous and better organized. That the repression had been basically directed at those engaged in anti-socialist actions, was, Stalin contended, shown by the fact that reactionaries everywhere immediately took up the cry of “injustice” and condemned the USSR out of hand (as they had also in Lenin’s day):
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 131

REPRESSION SHOULD BE MINIMAL AND KEPT TO A BALANCE OF NOT TOO MUCH OR TOO LITTLE

The problem of repression, therefore, is reduced to a question of the necessary minimum, having due regard to general progress. It is just as wrong to fall short of this minimum as to go beyond it. The man who spares people who are working against the cause of humanity is a malefactor. The duty of true kindness is to think of the future.
If the Russian Revolution had, to the intense satisfaction of a few sanctimonious idealists, adopted the system of automatic forgiveness and of not defending itself with the same weapons with which it was attacked, it would not have survived for long. It would have been stabbed in the back by France, England, and Poland, who would immediately have brought the Tsar and the Whites back to Petrograd, as they tried to do by every other means in their power. The reason the work of the Revolution subsists and is already brightening the future of humanity is because it fought without faltering and without mercy that appalling network of treachery, and all the plots–all stabs in the back–woven by White Guards, imperialist spies, diplomats and detectives, wreckers, Revolutionary-Socialists, Anarchists, and Nationalist Mensheviks, the degenerate Oppositionists, all more or less subsidized from abroad– all that

raffle furiously attacking the country which had given the subversive example of rising in order to make the liberty of the worker and human dignity secure.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 85

BEING TOO LENIENT OR GENTLE REPEATEDLY COST THE BOLSHEVIKS

Stalin, replying some time ago (towards the end of 1931) in an interview relating to "the severe and implacable attitude of the Soviet Government in its struggle against its enemies," said as follows:
"When the Bolsheviks came into power, they began by showing leniency towards their enemies. The Mensheviks continued to exist lawfully and to bring out their newspaper. So did the Revolutionary-Socialists. Even the Cadets (Constitutional-Democrats) continued the publication of their newspaper. When general Krasnoff organized his counter-revolutionary march on Petrograd and fell into our hands we might, according to the rules of war, at least have kept him prisoner. More than that, we ought to have shot him. But we freed him on parole. What was the result of this? We soon found that this leniency only undermined the stability of the power of the Soviets, and that we had made a mistake in giving proof of our forbearance towards the enemies of the working classes. If we had continued to be so forbearing we should have committed a crime against the working classes and we should have betrayed their interests. This soon became an obvious fact. We quickly discovered that the more indulgent we showed ourselves towards our enemies the stronger was the resistance they put up against us. In a short time the Revolutionary-Socialists, Gotz and others, and the Mensheviks of the Right, organized the rising of the pupils of the Military School at Petrograd, which resulted in the death of a great number of our Revolutionary sailors. The same Krasnoff, whom we had freed on parole, organized the White Cossacks. He joined Mamontoff and for two years carried on an armed struggle against the power of the Soviets…. It is easy to see that we had made a mistake in being too gentle."
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 85

They [the bourgeoisie] advocate a maximum of leniency, they advise the dissolution of the GPU…. But can anyone guarantee that the capitalists of all countries will abandon the idea of organizing and financing counter-revolutionary plotters, terrorists, incendiaries, and bomb-throwers after the liquidation of the GPU? To disarm the revolution without having any guarantees that the enemies of the revolution will be disarmed–would not that be folly, would not that be a crime against the working-class? No, we do not want to repeat the errors of the Paris Communards. The Communards of Paris were too lenient in dealing with Versailles, for which Marx rightly reproved them at the time. They had to pay for their leniency, and when Thiers came to Paris, tens of thousands of workers were shot by the Versailles forces. Do the comrades think that the Russian bourgeoisie and nobility are less bloodthirsty than those of Versailles and France? We know, at any rate, how they behaved towards the workers when they occupied Siberia, the Ukraine, and the North Caucasus in alliance with the French and British, Japanese and American interventionists.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 233

Within thirty hours of sentence of death being passed upon them, it was carried out. Thus ended the career of men who, as we shall see, had abused the repeated leniency that had been shown them by the Soviet people whom they had so thoroughly and so often betrayed.
Shepherd, W. G. The Moscow Trial. London: Communist Party of Great Britain, 1936, p. 10

IF NOT FOR THE ATTACKS BY OUTSIDE POWERS STALIN WOULD FAVOR NO DEATH PENALTY

And I will add to this what Stalin said to me personally, seven years ago, with regard to the famous “Red Terror.” He was speaking of the death penalty. We are naturally all in favor of the suppression of the death penalty. Indeed we believe that there is no need for us to retain it in the interior administration of the Soviet Union. We would have abolished the death penalty long ago had it not been for the outer world, the great Imperialist Powers, which have compelled us to retain it in order to preserve our existence.”
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 86

Stalin had abolished the death penalty in 1947, apparently to please Western opinion, though some executions seem still to have taken place. Early in 1950, ‘in response to numerous demands by workers’ he restored it, with a view to coping with the new wave of treachery in the top leadership.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 289

The immediate post-War period in the Soviet Union for the most part continued to be one of relative tolerance. In Roy Medvedev’s words:
“… right after the War the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet decreed an end to the death penalty, even for the most serious crimes. The spy mania and the universal suspicion that prevailed before the War tended to disappear, especially in view of the drastic change in the international situation. The Soviet Union was no longer isolated.”
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 258

CONQUEST’S FIGURES ARE ALL BUT WORTHLESS

Conquest writes that after 1938, there were an “odd million arrests per annum.” Stubborn as I am, I insist on evidence for this claim…. Weissberg wrote that, “After January 1, 1939, the arrests fell away practically to nothing.” As my article showed, a number of survivors spoke of the bad time as only 1937 or 1937-1938. The Poles and Ukrainians arrested beginning in September 1939 belong to a different story, in a very different context. I would argue that early 1939 represented a sharp break with the immediately preceding period. The idea that a system of terror continued in some fashion is contradicted by a number of accounts, while evidence for this theory presented to date is very thin indeed.
Thurston, Robert W. “On Desk-Bound Parochialism, Commonsense Perspectives, and Lousy Evidence: A Reply to Robert Conquest.” Slavic Review 45 (1986), p. 241.

Conquest’s book [Harvest of Sorrow] will thus give a certain academic credibility to a theory which has not been generally accepted by non-partisan scholars outside the circles of exiled nationalities. In today’s conservative political climate, with its “evil empire” discourse, I am sure that the book will be very popular.

Getty, Arch. “Starving the Ukraine.” Reviewing in The London Review of Books on January 22, 1987, The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine by Robert Conquest September,1986.

The most striking tales of atrocity are generally second-hand and unverifiable; they seem to compete with one another in their body-counts and depiction of savagery.
Getty, Arch. “Starving the Ukraine.” Reviewing in The London Review of Books on January 22, 1987, The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine by Robert Conquest September,1986.

…But there is plenty of blame to go around. It must be shared by the tens of thousands of activists and officials who carried out the policy and by the peasants who chose to slaughter animals, burn fields and boycott cultivation in protest. Beyond fixing blame, however, the tempting conclusion of intentionality is unwarranted: the case for a purposeful famine is weakly supported by the evidence and relies on a very strained interpretation of it….
Yet there are reasons why the majority of scholars have so far rejected the theory [that Stalin sealed off the Ukraine’s borders to prevent flight and produce mass starvation]. First, we actually know very little about the scale of the famine. Using census calculations of excess mortality, Conquest arrives at a figure of some five million victims of the Ukrainian famine. Yet such respected economic and demographic experts as Wheatcroft, Anderson, and Silver have examined the same census data and have suggested that the numbers Conquest supports are much too high. Additionally, Conquest notes that the famine varied greatly from place to place in the Ukraine. According to post-WWII interviews with Ukrainian emigres, some places saw little or no shortage of food. What regional or local differences could explain this? Were grain quotas arbitrarily set by local officials? Did high levels of peasant resistance or boycott contribute to famine? We do not know.
Second, Conquest has failed to establish a convincing motive for genocide. Certainly Stalin was capable of vindictive cruelty,…but those who knew and dealt with him during the war and after, and they include many Westerners, agree that he was not insane or irrational. Although he certainly meant to break peasant resistance to his brand of socialism, one must wonder why any national leader would deliberately imperil the country’s survival, its military strength and thus his own security, by methodically setting out to exterminate those who produced the food–and then stopping short of completing the presumed suicide…. our knowledge of the sources suggests that a genocidal Stalin is unnecessary to explain the events of the famine as we know them. More convincing explanations can be advanced….
Getty, Arch. “Starving the Ukraine.” Reviewing in The London Review of Books on January 22, 1987, The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine by Robert Conquest September,1986.

Conquest is a major `authority’ in the right wing. But Merl noted that Conquest’s writings show a `frightening lack of criticism of sources’. Conquest `uses writings from obscure Emigres taking up information transmitted by second or third hand…. Often, what he presents as `facts’ are only verified by a single questionable source.’
Merl, Stefan, “Ausrottung” der Bourgeoisie und der Kulaken in Sowjetrussland? Geschichte und Gesellschaft 13 (1987), p. 535
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 97 [p. 81 on the NET]

…For a long time, writings by authors who are not Communists, such as Merl, allowed one to refute Conquest's gross slanders.
But in 1990, Zemskov and Dugin, two Soviet historians, published detailed statistics of the Gulag. Hence the exact figures are now available and they refute most of Conquest's lies.
During the most violent period of the collectivization, in 1930–1931, the peasants expropriated 381,026 kulaks and sent their families to unplowed land to the East. These included 1,803,392 persons. As of 1 January 1932, there were 1,317,022 people in the new establishments. The difference is 486,000. The disorganization helping, many of the deported were able to escape during the trip, which often took three months or more. (To give an idea, of the 1,317,022 settled, 207,010 were able to flee during the year 1932.)
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 97 [p. 81 on the NET]

Up to now [1990], no problem. Everything was going just fine for our anti-Communists. Their word was taken for granted.
Then the USSR split up and Gorbachev's disciples were able to grab the Soviet archives. In 1990, the Soviet historians Zemskov and Dugin published the unedited statistics for the Gulag. They contain the arrivals and departures, right down to the last person.
Unexpected consequence: These accounting books made it possible to remove Conquest's scientific mask.
In 1934, Conquest counted 5 million political detainees. In fact there were between 127,000 and 170,000. The exact number of all detained in the work camps, political and common law combined, was 510,307. The political prisoners formed only 25 to 35 per cent of the detainees. To the approximately 150,000 detainees, Conquest added 4,850,000. Small detail!
Annually, Conquest estimated an average of 8 million detainees in the camps. And Medvedev 12 to 13 million. In fact, the number of political detainees oscillated between a minimum of 127,000 in 1934 and a maximum of 500,000 during the two war years, 1941 and 1942. The real figures were therefore multiplied by a factor of between 16 and 26. When the average number of detainees was somewhere between 236,000 and 315,000 political detainees, Conquest `invented' 7,700,000 extra! Marginal statistical error, of course. Our school books, our newspapers, do not give the real figure of around 272,000, but the horror of 8,000,000!
Conquest, the fraud, claims that in 1937–1938, during the Great Purge, the camps swelled by 7 million "politicals" and there were in addition 1 million executions and 2 million other deaths. In fact, from 1936 to 1939, the number of detained in the camps increased by 477,789 persons (passing from 839,406 to 1,317,195). A falsification factor of 14. In two years, there were 115,922 deaths, not 2,000,000. For the 116,000 dead of various causes, Conquest adds 1,884,000 "victims of Stalinism."
Gorbachev's ideologue, Medvedev, refers to 12 to 13 million in the camps; under the liberal Khrushchev, there remained 2 million, all common law. In fact, during Stalin's time, in 1951, the year of the greatest number of detained in the Gulag, there were 1,948,158 common law prisoners, as many as during Khrushchev's time. The real number of political prisoners was then 579,878. Most of these "politicals" had been Nazi collaborators: 334,538 had been convicted for treason.
According to Conquest, between 1939 and 1953, there was, in the work camps, a 10 per cent death rate per year, some 12 million "victims of Stalinism." An average of 855,000 dead per year. In fact, the real figure in peace time was 49,000. Conquest invented a figure of

806,000 deaths per year. During the four years of the war, when Nazi barbarity was imposing unbearable conditions on all Soviets, the average number of deaths was 194,000. Hence, in four years, the Nazis caused an excess of 580,000 deaths, for which, of course, Stalin is responsible. Werth, who denounces Conquest's falsifications, still does his best to maintain as much as possible the myth of Stalinist "crimes."
"In fourteen years (1934–1947), 1 million deaths were registered in the work camps alone." So Werth also blames socialism for the 580,000 extra deaths caused by the Nazis!
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 193 [p. 168-169 on the NET]

BERIA EXPOSES THE GREAT EXCESSES OF YEZHOV

It was Beria's diagnosis of the danger of Yezhov's excesses that had induced Stalin to trust him and brought him to power. Throughout the country these excesses had cast their shadow. At one sitting alone, the Central Committee of the Azerbaizhan Party had expelled 279 members, the Ukrainian Stalinsk Provincial Committee 72, the Ordjonikidze Regional Committee 101–it was the same everywhere…. The fear of being suspected of lack of vigilance drove local fanatics to denounce not only Bukharinists, but also Malenkovists, Yezhovists, even Stalinists. It is of course not impossible that they were also egged on to do so by concealed oppositionists! Hence Beria's task when he was summoned from Georgia by Stalin was to head a secret commission of inquiry into Yezhov's work.

To give Beria his due, he pulled no punches. At a closed joint session of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission of the Party, held in the autumn of 1938, he declared that if Yezhov were not a deliberate Nazi agent he was certainly an involuntary one. He had turned the central offices of the NKVD into a breeding ground for fascist agents. He had scorned citizens' constitutional rights and used illegal methods of extorting information, to such an extent that he had set quite non-political people against the Government. For a rank-and-file member of the Central Committee to say this was the height of courage.

The impression produced on Stalin and Molotov was tremendous. The Central Committee resolutions dismissing Yezhov (Member of the Politburo, the Orgburo, and the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, Secretary of the Central Committee, and People's Commissar of Internal Affairs; were written in Beria's hand. Beria's first acts as head of the NKVD, were the arrest of Yezhov and the issue of orders quashing an enormous number of sentences and recently-started proceedings. People who had been unjustly repressed were even indemnified by the State. Special commissions inquired into the past of convicted persons.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 119

Evgeniia Ginsburg, who was in Yaroslavl Prison and who saw no newspapers, said that the prisoners could tell when Yezhov fell: The draconian regime in the prisons (frequent solitary confinement and deprivation of all privileges) was relaxed one day. The timing was confirmed a few days later when Beria's name began to appear on official prison notices.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 189

… the replacement of Yezhov by Beria was received as a hopeful sign. And in fact, right after Yezhov's replacement mass repression was discontinued for a while. Hundreds of thousands of cases then being prepared by the NKVD were temporarily put aside.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 465

THE PEOPLE STALIN PUNISHED WERE NOT INNOCENT BUT GUILTY

… When in 1947 I spoke to some people of the West regarding what had happened they shrugged their shoulders non-committally and said that such 'punitive action' was an internal matter and that after all Stalin's victims were not innocent as Hitler's had been: had I not admitted that they had taken advantage of the war to declare against the Stalin regime?
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 260

Colonel Koznich [Estonian Military Attache in Moscow, later Ambassador] called to see me…. The Colonel wanted to tell me something about his conversations with foreign diplomats. He talked about the trial, saying that in his opinion all the defendants were really guilty and that our justice was the best in the world…. He praised Vyshinsky as much as he could, and said he wished Estonia had such prosecutors.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 255

Anyone who doubts this should read an article entitled "Red Wreckers in Russia" in the Saturday Evening Post, Jan. 1, 1938, in which John Littlepage, an anti-Communist American engineer, describes in detail what he saw of this sabotage while he was working in the Soviet Union. In fact, Littlepage gives this judgment:

"For 10 years I have worked alongside some of the many recently shot, imprisoned, or exiled in Russia as wreckers. Some of my friends have asked me whether or not I believe these men and women are guilty as charged. I have not hesitated a moment in replying that I believe most of them are guilty."
Franklin, Bruce, Ed. The Essential Stalin; Major Theoretical Writings. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p. 26

SECRET POLICE PERSONNEL ARE ARRESTED FOR BEING UNJUST TO PEOPLE

"Alexis Pushnov, the NKVD chief in Magnitogorsk in 1937, was himself arrested in 1939. He was accused of excessive ardour in purging the village population.
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 326

When, early in 1939, the Soviet press started to report the arrest of various NKVD officers for extorting false confessions, one case at Leninsk-Kuznetsk in the Kemerovo province concerned children as young as ten years old. Four officers in the NKVD and the Prosecutor's Office received five to ten-year sentences.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 274

…Garanin, launched on a campaign of, even by NKVD standards, maniac terror, torture, and execution, with the shooting in 1938 of an estimated 26,000 men in a special camp set up for

the purpose. Garanin was soon shot, and his successor, Vyshnevetsky, also lasted a very short time, receiving 15 years for a disastrous expedition intended to open up new areas.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 325

Preparations for the greatest trial of all were in less expert hands than those which had produced the Zinoviev and Pyatakov shows. The NKVD veterans had gone. Agranov had by now followed Yagoda and his staff, being “in 1937 expelled from the Party for systematic breaches of socialist legality,”… He died, presumed shot, in 1938.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 341

[Footnote]: Zakovsky, Deputy Chief of the NKVD under Yezhov. He was shot in 1938.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 230

In January 1938, The Central Committee criticized local Party organizations for exaggerated vigilance and excessive expulsions. The intensity of the purge then diminished. After the last of the ‘Great Purge Trials,’ expulsions and arrests markedly decreased. Abuses were, in part, attributed to ‘careerists trying to gain merit by throwing people out of the Party, trying to gain security for themselves through mass repressions against the rank-and-file members.’

In December 1938, the campaign came to a complete halt. Most pending investigations for counter-revolutionary activities were dropped and the suspects released. Yezhov was dismissed as head of the NKVD and replaced by Beria. A number of leading NKVD officers were arrested and some executed for having extracted false confessions. Most regional heads of the security police were purged, and many were subject to criminal actions. Past abuses were widely criticized. Both Yagoda and Yezhov were denounced as enemies of the people. Numerous cases were reinvestigated and quite a few of the sentenced released; conditions in the labor camps were ameliorated.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 239

Former NKVD officials Yezhov, Frinovsky, Agranov, Nikolayev, Dmitriyev, Tserpento, Ushakov, Chris Boldakovtov, Passov, Kogan, Gerzon, Glebov, Lulov and others, who had investigated this case [the Bukharin case] and others were convicted for making illegal arrests and falsifying evidence.
Political Archives of the Soviet Union (Vol. 1, No. 2) Commack, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1990, p. 138

Compared with the loss of life caused directly and indirectly by collectivization the deaths caused by the great Stalin purges of the late ‘thirties were almost negligible,…. But apart from those executed (for example those sentenced to death in the famous open purge trials of 1936-38, and in the trial of Marshal Tukhachevsky and other army leaders) and those shot in greater “privacy,” the deaths directly caused by the purge resulted from the overzealousness of certain “examining magistrates” whose tortures of those unwilling to “confess” merely led to the prisoner’s death.

Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co.,1971, p. 29

MANY SECRET POLICE ARE GUILTY OF GREAT ABUSES AND CRIMES AND PUNISHED

Resolution by the USSR Council of People's Commissars and the Party's Central Committee, Nov. 17, 1938, on improving NKVD arrest procedures]

… This is all the more necessary as the mass operations to crush and root out hostile elements carried out by NKVD agencies in 1937-38 employing simplified investigation and prosecution could not but result in a number of gross inadequacies and distortions in the operations of the NKVD agencies and the Procuracy. More importantly, enemies of the people and spies from foreign intelligence services who have infiltrated NKVD agencies (both central and local), continuing to carry on their subversive activity, have tried in all conceivable ways to confound investigative and undercover activities, have knowingly violated Soviet laws, have carried out unfounded mass arrests, while protecting their collaborators, particularly those planted in NKVD agencies.

Below are described the most significant shortcomings recently uncovered in the operations of agencies of the NKVD and Procuracy.

First of all, NKVD employees have completely abandoned undercover work, preferring to work in an oversimplified manner using mass arrests, paying no attention to the thoroughness and quality of the investigation.

NKVD employees have grown so unaccustomed to painstaking, systematic undercover work and have taken such a liking to the oversimplified modus operandi until very recently they have objected to placing limits on their execution of mass arrests.

Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 23

Second, a very gross inadequacy in the operation of the NKVD agencies is the deeply rooted, oversimplified procedure of investigation, whereby, as a rule, the examining magistrate limits himself to obtaining a confession of guilt from the accused and completely ignores substantiating this confession with the necessary documentary evidence (testimony of witnesses, expert depositions, statements, material evidence, etc.).

… Enemies of the people, having infiltrated NKVD and Procuracy agencies, often have skillfully exploited this irresponsible attitude toward investigative work and this gross violation of established legal procedures. They have knowingly twisted Soviet law, committed forgery, falsified investigative documents, indicted and arrested on trumped up charges and even without any grounds whatever, brought charges (for provocation) against innocent persons, while doing everything possible to conceal and protect their collaborators in criminal anti-Soviet activity. These kinds of things went on in both the central and local bureaucracy of the NKVD.

All these in tolerable failings in the work of NKVD Procuracy agencies were possible only because the enemies of the people, having infiltrated the NKVD and Procuracy agencies,

made every conceivable attempt to sever the work of NKVD and Procuracy agencies from party organs, to escape party control and supervision, and thus make it easier for themselves and their collaborators to continue their anti-Soviet, subversive activity.

In order to eliminate the above-described failings and properly organize the investigative work of NKVD and Procuracy agencies the [Central Committee of the Communist Party] resolves: 1) To prohibit NKVD and Procuracy agencies from carrying out any kind of mass arrests or evictions….
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 24

[Letter from members of the Procuracy of the USSR, Oct. 28, 1939, appealing to Zhdanov for changes in the Procuracy and calling for a halt to the criminal behavior of the NKVD]

Dear Comrade Zhdanov!… The Party's Central Committee decision of Nov. 17, 1938, identified the grossest distortions of Soviet laws by NKVD organs and obligated those organs and the Procuracy not only to stop these crimes but also to correct the gross violations of law that have resulted in mass sentencing of totally innocent, honest Soviet persons to various sorts of punishments, often even execution. These persons–not a few, but tens and hundreds of thousands–sit in camps and jails and wait for a just decision; they are perplexed about why and for what they were arrested and by what right the bastards from Yezhov's band persecuted them, using medieval torture.

It would seem that the party's Central Committee decision of Nov. 17, 1938, should have mobilized all attention on immediately rectifying the criminal policy of the bastard Yezhov and his criminal clique, which has literally paralyzed Soviet persons, upright, dedicated citizens, old party members, and entire party organizations.

In reality, something else is happening.

Comrade Pankratev, who replaced Comrade Vyshinsky, cannot guarantee implementation of this critical decision of the party Central Committee because of his lack of authority in the Procuracy and particularly in the eyes of NKVD personnel.

It is strange to say, but it is a fact that Comrade Beria not only is not burning with desire to free totally innocent people, but to the contrary is conducting a definite policy to handle this effort and is using his authority to maintain the "honor of the uniform."

Therefore, the decision to charge a special conference of the NKVD with reviewing its own decisions executed by Yezhov's band is a big mistake.

Here, at a special conference, the decisive role and final word belong not to the representative of supervision–the Procurator–but to Comrade Beria and his entourage, who, with all the means and resources at their disposal, are violating the requirements of the Procuracy to stop these actions.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 26

Comrade Pankratev, who attends these meetings, bows his head to Politburo candidate member Comrade Beria and silently goes along with obviously wrong decisions.

Thus, at these special conferences the absolutely correct and lawful protests of the Procuracy of the USSR are crushed with the direct connivance of the Procurator of the USSR, Comrade Pankratev.

One only needs to review what took place at the last special conference sessions and speak with the procurators who directly prepared these matters and it becomes apparent that the line followed by Comrade Beria has nothing in common with party directives.

Such practices have disoriented the staff of the Procuracy of the USSR, those honest procurators who directly monitor these scandalous cases and spend sleepless nights and grieve for guiltless Soviet persons condemned by Yezhov's band.

We earnestly beseech you, comrades Zhdanov, to take up this matter of utmost importance, and if there is no chance of changing the criminal practices pursued within the walls of the NKVD, to change the system, to entrust the Procuracy with reviewing matters incorrectly handled by Yezhov's band–excluding from these matters the authority of Comrade Beria, who intentionally or unintentionally is cultivating a defense of the "honor of the uniform" of NKVD personnel at all costs.

… We ask you to think about this. We are completely convinced that all that has been described here is being concealed from the party's central committee–obviously it is more advantageous that way for someone.

The procurators of the Procuracy of the USSR.

Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 27

Executions are going on. Several groups of opposition members have been shot in the Urals. The situation is particularly terrifying in Leningrad, where Zakovsky, an illiterate and debauched drunkard, reigns supreme. He himself shoots the victims and has declared that "a chief of the NKVD must himself carry out the sentences." He orders his subordinates to act in the same manner. It is said that Zakovsky hails from Odessa and is a former penal convict of the Orel prison. After the revolution he managed to pass off as a political prisoner and to make a career….

Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 231

Such was the case with the letter by Eikhe, an alternate member of the Politburo, whose spine was broken by his interrogator; the letter by Rudzutak, chairman of the Central Control Commission, also tortured cruelly;…
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 531

As for Stalin himself, on the other hand, he had publicly admitted, not in 1956, but at least as early as 1939, the innocent people had been convicted and punished in the purge: "It cannot

be said that the purge was not accompanied by grave mistakes. There were unfortunately more mistakes than might have been expected." (Report to the 18th Congress.) That is one reason why many of those tried and convicted in the last trials were high officials from the secret police, the very people guilty of forcing false confessions.
Franklin, Bruce, Ed. The Essential Stalin; Major Theoretical Writings. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p. 29

When asked about the fate of the perpetrators of the repressions and about the statute of limitations, Solomontsev answered:

"With regard to those instances of violations of socialist legality in the '30s, '40s, and early '50s that have been revealed, the culprits have already been punished through criminal, legal, and party channels. It is obviously not a secret to everyone that Avakumov, Ryutin, Leonov, Komarov, Likhachev, Shvartsman, and other former leaders and personnel of the USSR Ministry of State Security were sentenced to death for fabricating investigation materials…."

Even more amazing was an interview given by Pirozhkov, deputy head of the KGB. When asked how many hangmen had been brought to trial, he answered that 1,342 NKVD officials had been sentenced for severe violations of socialist legality, including Beria, Yezhov, Kobulov, Frinovsky, Agranov, Avakumov and others.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 266

No matter how Yezhov tried to conceal these arrests and killings from Stalin, this news reached him soon enough. Sensing his own danger, Yezhov started to befriend Stalin, trying by all sorts of methods to convince him of his dedication and loyalty to socialism. Stalin was beside himself, tried to contact Yezhov in every known place, and the answer was always that no one of his helpers knew where Yezhov was. Stalin sent a Colonel Kirilin with a package to Podlipki where he finally located Yezhov, demanding that Yezhov sign the envelope that he had received this package. Fatianov, assistant to Yezhov, tried to save his chief, willing to sign the envelope himself, but Kirilin refused, so that Yezhov was forced to sign this himself. This was a request for Yezhov to appear before the meeting of the Central Committee.

The plenum of the Central Committee ACP[B] was held in January of 1938. Stalin spoke at this Plenum, analyzed and criticized the work of the NKVD, which had abandoned its revolutionary principles. This activity of disregarding some organizational rules extended to higher commands and to some sections of the Red Army. Yezhov was removed from his post as head of the NKVD. In the ranks of the NKVD, there took place a very sharp debate and criticism to such an extent that the present "Glasnost" would be put to shame. There was a concerted aim of saving the leadership of the NKVD from criticism. But all over the country, there were stormy meetings and criticism of the leadership of the NKVD. In all districts, there took place a removal of provocateurs, spies, quislings, and perpetrators of injustices and some of them were jailed, while others, after being tried, were sentenced to death for the harm that they had done to the country, to the party, and to socialism. Right in the Central Committee of the NKVD, there was a commission looking into this, headed by Andreev. After this country-wide cleansing of the NKVD and other security branches, over

30,000 members were arrested, who, over the years, were placed there by Yezhov and before then, by Yagoda and others. One of these arrested came into my jurisdiction….
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 79

In fact it is quite typical that in 1933, just as top decision-makers were beginning to be preoccupied with the excesses of the apparatus, the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation recommended in the same document strong measures to be taken not only against officials guilty of having recourse to "violence, weapons, cruel and insulting acts," but also against participants in "mass unrests,"…
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 245

As secretly as the Trotskyists, the heads of the troikas which had condemned them, as well as members of the execution squads, were shot in 1938. The few who escaped by chance were those who had left the service.

In 1939 came the turn of Yezhov, whose orders they had carried out and by whose order most of them had died. The only announcement was of his transfer to another post, but he vanished completely.
Berger, Joseph. Nothing but the Truth. New York, John Day Co. 1971, p. 98

On 20 June 1937, with Stalin's approval, the first NKVD "conspirators" group was shot, among them Gai and S. V. Puzitskii, the head of the operational department of Dmitrov camp, or Dmitlag,

In early June a commission of the NKVD and the Procuracy, or dvoika, was created for quick examination of such cases. During the following months a great number of former OGPU-NKVD leaders were shot: on 14 August Pauker, Prokofiev, Shanin, and Firin; on 21 August former Foreign Department head A. Kh. Artuzov; on 2 September Piliar and S. A. Messing; on 9 October Molchanov; on 15 November Bokii and Sosnovskii; and on 27 November F. D. Medved' and V. A. Balitskii.

According to official NKVD statistics, from 1 October 1936 to 15 August 1938, that is, during the Ezhov purge, throughout the country 2,273 state security officers were arrested.
Jansen, Marc & Petrov, Nikita. Stalin's Loyal Executioner: Yezhov, Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution Press, c2002, p. 64-65.

No quotas were set in the national operations; the regional NKVD chiefs were given free rein. As a result, people were arrested indiscriminately and on a large scale. In the words of the Krasnoiarsk province Party secretary, Sobolev: "Stop playing internationalism, all these Poles, Koreans, Latvians, Germans, etc. should be beaten, these are all mercenary nations, subject to termination. . . all nationals should be caught, forced to their knees, and exterminated like mad dogs." This may have been an exaggeration, but (after Ezhov's fall) he was accused of this by the Krasnoiarsk state security organs' Party organization: "By giving such instructions, Sobolev slandered the VKP(b) and comrade Stalin, in saying that he had such instructions from the Central Committee and comrade Stalin personally."

Jansen, Marc & Petrov, Nikita. Stalin's Loyal Executioner: Yezhov, Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution Press, c2002, p. 98

CC PLENUM COMPLAINS THAT VETTING OF CHEKA PEOPLE IS LAX AND SUBVERSIVES GET IN

e) A very serious flaw in the work of state security organs is the practice of selection, promotion, and training of Cheka personnel. People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs staff as a whole are unquestionably experienced, professional Chekamen, selflessly devoted to the goals of our party. In spite of this, in practice, promotions and appointments of people have not been performance-based. In many cases people were promoted not by reason of their loyalty to the party, capabilities, or expertise, but for their servility and ability to flatter.

As a result, alien and criminal elements have infiltrated some units of state security organs. Several cases have been revealed where even foreign intelligence agents have managed to infiltrate state security organs"

…This very lack of professionalism in promoting people and also the lack of political training have created conditions that have enabled outright Trotskyite traitors to obtain supervisory positions in the Cheka.

Some of them have systematically informed members of the Trotskyite organization about People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs materials on the anti-Soviet activities of the latter (Balaniuk, head of the Taganrog Department of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, Shapovalov, head of the Novocherkassk Department of the People's Department of Internal Affairs; Kozelskii, former head of the Secret Political Division of the Ukrainian People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs).
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 114 and 116

Relatives of "enemies of the people," former oppositionists, former Mensheviks, and so on could be found at the highest levels. No agency was stricter in selection of personnel than the NKVD, yet that agency had the most alien elements, people who had once been expelled from the party, people with criminal records and dubious political histories.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 848

BECAUSE EXCESSES HAPPEN DOES NOT MEAN A CORRECT POLICY SHOULD BE ABANDONED

A most fashionable word among the opposition is the word "excesses," as applied to grain collections. That word has become the most popular word among them, since it helps them to mask their own line. When they want to mask their own line they usually say we, of course, are not opposed to pressure being exerted on the kulak, but we are against the excesses which are being committed in this sphere and which hurt the middle peasant. They then go on to relate stories of the horrors of these excesses, they read you letters from "peasants," panic-stricken letters from comrades, such as Comrade Markov, and they then draw the conclusion: the policy of bringing pressure to bear on the kulaks should be

abandoned. How do you like that? It appears that because excesses occur in carrying out a correct policy, the correct policy must be abandoned. That is the usual trick of the opportunists: on the pretext that excesses are committed in carrying out a correct line, to abandon that line and replace it by an opportunist line. Moreover, the men in Comrade Bukharin's group are very careful to say nothing about the fact that there is another kind of excess, which is more dangerous and more harmful, namely, excess expressed in a tendency to become merged with the kulak, to adapt oneself to the wealthy sections of the countryside, to replace the revolutionary policy of the Party by the opportunist policy of the Right deviationist.

Of course, we are all opposed to excesses. None of us want the blows directed against the kulaks to fall on the middle peasants. That is obvious, and there can be no doubt on that point. But we are most decisively opposed to the nonsensical talk about excesses which Comrade Bukharin's group so zealously indulges in being used in order to secure the abandonment of the revolutionary policy of our Party and to substitute for it the opportunist policy of the Bukharin group.

Is there a single political measure taken by the party that has not been accompanied by excesses? The conclusion we must draw is that we have to combat excesses. But ought we for this reason decry the line itself, the only correct line? Take a measure like the seven-hour day. There can be no doubt that this is one of the most revolutionary measures carried out by our Party in recent years. Who does not know that this measure, which in itself is a most revolutionary one, is frequently accompanied by excesses, sometimes of a most objectionable kind? Does that mean that we ought to abandon the policy of the seven-hour day? Does the opposition understand what a mess it is slipping into, when it tries to make capital of the excesses committed during the grain collections?
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 172-173

NUMBERS GIVEN FOR PEOPLE REPRESSED ARE FAR TOO UNRELIABLE AND BIASED

No attempt is made to fix the total number of victims of the Great Purges. Because there are no convincing statistics, all calculations are quite subjective and appear to reflect the point of view of the person making the calculation.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 7

STALIN URGES TREATING TROTSKYISTS AND FORMER TROTSKYISTS FAIRLY

Stalin again argued for circumspection (if not restraint) on the liquidation of Trotskyists. After noting that, of course, the present wreckers, spies, etc., had to be smashed, he reflected: "But here is the question–how to carry out in practice the task of smashing and uprooting the German-Japanese agents of Trotskyism. Does this mean that we should strike and uproot not only the real Trotskyists, but also those who wavered at some time toward Trotskyism, and then long ago came away from Trotskyism; not only those who are really Trotskyist agents for wrecking, but also those who happened once upon a time to go along a street where some Trotskyist or other had once passed? At any rate such voices were heard at the

plenum. Can we consider such an interpretation of the resolution to be correct? No, we cannot consider it correct.

On this question, as on all other questions, there must be an individual, differentiated approach. You must not judge everybody by the same yardstick….

Among our responsible comrades, there are a certain number of former Trotskyists who left Trotskyism long ago, and now fight against Trotskyism not worse, but better than some of our respected comrades who never chanced to waver toward Trotskyism. It would be foolish to vilify such comrades now."

Stalin seemed to be cautioning against uncontrolled witch hunting of persons with only tenuous connections to Trotskyism. "Voices" at the plenum had apparently supported such measures, and it seems safe to presume that they came from two sources. First, Yezhov and Molotov may have argued for such a root-and-branch approach to Trotskyism in the party and economic leadership. Stalin warned against vilifying such "responsible comrades" simply because they were former adherents of Trotskyism. Second, regional party secretaries frequently sought to demonstrate their own vigilance by "unmasking" the enemy (currently defined as Trotskyists) among the rank-and-file. Given this record, it would not have been strange for local officials to protect their cronies by encouraging the expulsion of rank-and-file members with remote (or no) connections to Trotskyism. Despite Stalin's strictures, this practice would continue because it was the obvious way for local leaders to expel troublesome critics and subordinates while appearing to be zealous.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 144-145

…on June 14, 1939 Ulrich reported to Stalin and Molotov that a 'large number of cases were pending against members of Right-Trotskyite, bourgeois nationalist and espionage organizations:… For the sake of secrecy, we suggest the defendants not be allowed to attend their trials. I await your orders.' There is no indication on this document of Stalin's response, but given the huge deficiency of officers in the face of a looming war, it is possible that he rejected it as an example of 'mistakes and slander'.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 368

Thus, on the very eve of 1937, Stalin let it be known that people with "the past sins of Trotskyism" could enjoy "full confidence."
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 90

Just as during the sharpest moments of the legal struggle against the Oppositions of the 1920s, Stalin superficially was distancing himself from the extremist moods of Central Committee members and was speaking in favor of "flexible" decisions. He declared, "you cannot measure all people by the same yardstick…. Among our leading comrades there are a certain number of former Trotskyists who long ago abandoned Trotskyism and are now waging a battle against Trotskyism no worse, and even better than a few of our respected comrades who did not have the occasion to waiver in the direction of Trotskyism."
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 290

The third episode involved the fate of Khrushchev himself. Knowing that during the discussion of candidacies, the slightest affiliation of each candidate in the past to "Trotskyism" would be presented, inevitably in an especially biased manner, Khrushchev was terrified that some of the delegates might remember a dangerous page in his biography: during the discussion of 1923 he had spoken in support of Trotsky on the question of inner-party democracy. Understanding that if this fact became known in the heated atmosphere of the conference, he "would find it very difficult to give an explanation," Khrushchev decided to confess directly to Stalin. Imagining what consequences this confession might entail, he sought advice from Kaganovich, who at that time was very favorably disposed toward him. Kaganovich, who "had been entrusted with observing the Moscow conference," began to strongly dissuade Khrushchev from his intentions to tell Stalin about his "Trotskyist vacillations." Despite his warnings, Khrushchev nevertheless decided to tell Stalin "about the mistake committed in 1923," so that he would not appear at the conference to be a man "who had concealed compromising information."

After he had told Stalin about his "mistake," Khrushchev added that he "had been taken in at that time by Kharechko, who was a rather well-known Trotskyist." Stalin reacted to his words: "Kharechko? Oh, I knew him. He was an interesting man." (Kharechko at that time was in a Kolyma concentration camp). Khrushchev asked Stalin whether he should speak at the conference about his "mistake" from the distant past. Stalin answered: "As far as I'm concerned, you don't have to mention it. You have told us, and that is enough." Molotov, who was present during this conversation, objected: "No, it would be better if he spoke." Stalin agreed: "Yes, you had better speak about it, because if you don't, then someone might latch onto it, and then they will shower you with questions, and us with denunciations."

Thirty years after the event, Khrushchev recalled that this discussion produced a certainty in him that "those who had been arrested were truly enemies of the people, even though they had acted so craftily that we were unable to notice because of our inexperience, political blindness, and trustfulness. Stalin…seemed to rise up even higher on the pedestal: he saw everything, knew everything, judged people's mistakes fairly, defended and supported honest people, and punished those who were undeserving of trust."

Kaganovich treated this episode somewhat differently in his discussions with Chuev. Kaganovich reported that Khrushchev came running to him with tears in his eyes: "What am I to do? Should I speak at the conference or not?" Kaganovich promised to seek advice on this question from Stalin. When he learned that Khrushchev "had been a Trotskyist," Stalin asked, "And what about now?" Kaganovich replied, "He is very active, and fights sincerely." Then Stalin said: "Let him speak, let him tell about it. Then you should speak and say the Central Committee knows about this and trusts him…." As Kaganovich recalls, "That's what was done."

The episode of Khrushchev's "Trotskyist past" had a noteworthy continuation. At the session of the Presidium of the Central Committee in June 1957, when Molotov and Kaganovich proposed to remove Khrushchev from his post as First Secretary of the Central Committee, one of their main arguments was reference to Khrushchev's "Trotskyism." Kaganovich was particularly impassioned in exposing Khrushchev as a "Trotskyist." When several participants at the session began to protest against this "inadmissible method," Molotov declared, "But it all happened."

Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 301-302

As at the February-March plenum, Stalin declared his readiness to give indulgences to former Trotskyists who “have left Trotskyism, left it for good and who are putting up a very good fight against it.” Having said that he could “count 20 or 30” such people, Stalin named as an example the Politburo member Andreev, who “had been a very active Trotskyist in 1921,” but now “was fighting very well.”
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 433

Some of those present had outdone themselves in calling for punishment of all who had ever had the most tenuous ties with Trotskyists or Trotskyism. This we may infer from the fact that Stalin now cautioned against demands “heard here at the plenum” for casting out not only “real Trotskyists” but also those who had once oscillated toward Trotskyism but then turned away from it, and even those who had occasion “to walk along the same street as a Trotskyist.” An individualized approach was needed, he [Stalin] said. Some one-time Trotskyists had really reformed, and some non-Trotskyists had maintained personal ties with individual Trotskyists for a time. But such comrades must not be lumped together with the Trotskyists.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 427

But the question arises: how is this task of smashing and uprooting the Japano-German Trotskyite agents to be carried out in practice? Does that mean that we must strike at and uproot, not only real Trotskyites, but also those who at some time or other wavered in the direction of Trotskyism and then, long ago, abandoned Trotskyism; not only those who are really Trotskyite wrecking agents, but also those who, at some time or other, had occasion to walk down a street through which some Trotskyite had passed? At all events, such voices were heard at this Plenum. Can such an interpretation of the resolution be regarded as correct? No, it cannot be regarded as correct. In this matter, as in all others, an individual, discriminate approach is required. You cannot measure everybody with the same yardstick. Such a wholesale approach can only hinder the fight against the real Trotskyite wreckers and spies.

Among our responsible comrades there are a number of former Trotskyites who abandoned Trotskyism long ago and are fighting Trotskyism not less and perhaps more effectively than some of our respected comrades who have never wavered in the direction of Trotskyism. It would be foolish to cast a slur upon such comrades now.

Among our comrades there are some who ideologically were always opposed to Trotskyism, but who, notwithstanding this, maintained personal connections with individual Trotskyites which they did not hesitate to dissolve as soon as the practical features of Trotskyism became clear to them. Of course, it would have been better had they broken off their personal friendly connections with individual Trotskyites at once, and not only after some delay. But it would be foolish to lump such comrades with the Trotskyites.

3) What does choosing the right people and putting them in the right place mean?

It means, firstly, choosing workers according to political principle, i.e., whether they are worthy of political confidence, and secondly, according to business principle, i.e., whether they are fit for such and such a definite job

Can it be said that this Bolshevik rule is adhered to by our Party comrades? Unfortunately, this cannot be said. Reference was made to this at this Plenum. But not everything was said about it. The point is that this tried and tested rule is frequently violated in our practical work, and violated in the most flagrant manner. Most often, workers are not chosen for objective reasons, but for casual, subjective, philistine, petty-bourgeois reasons. Most often, so-called acquaintances, friends, fellow-townsmen, personally devoted people, masters in the art of praising their chiefs are chosen without regard for their political and business fitness.
Stalin, Joseph. Works, Vol. 14, Speech in Reply to Debate, 1 April 1937, Red Star Press, London, Pravda 1978, pp. 279-280

The campaign against the Party opposition continued. Ezhov drafted the Politburo resolution "On the Attitude to Counterrevolutionary Trotskyist-Zinovievist Elements," which Stalin signed on 29 September; the "Trotskyist-Zinovievist scoundrels" should from now on be considered "foreign agents, spies, subversives, and wreckers on behalf of the fascist bourgeoisie in Europe," and one needed to make short work of them all. Stalin did delete one point from the draft: a demand for the summary execution of several thousand Trotskyists and the exile of thousands of others to Iakutiia.
Jansen, Marc & Petrov, Nikita. Stalin's Loyal Executioner: Yezhov, Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution Press, c2002, p. 57

STALIN SAYS LEADERS SHOULD JUDGE PEOPLE AS INDIVIDUALS NOT AS PART OF A GROUP

Finally, Stalin touched a longtime sore point: the "formal and heartless bureaucratic attitude of some of our party comrades toward the fate of individual party members" who had been expelled from the party. Moscow had denounced the practice on several occasions, but this time Stalin took a stronger stand.

"The fact is that some of our party leaders suffer from lack of attention to people, to party members…. They have, therefore, not an individual approach to party members. And just because they have not an individual approach when appraising party members, they usually act at random, either praising them wholesale, without measure, or crushing them, also wholesale and without measure, expelling thousands and tens of thousands from the party….

But only people who in essence are profoundly anti-party can have such an approach to members of the party."
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 147

It was Stalin who called a special plenum of the Central Committee in January 1938, when more than half of the members of the Central Committee had already been arrested, to pass the resolution "On the mistakes of party organizations in expelling Communists, on the

bureaucratic handling of the appeals of those expelled, and on measures to eliminate these shortcomings." Presenting scattered figures on expulsions that had been rescinded by the Control Commission and on "enemy" accusations that had been proved groundless by the NKVD, the resolution attacked the expellers and accusers:

"All these facts show that many of our party organizations… have not exposed the cleverly massed enemy who hides… behind shouts for vengeance… and tries to slaughter our Bolshevik cadres and sow distrust and excessive suspiciousness in our ranks."

Whereupon the Central Committee ordered all party organizations to cease "mass, wholesale expulsions," to decide each case on an individual basis, to get rid of party officials who did not take the individual approach, and to review the appeals of expelled members within the three-month period.

… Only on the eve of the 18th Party Congress, after Yezhov's dismissal, did the press begin to emphasize Stalin's leading role in the assault on "enemies of the people." The theme was continued by many speakers at the congress itself in March 1939. Shkiryatov, for example, declared:…

"Comrade Stalin has directed the work of purging enemies who have wormed their way into the party. Comrade Stalin taught us how to fight wreckers in a new way; he taught us how to get rid of these hostile elements quickly and decisively."

…Many years later, further details were made public. At first Shkiryatov was given the job of checking Mishakova's accusations. He supported her, but only to the extent of suggesting that Kosarev be reprimanded for "persecuting" Mishakova. Shkiryatov sent this proposal to Stalin, with a covering note: "Dear Joseph Vissarionovich: As always, I am sending this memo to you. If something is not right, you will correct me." And Stalin did "correct" Shkiryatov. In his speech to the seventh plenum of the Komsomol Central Committee, Shkiryatov shouted: "You, Kosarev, wanted to kill everything Stalinist and Bolshevik in Mishakova, but you didn't succeed, because Stalin intervened in this matter."
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 528-529

On this question, as on all other questions, there must be an individual, differentiated approach. You must not measure everyone with the same yardstick. Such a sweeping approach can only harm the cause of struggle against the real Trotskyite wreckers and spies.

Among our responsible comrades there are a certain number of former Trotskyites who left Trotskyism long ago, and now fight against Trotskyism not worse but better than some of our respected comrades who never chanced to waver toward Trotskyism. It would be foolish to vilify such comrades now.

Among our comrades there are also those who always stood against Trotskyism ideologically, but in spite of this kept up personal contacts with individual Trotskyites, which they did not delay in liquidating as soon as the actual visage of Trotskyism became clear to them. It is, of course, not a good thing that they did not break off their personal friendly

connections with individual Trotskyites at once, but belatedly. But it would be silly to lump such comrades together with the Trotskyites.
Stalin, Joseph. Mastering Bolshevism. San Francisco: Proletarian Publishers, 1972, p. 33

Given the explicit assumption at the February 1937 Plenum that “enemies” were within the gates, Stalin’s measured call for an “individual, differentiated approach” to the verification of comrades was overwhelmed by the cacophony of calls for vigilance, for giving the NKVD increased powers, for smashing the enemy. His cautions may have tempered somewhat the resolution of the Plenum, but such nuances were drowned out by the rallying cries of the advocates of vigilance, comrades who believed that the August 1936 and January 1937 trials and other recent revelations proved that “enemies” threatened the party and national security. Of course, none of them believed that they themselves were “enemies.”
Chase, William J., Enemies Within the Gates?, translated by Vadim A. Staklo, New Haven: Yale University Press, c2001, p. 221.

IN 1937 STALIN WARNED AGAINST EXCESSES AGAINST MANAGEMENT AND LEADERS

Although Stalin certainly supported the liquidation of highly placed “spies, wreckers, and enemies” and a promotion of “control from below,” there is no reason to believe that he intended for the fusion of the two campaigns to produce the chaos it did. Almost immediately, Moscow began a series of unsuccessful attempts to limit the chaos while continuing to support investigations of highly placed “enemies.”

Even as the press continued to push anti-bureaucratic and mass criticism themes, Moscow warned against excesses that could lead to chaos….

In June 1937, the press continued to criticize radical “excesses.” Pravda complained that criticism of leaders had sometimes gone too far. Production and labor discipline had suffered as rank-and-file activists criticized their leaders and managers. The press warned that such excesses were dangerously reminiscent of the anti-party activities of Trotskyists….

Later in October 1937, Stalin made one of his rare 0lympian pronouncements, which esoterically condemned radical excesses. In a reception for lower-and middle-level leaders of industry from the Donbas, Stalin toasted the leaders of Soviet industry. Although he did not directly denounce radicalism, he went out of his way to explain that Soviet technicians and economic leaders, unlike their prerevolutionary counterparts, deserved the trust and respect of the Soviet people. Stressing that members of the Soviet intelligentsia and management cadre were drawn from the proletariat, he defended such leaders and warned that it was wrong to persecute all leaders. It would have been unnecessary for him to make such remarks had radical specialist baiting not been out of control.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 178

Although sources on this period are weak and vague, there are signs that Stalin may not have been entirely satisfied with other events in mid-1937. He certainly favored an offensive against disobedient, suspicious, and corrupt members of the bureaucracy, but it is by no

means certain that he was comfortable with the accompanying excesses. For whatever reason, he seems to have tried to reduce the cult of the NKVD by putting a certain distance between himself and the radical efforts of the police.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 182

STALIN AND HIS ALLIES TRIED TO CONTROL EXCESSES AND UNJUST EXPULSIONS

Although Moscow politicians, including Stalin, tried to channel and control political campaigns, the evidence shows that they had great difficulty doing so. As in the cases of the Shakhty trial, collectivization, and membership screenings, Moscow had to intervene forcefully to limit and defuse movements it had unleashed. The repeated but unheeded demands to halt expulsions of passives between 1935 and 1939 are examples of Moscow's inability to control events. "Fulfillment of decisions" remained as elusive as ever.

In 1937 and 1938, Stalin and company tried to contain radicalism through press articles, speeches, revised electoral plans, and deglorifying the police. That they had to take such measures shows their lack of tight control over events.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 195

But we have still another error in this field. The fact is that our comrades do not recognize the mean between two extremes. It is sufficient for a worker, a Party member, to commit some small offense, to be late two or three times at a Party meeting, not to pay membership dues for some reason or other, and in a flash he is thrown out of the Party.

No interest is taken in the degree of his offense, the cause of his non-appearance at the meeting, the cause of the non–payment of membership dues. The bureaucracy of this is simply unparalleled. It is not difficult to understand that, precisely as a result of such a heartless policy, splendid skilled workers, excellent Stakhanovites, have been thrown out of the Party. And was it impossible, before expelling them from the Party, to give a warning, and if this had no effect, to censure them, or administer a reprimand, and, if this had no effect, to set a period for reformation, or in the extreme case to reduce to the position of a candidate, but not expel them with a sweep of the hand from the Party?

Of course it was possible.

But this requires an attentive attitude to people, to the Party members, to the fact of Party membership. And this is exactly what some of our comrades lack.

It is high time to put a stop to this outrageous practice.
Stalin, Joseph. Mastering Bolshevism. San Francisco: Proletarian Publishers, 1972, p. 48

STALIN SAYS ONLY CURRENT TROTS SHOULD BE PUNISHED NOT FORMER ONES

On March 5, 1937, Stalin told the Central Committee that only active Trotskyists still loyal to their exiled leader had to be repressed. “Among our comrades,” he said, “are a certain number of former Trotskyites who abandoned Trotskyism a long time ago and are fighting against it. It would be stupid to defame these comrades.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 383

STALIN WANTED CRIMINAL ACTIVITY OF THE INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES INVESTIGATED

On his [Stalin] suggestion the Central Committee unexpectedly appointed a special commission to investigate NKVD activity; it included, among others, Beria & Malenkov. During the discussion of this matter in the Politburo, Kaganovich suggested that Beria be appointed deputy people’s commissar of internal affairs in order to “facilitate his access to all the materials of the NKVD.” This proposal was accepted.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 456

MANY INTELLIGENCE AGENTS WERE KILLED FOR COMMITTING CRIMINAL ACTS

Hardly anyone paid attention to this appointment either within the Soviet Union or outside its borders. But for Yezhov and his circle it was an alarming signal…. As soon as Yezhov was replaced by Beria, the NKVD was hit by the usual wave of dismissals and arrests. Almost all of Yezhov’s close associates and dozens of leading NKVD officials were arrested and shot. Among those arrested were Frinovsky and Zakovsky, men left over from Yagoda’s days; Maltsev, “chief executioner” of Novosibirsk oblast; Berman, the sadistic head of the Byelorussian NKVD; Lavrushin, head of the Gorky NKVD, and his deputies Kaminsky and Listengurt. Among others who were arrested and soon shot was Redens, husband of Alliluyeva’s sister. In 1937 he had directed the mass repression in Moscow and then, as NKVD chief in Kazakhstan, had decimated the party and government apparatus of that republic. The head of the Ukrainian NKVD, Uspensky, was also eliminated. Most prison wardens got a taste of their own prison discipline, including Popov of Butyrskaya, Vainshtok of Yaroslavl, and the warden of Solovetskaya. They were all quickly shot, as were most of the heads of the major prison camps and administrative units of the Gulag. As a rule, these people had occupied their posts in the NKVD for only a short time, from the removal of Yagoda to the removal of Yezhov.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 457

STALIN COMES DOWN HARD ON THE CRIMINAL YEZHOV

In late 1938 and the first part of 1939 Feldman acted as first secretary of the party’s Odessa oblast committee. He was a delegate at the 18th Party Congress,… Feldman left his friends the following memorandum about this gathering:

“When the Congress was ending, the Council of Elders gathered in one of the halls of the Kremlin. In front of the elders at a long table, as if on a stage, sat Andreev, Molotov, & Malenkov. Behind them, far to the rear, in a corner to the left sat Stalin, puffing away at his pipe. Andreev stated that since the congress was finishing its work, it was necessary to

nominate candidates for the Central Committee that was to be newly elected. The first to be named were members of the previous Central Committee, except of course for those who had fallen. They came to Yezhov. Andreev asked, “What do you think?” After a short silence someone said that Yezhov was one of Stalin’s people’s commissars, everyone knew him, he should be kept. “Any objections?” Everyone was silent. Then Stalin took the floor. He got up, walked to the front table, and, still smoking his pipe, called out:

“Yezhov! Where are you? Come up here!”

From one of the back rows Yezhov came up to the table.

“Well! What do you think of yourself? Are you capable of being a member of the Central Committee?”

Yezhov turned pale and in a broken voice answered that his whole life had been devoted to the party and to Stalin, that he loved Stalin more than his own life and didn’t know anything he had done wrong that could provoke such a question.

“Is that so?” Stalin asked ironically. “And who was Frinovsky? Did you know him?”

“Yes, of course I knew him,” answered Yezhov. “Frinovsky was my deputy. He—”

Stalin cut Yezhov short, asking who Shapiro was, what Ryzhova had been (Yezhov’s secretary), who Fyodorov was, and who others were. (By this time all these people had been arrested.)

“Joseph Vissarionovich! You know it was I–I myself!–who disclosed their conspiracy! I came to you and reported it….”

Stalin didn’t let him continue. “Yes, yes, yes! When you felt you were about to be caught, then you came in a hurry. But what about before that? Were you organizing a conspiracy? Do you want to kill Stalin? Top officials of the NKVD are plotting, but you, supposedly aren’t involved. You think I don’t see anything?! Do you remember who you sent on a certain date for duty with Stalin? Who? With revolvers? Why revolvers near Stalin? Why? To kill Stalin? And if I hadn’t noticed? What then?!”

Stalin went on to accuse Yezhov of working too feverishly, arresting many people who were innocent and covering up for others.

“Well? Go on, get out of here! I don’t know, comrades, is it possible to keep him as a member of the Central Committee? I doubt it. Of course, think about it…. As you wish…. But I doubt it!”

Yezhov, of course, was unanimously struck from the list; after a recess he did not return to the hall and was not seen again at the Congress….

Yezhov was not arrested right away, however. He continued to appear at the offices of the Commissariat of Water Transport. His behavior showed evidence of severe depression and

even psychological disorder. While attending meetings of the collegium of the Commissariat, Yezhov remained silent and did not intervene in any way. Sometimes he made doves and airplanes out of paper, sailed them, and went after them, at times even crawling under the tables and chairs. All this in silence. A few days after the Congress, when a group of NKVD operatives entered the conference room of the collegium, Yezhov rose and said, with his face almost aglow, “How long I have waited for this!” He put his gun on the table and they led him away….

Yezhov’s arrest was not reported in the press. The man whom Pravda had called “the nation’s favorite,” who possessed “the greatest vigilance, a will of iron, a fine proletarian sensitivity, enormous organizational talent, and exceptional intelligence” was not mentioned again in any newspaper.

Yezhov was not shot right after his arrest. A long investigation was conducted in connection with his case. He was not tortured, since he readily confessed to all charges, changing or correcting them when necessary and, in general, calmly acceeding to all the demands of the investigators. The old Bolshevik Shabalkin, who died in 1965, gave me the following account of Yezhov’s subsequent fate:

“When they took me from the Solovetskie Islands back to Butyrskaya prison for reinterrogation, I found myself in a cell with Bulatov, a well-known party official. Bulatov was refusing to testify and demanding interrogation by Yezhov himself. (A few years earlier Bulatov and Yezhov, when they were in charge of CC departments, had lived next to each other and often visited each other.) In the fall 1938 Bulatov was taken to interrogation for the fifth time. Suddenly a door in the wall opened and Yezhov entered the interrogator’s office. “Well,” he [Yezhov] said, “is Bulatov testifying?” Not at all, Comrade General Commissar,” replied the investigator. “Then lay it on him good,” said Yezhov, and left by the same door…. After that Bulatov was beaten several times, but then they seemed to forget about him. A few months later, in 1939, Bulatov was again taken to interrogation and for more than a day did not return to the cell. When he came back, he fell on his bunk and began to sob. Two days later Bulatov told Shabalkin that they had taken him to some other prison and into an investigators office, where he saw Yezhov, now arrested and held in confinement. This was a confrontation. In a monotonous and indifferent voice Yezhov began to tell how he had been preparing to get rid of Stalin and seize power and how Bulatov had been one of the members of his organization, whom, for “better protection,” they had decided to keep in Butyrskaya prison. Bulatov naturally denied this slander, but Yezhov kept to his story.

Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 458-460

The airplane designer Yakovlev recalls the following in his memoirs:

“In the summer of 1940 Stalin said these precise words in a conversation with me:

“Yezhov is a rat; in 1938 he killed many innocent people. We shot him for that.”

I wrote these words down immediately after returning from the Kremlin.”

Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 529

Here is one such document, read to the 22nd Congress by Serdyuk:

“Comrade Stalin:

I am sending for confirmation four lists of people whose cases are before the Military Collegium:

(1) List No. 1 (general)

(2) List No. 2 (former military personnel)

(3) List No. 3 (former NKVD personnel)

(4) List No. 4 (wives of enemies of the people)

I request approval for first-degree condemnation of all these people.

Signed Yezhov

Condemnation in the first-degree meant shooting.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 530

Over the autumn of 1938 Stalin set up a commission to investigate the NKVD. It reported adversely, as was no doubt intended. In December Yezhov was replaced by Beria. Over the next few months many of Yezhov’s men were shot. But Yezhov still remained in at least one of his various posts–People’s Commissar of Water Transport. And he appeared on the platform at Lenin’s birthday celebrations in February 1939. [LENIN’S BIRTHDAY IS IN APRIL STUPID] At the informal Council of Elders which met before the 18th Party Congress in March to decide on a new Central Committee, he was present as a current member of that body. When his name was suggested from the chair, there was at first no objection, and in fact speakers noted his loyal service, until Stalin, puffing his pipe, walked from the corner where he was sitting to the front table and called Yezhov forward:

‘Well! What do you think of yourself? Are you capable of being a member of the Central Committee?’

Yezhov turned pale and in a broken voice answered that his whole life had been devoted to the party and to Stalin, that he loved Stalin more than his own life and didn’t know anything he had done wrong that could revoke such a question.

‘Is that so?’ Stalin asked ironically. ‘And who was Frinovsky? Did you know him?’

‘Yes, of course a do him,’ answered Yezhov. ‘Frinovsky was my deputy. He–‘

Stalin cut Yezhov short, asking who Shapiro was, what Ryzhova had been (Yezhov’s secretary), who Fyodorov was, and who others were.

‘Joseph Vissarionovich! You know it was I–I myself!–who disclosed their conspiracy! I came to you and reported it…’

Stalin didn’t let him continue. ‘Yes, yes, yes! When you felt you were about to be caught, then you came in a hurry. But what about before that? Were you organizing a conspiracy? Did you want to kill Stalin? Top officials of the NKVD are plotting, but you, supposedly are not involved. You think I didn’t see anything? Do you remember who you sent on a certain date for duty with Stalin? Who? With revolvers? Why revolvers near Stalin? Why? To kill Stalin? And if I hadn’t noticed? What then?’

Stalin went on to accuse Yezhov of working too feverishly, arresting many people who were innocent and covering up for others.

‘Well? Go on, get out of here! I don’t know comrades, is a possible to keep him as a member of the Central Committee? I doubt it. Of course, think about it…. As you wish… But I doubt it!’

and that was the end of Yezhov. Arrested a few days later, he was shot on 4 February 1940 [approximately a year later].
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 208

“It’s high time to do something about the NKVD,” he [Stalin] said. “If that madman of a Yezhov keeps on the way he’s going, he’ll arrest me yet for plotting against Stalin. It can’t go on! But just now I can’t do anything about your engineers. Beria is coming here the day after tomorrow, and I think I’m going to name him the head of a committee to re-organize the NKVD completely. I’ll ask him to make an investigation into the case of your engineers.”

I left Sochi the following day. Three months later Beria, now head of the NKVD instead of Yezhov, who later committed suicide in the asylum to which he was sent, freed my engineers.
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 151

Although not a delegate to the 18th Party Congress, in March 1939, he [Yezhov] was present as a member of the outgoing Central Committee. And when the Congress’s “Senioren Konvent,” or informal Council of Elders, met to consider names for the new Central Committee, Yezhov’s went forward. There were no objections until Stalin said he thought him unsuitable, since he was involved in a plot with Frinovsky and others to use Stalin’s own bodyguard to assassinate him. Yezhov answered that it had been he who had exposed this plot. But Stalin retorted that this was only to cover himself; moreover, he had arrested many innocent people while protecting the guilty. Stalin ended by telling those present that in his opinion Yezhov was unfit to serve on the Central Committee, though it was, of course, up to them to decide.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 432

The only epitaph that Stalin left to his faithful servant [Yezhov] was recorded in a private conversation. Over a luncheon with a young protege Stalin confided, “Yezhov was a scoundrel. He killed our best people. The man went to the dogs. You call him at the Ministry, they say he has gone to the Central Committee. Call him there, they say he is at work. You

send after him to his house, he is lying in bed dead drunk. How many innocent people he destroyed! For that we had him shot."
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 487

STALIN SET UP COMMISSION TO INVESTIGATE SECRET POLICE CORRUPTION

The special commission appointed to investigate NKVD activity continued its work, with Andreev as its new chairman. Andreev himself had been very active during 1937-1938 in the assault on "enemies of people," and this was Stalin's chief consideration in selecting him to head the commission.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 465

On 11 September 1934, Stalin complained to Zhdanov and Kuibyshev about misguided secret-police coercion: "Find out all the mistakes of the deduction methods of the workers of the GPU…. Free persecuted persons who are innocent if they are innocent and…purge the OGPU of people with specific "deduction methods" and punish them all–whoever they may be."
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 141

ONLY A MINORITY OF CHEKISTS USED EXTREME METHODS AND DESERVED TO BE SHOT

One of the memoirs I have is by a former high official in the NKVD, who wrote:

"We declare, with full responsibility, that only individual, morally unstable, and unprincipled chekists went so far as to apply physical torture and torment, for which they were shot in 1939, following the November [1938] letter to the Politburo on excesses in investigation."
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 486

STALIN SOMETIMES PROTECTED PEOPLE AGAINST THE SECRET POLICE

It is also instructive to observe how Stalin frequently limited himself, at first, to shifting a major figure without arresting him, although the NKVD already had fabricated testimony against him. The man would be transferred to a less important or sometimes a more important post;…
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 544

SOME LOCAL LEADERS ABUSED PEOPLE AND BECAME A LAW UNTO THEMSELVES

If many ordinary citizens took advantage of the terror to pursue their own despicable aims, what could be expected from the leaders on all the various levels, including Stalin's closest aides?

… The newly appointed people's commissars, directors of major enterprises and institutions, obkom and raikom secretaries, and state security officials were given the right to decide the fate of Soviet citizens. Each of them was virtually the master of his domain, and many of them abused this power, forming cliques of hangers-on and unprincipled careerists around themselves. Thus a basis was created for ceaseless mass repression.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 613

A great deal of work has been done in the West on the relative power and influence of Moscow versus local political organizations. We now have studies of the local judiciary and of the local process of collectivization. While Moscow gave the orders, it seems that local party bodies, far removed from the capital, carried out policies independently and frequently at odds with those desired by Moscow. Campaigns–including purges–could be stalled, sped up, aborted, or implemented in ways which suited local conditions and interests. Local judicial bodies conducted trials and pronounced sentences wildly at variance with the procedures prescribed in the center but in accord with the political interests of local machines. Local agents of agricultural collectivization were sometimes genuinely "dizzy with success." They often jumped the gun in initiating the process, outran central targets, violated and ignored directives which did not suit them.

Local proizvol (arbitrary misconduct) and disobedience of central directives were endemic, particularly in collectivization and in the purges of the 1930s.
Nove, Alec, Ed. The Stalin Phenomenon. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993, p. 128

…the state played a major role. At the same time, the vitally important specific and personal decisions of life and death for most of the population were made locally. How many "kulaks" were to be deported from which villages? Who had the power to arrest them? Whose name appeared on the purge list? Which local faction controlled the NKVD? If one is interested in either a social history of the common folk or in "total history," one should look less at those at the pinnacle, who tried to push the tides one way or another, and more at the forces that were really important to the fates of most people.

… If, for example, implementation of political, judicial, and agricultural policies in the country was so dependent on local conditions and alignments, how can one be certain that the actual results, on the ground, were an accurate reflection of Stalin's wishes? Even if one assumes Stalin's personality was the only or main factor in the initiation of policies, one must still explain the obvious disparities between central orders and local outcomes: for example the failure of local agencies to adhere to Moscow's collectivization (and later, purge) targets.

Why was it that during the membership chistki (purges) of 1933-36, local leaders expelled so many more members than Moscow wished? Why was it that practically no local officials were purged until the power of their "family circles" was broken in 1937? What were the personal and political interests of those local officials who decided who was to be purged and when? How much of the… selection of victims, was "just local stuff"?

The complex political sociology of the system involved kolkhozniki, factory workers, rank-and-file party activists, local party apparatchiki, regional first secretaries, and several factions in Moscow. Each group had its own interests and agendas and, with varying limits, the means to realize them…. Local actors may not have decided national policies but they

certainly determined their results. R.W. Davies is right to draw our attention to “autonomous or uncontrolled behavior at various levels.”

Consider the party membership purges (chistki) of 1933-6. At the lowest level, that of party cells, the membership targeted the peasantry’s traditional class enemies as well as those with dubious Civil War pasts. This included former tsarist policeman, wealthy peasants, former noble landowners and their associates, White Army participants, locally known crooks, members of the intelligentsia and generally unpopular types who had entered the party. As the Smolensk Archive transcripts of these grass-roots chistka meetings show, this process victimized innocent bystanders, relatives and even past associates of the above categories: the “genetic” peasant approach again. Local party secretaries tried to protect their political machines by defending those of their number who work targets of rank-and-file wrath and by running up the purge score. These secretaries expelled “passive” (non-participating or non-dues paying) members, those who could be tripped up on ideological questions and particular members who had made trouble for the machine.

[Footnote]: “Passives were not mentioned or targeted in the instructions for the 1933 Chistka, but were nonetheless the largest single group expelled in the operation itself.–Page 149

This was not at all what the Stalinist center had in mind, as its subsequent furious reaction showed.

[Footnote]: From the “outside,” though, it was and is easy to mistake this mass purging at the hands of local secretaries for a Stalin plan to terrorize everyone.–Page 149

Indeed, the Moscow leadership spent a good deal of time trying to clean up the mess that local conduct of the membership screenings had caused. Beginning in June 1936 and picking up steam after January 1938, the center encouraged those expelled to appeal to higher authorities. Party committees, local control commissions, the Party Control Commission and the Central Committee itself were all involved in considering appeals for reinstatement. Hundreds of thousands were readmitted. Nationally, by June 1, 1938, 51.6% of all purge penalties and expulsions that were appealed were reduced or vacated by higher authorities.

When the Yezhov vigilance campaign began in mid-1936, local party secretaries were happy to direct the enemy accusation against has-been ex-oppositionists. When Stalin and the Moscow leadership demanded further vigilance against local machines, the local leaders were still able to protect themselves by turning police attention to helpless and unprotected common folk who were accused of suspicious connections and singing counter-revolutionary songs. When rank-and-file party members managed against all odds to spontaneously overthrow local leaders, the provincial leadership took in the ranking victims and protected them from police trouble. When rank-and-file party members were expelled on the other hand, the machine controlled NKVD frequently arrested them.

In Smolensk, for example, as long as the party obkom controlled the local NKVD (whose chief sat on the Smolensk Party Buro and was part of its nomenklatura, or personal list), no important members of the oblast and raion party leadership were arrested. Only when the

Smolensk machine was attacked by Moscow in June 1937 and a new NKVD chief sent in were party leaders arrested. Who controlled whom locally was once again the key to understanding the impact of the event on real people.
Nove, Alec, Ed. The Stalin Phenomenon. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993, p. 128-131

Peasants and rank-and-file party members accused and purged each other, accusing each other of being byvshie liudi (former people) from the old regime, such as kulaks, former gendarmes and White Army soldiers. Relatives of enemies of the people were also swept away as common folk used familiar genealogical and kin categories as their reference points in defining enemies. Blind and pitiless peasants and others also lashed out at the local intelligentsia in traditional assertions of cultural and social resentment…. Peasants naturally jumped to the conclusion that "our" dead livestock had been poisoned by "them"–the educated specialists…. In some collective farms, "one half expelled the other half."

…Before the mid-1930s, the "enemy," in both official Soviet and customary peasant usages, referred to the traditional social enemy: the kulak, the nobleman, the White Army officer, and so forth. By 1937, though, Stalin had identified "enemies with party cards," suggesting that the bureaucrat was the class enemy.

Rank-and-file party members lashed out at their secretarial leaders, accusing them of bureaucratism, corruption, and dictatorial methods. Factory workers attacked their managers with the same kind of populist anger. Even the newly prompted Red Specialists came under fire in the pitiless assertion of radicalism. In response, the threatened official strata fought back by blaming their subordinates. Party secretaries expelled huge numbers of rank-and-file members in order to protect themselves and display their vigilance. Collective farm chairmen desperately ejected troublesome peasants from the kolkhozy for the same reasons. It was a war of all against all and the battle lines reflected social conflicts, some of them decades or even centuries old.

… Party secretaries, anxious to feed their industrial workers, extend their own rural powers and increase their budget allocations truly became "dizzy with success." For their own reasons, and encouraged by Moscow's irresponsible cheerleading, they routinely exceeded dekulakization and collectivization targets, sponsored intense religious persecution and illlegally arrested vast numbers of recalcitrant peasants.

Again at the micro level, local peasants and party activists dekulakized unpopular "outsiders": those who had violated communal traditions by getting ahead, members of the rural intelligentsia, and other traditional enemies. Things were out of control; everyone was arresting everyone. Of course, Stalin and his clique share ultimate responsibility for these "excesses." Their strident rhetoric and sloganeering had sparked the fire in the first place and in their attempts to build momentum for dekulakization and collectivization they had (until March 1930) encouraged "energetic" measures.

As they would do five years later during the chistki, the Stalinist center intervened during collectivization in an attempt to control the process. Stalin's March 1930 "Dizzy With Success" article was the best known such attempt. Sending in the supposedly disciplined and tempered proletarian 25,000ers was another and the Stalin-Molotov May 1933 decree limiting arrests and detentions was a third.

In the collectivization, chistki, and Ezhovshchina phenomena we find the same dynamics at work: the anatomy of a radical Stalinist transformation. First, the leadership announces the campaign, pressure for which had been developing in the party. The announcement is vague and confused and the documents show signs of poor planning and internal conflict. Nevertheless, in order to overcome traditional inertia of local interests, enthusiastic measures are demanded in strident language as the party is shoved to the left.

Second, the decision percolates down, local officials at all levels variously delay, speed up, re-interpret, or twist the idea to suit both local conditions and their own interests. Implementation of the campaign, quite regardless of Stalin's presumed intentions, alternatively reflects historical class hatreds, Civil War legacies, zealotry, personal rivalry, and the needs of official "family circle" cliques.

Third, things rapidly get out of control. Insofar as anyone is directing events, it is the local party secretary. But much is beyond his power, not to mention Stalin's. The Stalinist center intervenes through jawboning speeches, exemplary indictments of particular organizations and individuals, an official decrees. More often than not, the intervention is on the side of restraining local chaos and enhancing Moscow's control over the territorial apparatchiki: Stalin now shoves them to the right. Moscow tries to protect favored groups, break local "family circles," and conveniently pose as the friend of the persecuted "little person."

Finally, the central leadership decides to attenuate the campaign or end it altogether. Once again, this requires multiple statements and interventions. Halting a campaign was much more difficult than starting it precisely because of the strong influence of local attitudes, multiple actors, and omnipresent confusion. The entire process is characterized by zig-zag pushes of the political/social leviathan to the left and right in an attempt to direct it.

Several times Moscow intervened to restore the party membership of rank-and-file persons expelled by local officials. Stalin had to intervene personally to stop the anti-specialist zeal of local party members in industrial centers. A highly publicized January 1938 Central Committee resolution, which Stalin must have approved, condemned the wild orgies of vigilance at lower levels….
Nove, Alec, Ed. The Stalin Phenomenon. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993, p. 131-134

Collectivization and collective farming were shaped less by Stalin and the central authorities than by the undisciplined and irresponsible activity of rural officials, the experimentation of collective farm leaders left to fend for themselves, and the realities of a backward countryside and a traditional peasantry which defied Bolshevik fortress storming.

…The center never managed to exert its control over the countryside as it had intended in the schema of revolution from above.
Viola, Lynne. The Best Sons of the Fatherland. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1987, p. 216

STALIN WAS NOT GENERATING FEAR BY ARRESTS BECAUSE THEY WERE KEPT SECRET

The third objection to the theory that Stalin planned everything to create a climate of universal fear relates to the process of arrest itself. Except for a few well-publicized show trials in Moscow and in the localities, most arrests were carried out quietly and without publicity. The press in the period, while filled with editorials about maintaining vigilance, carried practically no lists or even mentions of those arrested. It is almost as if the authorities wanted to keep them a secret: hardly an effective plan to generate universal terror.
Nove, Alec, Ed. The Stalin Phenomenon. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993, p. 134

YEZHOV AND HIS HENCHMEN ARE ARRESTED

Yezhov was seen for the last time in February 1939 on the Presidium of a meeting commemorating the death of Lenin. Soon he was arrested and charged with "leftist overreaction." The next purge of the NKVD began at the same time. His assistants, the heads of departments, and his closest henchmen were arrested.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 39

STALIN OBJECTS TO THE LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE YEZHOV IS PURGING

In June 1936, Stalin interrupted Yezhov at a Central Committee Plenum to complain about so many party members being expelled:
YEZHOV: Comrades, as a result of the verification of party documents, we expelled more than 200,000 members of the party.
STALIN: [interrupts] Very many.
YEZHOV: Yes, very many. I will speak about this….
STALIN: [interrupts] If we expelled 30,000… [inaudible remark] and 600 former Trotskyists and Zinovievists, it would be a bigger victory.
YEZHOV: More than 200,000 members were expelled. Part of this number of party members, as you know, have been arrested.
At about this time, Stalin wrote a letter to regional party secretaries complaining about their excessive "repression" of the rank-and-file. This led to a national movement to reinstate expelled party members,…
[Later in this plenum, Stalin spoke specifically on this question. Circumstantial evidence suggests that he was genuinely concerned that too many of the rank-and-file had been expelled because such large numbers of disaffected former members could become an embittered opposition.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 51

FIGURES GIVEN FOR DEATHS IN THE SU IN THE 30S ARE MUCH TOO HIGH

Mark Tolts revealed in late 1987 that results of the 1937 census had indicated a population of 162 million. This flatly contradicted the claims of Rosefielde and Antonov-Ovseenko that the 1937 census had indicated that the population in the USSR was only 156 million and that an additional 6 million deaths needed to be added to estimates of excess mortality.

Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 276

These figures [of deaths] are much lower than many of the excess mortality and population loss figures that are cited in the West. Mace believes that 5-7 million for the Ukraine alone is a “conservative figure;” Conquest claims 5 million Ukrainian famine deaths, and 8 million overall including the North Caucasus and Kazakhstan; but on top of this he wishes to add another 6.5 million deaths as a result of dekulakization.” The figures given by Mace and Conquest are impossible to accept.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 280

By the mid-30s the old hoary anti-Soviet slanders were wearing thin. Capitalist propagandists had prophesied the quick downfall of the Soviet regime, but it had not fallen down. In the columns of their “respectable” journals they had killed by “Ukrainian famines” many times the total population of the USSR.
Klugmann, James. From Trotsky to Tito. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1951, p. 83

Jerry Hough, of Duke University, has suggested just how ambiguous such calculations can be. Using the dramatically rising death rates in Russia in the 1990s, and with perhaps a bit of tongue-in-cheek, Hough calculated that 1.5 million “extra deaths” occurred in Russia in just the first four years of Yeltsin’s tenure–a total that, Hough points out, is “considerably larger than the number Stalin killed in the Great Purge” of the 1930s….
If we want to play this scorecard game with isms, we could post a huge number of deaths to the account of capitalist and nationalist competition, starting with imperialism and two world wars and ending with excess deaths in Yeltsin’s democratic Russia.
The Future Did Not Work by J. Arch Getty, Book Review of The Passing of an Illusion by Franois Furet [March 2000 Atlantic Monthly]

POLICE ARE FAIR AND FORGET THE TROTS PAST ALLEGIANCE TO TROTSKY

“But the GPU isn’t composed of lunatics,” I (Peter Kleist) said. It’s not going to take useful and sincere men away from their job merely because once they breathed the same air as Trotsky.”
… If the GPU charges a man it has usually good grounds. There are hundreds of thousands of people who had contact with Trotsky. Are they all in prison? What infinitesimal fraction of them has been imprisoned. If you admit that Trotsky is a threat to the USSR today you must admit that the GPU is justified in caution.”
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 105

The press constantly…[stated] that the ‘Trotskyite-Zinovievite wreckers’ were planning terrorist acts against the party and state leadership and that above all ‘they wanted to kill Comrade Stalin’, also that ‘Comrade Stalin, who was in constant peril, would concern himself with anyone who had made mistakes and who wants to improve himself.’ At the February-March 1937 plenum, Molotov read out one of the leader’s letters as an example of ‘Comrade Stalin’s solicitous attitude to the cadres’:

“To town committee secretary Comrade Golyshev, Perm.
The Central Committee has received information concerning the persecution and slander of the manager of the motor factory, Poberezhsky, on account of his past sins as a Trotskyist. In view of the fact that both Poberezhsky and his fellow workers are now working conscientiously and have the full trust of the Central Committee, we request that Comrade Poberezhsky and his fellow workers be protected against such slander and that an atmosphere of complete trust be created around him.”
‘That’s the way to treat former Trotskyist comrades who are now working honestly in their jobs.’ Molotov concluded.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 265

SOVIET BORDERS ARE JUSTIFIABLY SEALED TO YOU IF YOU ARE EXPELLED

… I asked [Jonescu], pointing to the turbaned man who was asleep, “Who’s he?”
Jonescu said, “He? Oh, he’s a Persian carpet dealer who came to Baku to sell shawls to the Trust and then began to bribe the officials to take inferior qualities and pay high prices.”
“What’s the sentence?”
Jonescu replied, “Expulsion–and you can believe me, if you’re expelled from the Soviet Union it’s much more easy for a camel to pass through the needle’s eye or even for a rich man to enter Paradise than it is for a deportee to re-enter the Soviet Union. You can apply for visas till you get writer’s cramps. A sea of ink won’t blot out your stain. What the devil! The Soviet Union’s got to be rigid. I’m a Socialist. This is the world’s first Socialist country. The Revolution is still taking place. There are still counter-revolutionaries lurking in dark corners. Only a stiff broom can sweep them out. There are still a horde of interventionists ready to pour their agents over the frontiers. What do the sentimentalists ask the Soviet Union to do? Open her frontiers, embrace with open arms the counter-revolutionaries waiting to press themselves to her bosom? The GPU must be vigilant. Divorce yourself from the personal accident which has made you a prisoner. Then say whether the GPU is right or wrong.”
“It’s true,” I said, “I don’t abuse the GPU. I can’t say that I’ve liked being in prison. I haven’t. But I have been treated considerately, without brutality, and in the circumstances, fairly.”
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 182

THOUSANDS OF PRISONERS WERE RELEASED

Altogether, 364,437 prisoners were released from the gulag in 1937, though the meaning of this figure is not clear.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p.69

In July 1946, for instance, Beria reported that his corrective labor camps contain more than 100,000 prisoners who were completely incapable of further useful work and whose upkeep was costing the state a fortune. Beria recommended that the incurably ill and the mentally disturbed be released forthwith. Stalin agreed, but insisted that especially dangerous criminals and those serving hard labor, however sick, be kept in.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 235

…Malenkov managed to persuade Stalin into performing a ‘humanitarian’ act. He showed his boss a report from the head of the Gulag, Dobrynin, which stated that in 1949 there were 503,375 women in camps and exile colonies. Malenkov suggested they should consider releasing women with children under the age of seven, since the cost of maintaining children in the camps was running at 166 million rubles a year. After careful scrutiny of the figures, Stalin agreed, and went further by decreeing that such mothers should henceforth be employed on forced labor in their home towns. Any women who had been sentenced for counter-revolutionary activity, however, were to be excluded from this category.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 523

Stalin’s camps were different from Hitler’s. Tens of thousands of prisoners were released every year, upon completion of their sentences…. Rations and medical care were substandard, but were often not dramatically better elsewhere in Stalin’s Soviet Union and were not designed to hasten the inmates’ deaths,… Similarly, the overwhelming weight of opinion among scholars working in the new archives (including Werth) is that the terrible famine of the 1930s was the result of Stalinist bungling and rigidity rather than some genocidal plan.
Getty, J. Arch. “The Future Did Not Work.” Atlantic Monthly Book Review of The Passing of an Illusion by Franois Furet, March 2000.

How long was the average prison sentence? The length of prison sentences has been the subject of the most scurrilous rumour-mongering in Western propaganda. The usual insinuation is that to be a convict in the Soviet Union involved endless years in prison–whoever went in never came out. This is completely untrue. The vast majority of those who went to prison in Stalin’s time were in fact convicted to a term of 5 years at most. The statistics reproduced in the American Historical Review show the actual facts. Common criminals in the Russian Federation in 1936 received the following sentences: up to 5 years: 82.4%; between 5-10 years: 17.6%. 10 years was the maximum possible prison term before 1937. Political prisoners convicted in the Soviet Union’s civilian courts in 1936 received sentences as follows: up to 5 years: 44.2%; between 5-10 years 50.7%. As for those sentenced to terms in the gulag labour camps, where the longer sentences were served, the 1940 statistics show that those serving up to 5 years were 56.8% and those between 5-10 years 42.2%. Only 1% were sentenced to over 10 years.
For 1939 we have the statistics produced by Soviet courts. The distribution of prison terms is as follows: up to 5 years: 95.9%; from 5-10 years: 4%; over 10 years: 0.1%.
As we can see, the supposed eternity of prison sentences in the Soviet Union is another myth spread in the West to combat socialism.
Sousa, Mario. Lies Concerning the History of the Soviet Union, 15 June 1998.

INFILTRATED SECRET POLICE CARRIED OUT UNJUST ARRESTS UNDER YEZHOV

By the fall of 1938 Yezhov’s leadership of the NKVD was under steady fire from various directions. The regime responded officially on Nov. 17, in a joint resolution of the Sovnarkom and the party Central Committee. This document went to thousands of officials across the USSR in the NKVD, the Procuracy, and the party, down to the raion level. Thus, the

acknowledgement that grotesque mistakes and injustice had occurred spread widely–hardly the action of a government that wanted to continue fighting its citizens.
The resolution began by stating that in 1937-38 the NKVD had carried out “major work” in destroying enemies of the people. More remained to be done in this sphere, but the struggle now had to adopt more “perfect and reliable methods.” This was all the more necessary because the “mass operations” of the preceding period, with their “simplified conduct of investigations and trials,” had led to “a number of serious shortcomings and distortions in the work of the organs of the NKVD and the procuracy.” Enemies of the people and foreign spies had penetrated the security police and the judicial system and had “consciously…carried out massive and groundless arrests.” NKVDisty had completely abandoned careful investigative operations and had recently adopted “so-called ‘limits’ [quotas]” for arrests. Agents had wanted only to obtain confessions from arrestees, regardless of evidence or lack of it.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 114

[1937 letter from Ivanova to the Central Committee of the All Union Communist Party]
I am writing you, old party members, and I think you will pay attention to all the actions by our NKVD. Is a really possible that you haven’t heard yet about all the horrors that are going on in our provincial cities, where horrors in the literal sense of the word are taking place, so that it is even hard to believe that we live in a “land of joys.” After all, we are living in a happy time, yet power NKVD is perpetrating total outrages. For some reason lately they have begun to arrest only old party members, who have acquitted themselves well among the people, have worked in conformity with the party line honestly and conscientiously, have not had any party penalties, have a party service record of 20 to 25 years apiece behind them, and suddenly are made enemies of the people in just 15 or 20 days. How are we to take this, either he is an enemy of the people, or the enemies of the people got him out of the way because he was interfering with them. But his arrest sets off a whole series of sufferings: the family is immediately evicted from its apartment, and persecution of the children and all kinds of other abuse begin. But in point of fact their father is the most honest worker, he carried out all party tasks conscientiously, the people know him as the most honest worker, but our NKVD doesn’t take any of this into account.
Comrades, you would do better to pay attention to what is going on in our NKVD and check whether an enemy of the people hasn’t wormed his way and there or whether a kulak hasn’t taken over there and is doing all sorts of vile things there in order to undermine Soviet power.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 232

[Dec. 10, 1938 letter from Chernousov to the Central Committee on the removal of Yezhov]
As an ordinary citizen of the USSR I cannot help but comment on the removal of Yezhov from the NKVD leadership–an event of no small importance.
Appointed to the job to uncover betrayers and traitors and to purge the country of enemy elements, he himself caused as much harm as maybe all of the betrayers and traitors combined.
According to tens and hundreds of thousands of people, Yezhov overlooked real spies and saboteurs. The fires and explosions at enterprises have not stopped, and they are undoubtedly plotted by saboteurs. It is naive to think that the country has been completely purged of them. But Yezhov had his agents specialize in taking innocent citizens from their

beds, while they forgot how to catch real saboteurs. On the contrary, they are even openly allowed into the country. The case of the pilot Lindbergh is a very striking one.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 240

A further decline in Yezhov's influence was detectable on 23 Oct 1938, when the writer Sholokhov gained an audience with Stalin to complain about being investigated by the NKVD. Stalin humiliated Yezhov by requiring him to attend. On 14 November an order came from Stalin to purge the NKVD of individuals "not worthy of political confidence.' Next day the Politburo confirmed a directive of party and government to terminate cases currently under investigation by the troiki and the military tribunals. On 17 November the Politburo decided that enemies of the people had infiltrated the NKVD. Such measures spelled doom for Yezhov….
Just as many people at the time and a few subsequent commentators surmised that the Great Terror had not been started on Stalin's initiative, so the idea got about that the process was entirely out of his control once it had begun. Stalin may well have failed to anticipate the catastrophic excesses of the NKVD under Yezhov. What is more, local police organs undoubtedly bothered less about arresting individuals who fell into the designated social categories than in meeting the numerical quotas assigned to them. Repressions in 1937-38 were constantly accompanied by "wrongful' arrests. Abuses and excesses were ubiquitous. It is also true that many truly anti-Soviet individuals survived the Great Terror and put themselves at the disposal of the German occupation regime in 1941. Hitler's forces had little difficulty discovering kulaks, priests, and other anti-Soviet elements
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 368-369

On 1 February 1939 Andreev, Beria, and Malenkov handed over to Stalin the act on the transfer of authority for the NKVD. In their conclusions they established "flagrant errors, perversions, and excesses" in the NKVD work: "Enemies of the people who have forced their way into the NKVD organs have deliberately perverted the punitive policy of the Soviet regime and carried out unfounded mass arrests of completely innocent people, while at the same time concealing real enemies of the people." Illegal investigation methods had been used and torture applied in order to obtain "confessions." The work of the troikas had been full of defects. Under Ezhov the guarding of Party and government leaders had been directed by Kurskii, Dagin, and other enemies: "The whole foreign agents and informants network of the NKVD was in the service of foreign intelligence services." Ezhov used to appear at his office very late and had abandoned himself to drink. He had concealed from the Central Committee "compromising evidence with respect to leading NKVD executives who have now
been unmasked and arrested as conspirators." All these things "cause serious doubts with respect to comrade Ezhov's political honesty and reliability." The draft of the covering letter, dated 29 January, asked whether Ezhov could remain a Party member, but this passage had been crossed out and was not included in the final text. The authors are inclined to think it was crossed out in accordance with Stalin.
Jansen, Marc & Petrov, Nikita. Stalin's Loyal Executioner: Yezhov, Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution Press, c2002, p. 176-177.

LAWS ARE STRENGTHENED TO REGULATE SECRET POLICE BEHAVIOR

The resolution went on to say that many prisoners had not been questioned until long after their arrests. Protocols of their statements were often not kept, or if taken down, were full of changes made by the police. Vyshinsky's staff also stood accused: the Procuracy had not worked to improve its procedures, and enemies had entered its ranks. All this had happened because the NKVD and the Procuracy had tried to "tear [their] work" away from party supervision.
Sovnarkom and the Central Committee therefore resolved to prohibit "any sort of mass operations relating to arrests and exiles" by the NKVD and the Procuracy. Henceforth arrests would require a court order and the sanction of a procurator. Exile from a border area was permitted in "each individual case" only with the approval of the Sovnarkom and the Central Committee. The troiki, so instrumental in raising the tempo of the Terror, were immediately disbanded.
When requesting a procurator's sanction for arrests, the NKVD had to produce incriminating materials, which the Procuracy was required to verify. State attorneys were specifically directed not to permit groundless arrests. NKVDisty had to follow strictly the procedures of the criminal code on investigations, including interrogation within 24 hours. All questioning had to be under the supervision of procurators, who were responsible for seeing that any violations of the specified procedures were corrected. Vyshinsky was ordered to create a special group of procurators dedicated to this task. The resolution concluded with a warning to all members of the NKVD and Procuracy: "no matter who the person," any party guilty of the "slightest violation" of the directive and Soviet laws would be brought to the "strictest legal accounting."
Vyshinsky quickly echoed the main points of the resolution in an order to the Procuracy. He added that all cases that had passed through the troiki or the NKVD's Special Sessions but had not yet reached sentencing had to be returned to the NKVD for further investigation. There could be no more prolonging of jail or camp terms for inmates. Local procurators had to meet with local NKVD heads to make all this clear to them….
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 115

As early as January 1938 a plenum of the Central Committee did take some steps, adopting a resolution that condemned the mistakes of party organizations in expelling Communists from the party and the formally bureaucratic treatment of appeals by expelled members. It also condemned scandalmongers and careerists, who were contributing to an atmosphere of distrust and suspicion in the party. It mentioned functionaries of the NKVD, the procurator's office, and judicial bodies that were under the thumb of the NKVD and committed "mistakes" in convicting honest Communists.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 238

All Party bodies, from local cells right up to the regional leaderships, were required to expel from the Party and denounce to the police any official in serious discredit, but at the same time members of the NKVD themselves were placed under surveillance, insofar as their actions were subject to the collective responsibility of the Party organizations to which they

belonged. As Party members or officeholders, they could thus be criticized, even by their own subordinates, and even expelled in their turn for “hostile” behavior. In addition–presumably to avoid the settlement of personal scores by arbitrary arrests and to ensure that policemen did not try to cover up for their friends or show off their zeal by arresting any official who happened to annoy them–the powers of police officers were hierarchically defined: they were only allowed to arrest officials of a lower rank than themselves, and never their equals. The archive material shows clearly that local NKVD officers did not have the right to arrest local leaders like themselves, even after they had been expelled from the Party.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 144

YEZHOV RESIGNS FOR INCOMPETENCE AND ADMITS HIS FAILINGS

The Terror had ended…. the highest authorities of the land had made clear their desire to end mass arrests, stabilize the country, and restore a much greater level of justice.
Yezhov had to go. On Nov. 23, 1938 he wrote to Stalin asking the Central Committee to release him from his post. He took responsibility for failing to notice that several of his close subordinates had attempted to conceal their own links to conspiracies. There were other, “completely intolerable shortcomings” in the NKVD’s work, and it had been widely penetrated by enemies and foreign agents. Yezhov continued that he had been satisfied with destroying only the upper level and part of the middle reaches of this infestation. Many enemies were left in the NKVD.
He stressed that he had proved unable to cope with the task of running a “huge and responsible commissariat.” He had seen mistakes in the NKVD but did not bring them to the Central Committee’s attention. He had recommended people for promotion who later proved to be spies. Two high NKVD officials had defected or disappeared.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 116

NO EVIDENCE OF A MASTER PLANNER PLANNING THE TERROR

Neither the beginning of, the course of, nor the end of the Terror show the hand of a master planner.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 135

This book argues that Stalin was not guilty of mass first-degree murder from 1934 to 1941 and did not plan or carry out a systematic campaign to crush the nation. This view is not one of absolution, however: his policies did help to engender real plots, lies, and threats to his position.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 227

Several conclusions follow: Stalin becomes more human than others have portrayed him. And his regime becomes less malevolent but possessed of greater popular support than is usually argued.

Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 228

EVIDENCE SHOWS THE TERROR LASTED AT MOST FROM SPRING 1937 TO LATE 1938

Even if, despite all the evidence presented thus far, extensive fear did reign for a time in the USSR, it could have begun no earlier than the spring of 1937. And it would have lasted no longer than the end of 1938, though the course of the Terror became highly checkered well before that.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 157

The evidence is thus substantial that even many people close to the centers of power did not feel fear, let alone pervasive fear, before 1937. Indeed, those who say that they personally experienced fear earlier than that are the exception, not the rule; and the accounts that do mention fear almost invariably refer to a situation among the country's elite, not to the population as a whole."
Thurston, Robert W. "Fear and Belief in the USSR's 'Great Terror': Response to Arrest, 1935-1939." Slavic Review 45 (1986), p. 218

… Anyway, my evidence suggests that widespread fear did not exist in the case at hand.
I will not simply imply, but will state outright that the Ezhovshchina was an aberration. Torture was uncommon until August 1937, when it became the norm; it ended abruptly with Beria's rise to head the NKVD in late 1938. Mass arrests followed the same pattern. Stalin emphasized the complete victory of socialism in the USSR, suggested that the old classes had been completely defeated, and belittled fear of "enemies" up into November 1936. A little over three months later, he was practically foaming at the mouth about how "enemies" had penetrated the entire country. But his tone at the 18th Party Congress in March 1939 was again largely moderate; he generally spoke of wreckers in the past tense, and he defended the Soviet intelligentsia against critics. Once more, he emphasized the unity of Soviet society, not differences within it….
I do not think that a monstrous Terror existed in the Soviet Union in the 1930s; the article repeatedly noted mass arrests of the innocent, and I wrote of "tremendous injustice and state crime… for the terror victims." We all agree that that happened. Where I differ with Conquest is in describing the scale of the Terror, its effect on the Soviet people, and whether it was a logical policy. I base my view on a detailed examination of the evidence.
Everyone in the field realizes the importance of studying these issues; one's assessment of them bears enormously on one's view of the entire Soviet experiment and of the USSR today. If Conquest or anyone who generally accepts his views can come forward with specific, firsthand evidence that counters my view of the Terror's effect on Soviet society, let him now do so.
Thurston, Robert W. "On Desk-Bound Parochialism, Commonsense Perspectives, and Lousy Evidence: A Reply to Robert Conquest." Slavic Review 45 (1986), 243-244.

ONLY A SMALL PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE FELT ANY TERROR

Both evidence and theory lead to acceptance of what people said about the Terror as reflecting their feelings at the time.
Most reactions to arrest catalogued above suggest that extensive fear did not exist in the USSR at any time in the late 1930s…. Citizens at liberty often felt that some event in the backgrounds of detained individuals justified their arrest. The sense that anyone could be next, the underpinning of theories on systems of terror, rarely appears. If by the Terror we mean that many innocent people suffered tremendously at the hands of the state, that is a valid statement; to say that all, or probably even the majority, were terrorised is as incorrect for the USSR in the last half of the 1930s as it is for Germany at the same time.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 159

But statistics from Russian archives suggest that the scale of arrests and unnatural deaths under Stalin was not sufficient to induce general fear of the regime, even considering as indirect victims the friends and families of those taken away by the NKVD. The weight of impressionistic evidence found in many memoirs, interviews, and other accounts shows the same thing. More often than fearing the government in the late 1930s, people supported its campaign to root out enemies.
… In any case, terror touched a minority of the citizens, albeit a substantial one, and the violence was concentrated among the country's elite. Many citizens, however, did not experience or even notice the Terror except in newspapers or speeches.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 232

In the civil war it was the hot breath of a genuine revolutionary anger that struck at the forces of the ancien regime which plotted, organized, armed, and fought against the new republic. The agents of the Cheka were freshly recruited from insurgent workers, were steeped in the experience of their class, shared its privations and sacrifices, and relied on its support. Their terror was as discriminating as it could be amid the chaos of civil war: it aimed at the real and active enemies of the revolution, who, even if they were not "a mere handful," were in any case a minority.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 109

LOCAL LEADERS OFTEN DID NOT LIKE CRITICISM AND SCRUTINY FROM ABOVE

Regional authorities often differed from national leaders in their reactions to criticism from below. Complaints challenged the power of local officials, and some lead to reallocation of scarce resources and unwanted, dangerous scrutiny from above. Provincial satraps therefore sometimes acted severely to throttle or punish criticism.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 187

EVERY TIME SOVIET GOVT TRIED TO BE MORE LENIENT EVENTS PREVENTED IT

The evidence is now strong that he [Stalin] did not plan the Terror. By 1935-36, the country had relaxed substantially in political terms. Coercion was steadily declining. Then came a huge new internal crisis and bloodletting. It too passed, although it left a gruesome trail. By late 1938, the regime admitted that many horrible mistakes had occurred. Once more the leadership reduced tension and curtailed the political use of law. Without the sharpening international situation of the years immediately preceding the war, more liberalization would have taken place.
There was never a long period of Stalinism without a serious foreign threat, major internal dislocation, or both, which makes identifying its true nature impossible. Was Stalinism therefore little more than crises and brutal responses to them? In answer, the trends of the calmer years between 1933 and the German invasion acquire great significance. Twice in that period amelioration in political life and use of the law, with the promise of even better to come, dominated the scene. But twice this direction was broken by unplanned events.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 233

YEZHOV WAS A BAD HEAD OF THE SECRET POLICE

The purge was raging throughout the country under the direction of the head of the NKVD, Yezhov, whose reputation was terrifying. Everyone agreed that he was half mad, a sadist, and a victim of persecution mania. But no one dared oppose him. Even the members of the Politburo were afraid of him. He was perfectly capable of forging documents which would permit him to arrest the highest officials of the government. It was common talk that Stalin, whose health was bad and who was frequently absent from Moscow, paid very little attention to what Yezhov was doing. As for Molotov, the chairman of the Politburo, he was on bad terms with Yezhov, but dared not attempt to check him.
I met Beria in Moscow at the home of my friend Mikeladze. Beria was already head of the NKVD in the Caucasus and an alternate member of the Politburo; but when I tried to persuade him to intercede with Yezhov for my engineers, he refused flatly.
"If I said anything," he said, "it would have the opposite effect from what you desire. Yezhov would crack down on your men even more severely. He doesn't always follow even Stalin's orders. I think we're going to have him shut up in an asylum soon–along with his aide, Zakovsky, who spent six years in one before the revolution. For that matter, there's a rumor that Yezhov was once in the 'yellow house' [Russian slang for 'lunatic asylum'] too in his hometown–Rostov-on-the-Don.
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 138

[Yezhov was] Dwarfish, racked by the phthisis, asthma, and angina, he was a sadist who, as well as being thin and ugly, could have given points for sheer hypocrisy to Loyola's Grand Inquisitors.
Alexandrov, Victor. The Tukhachevsky Affair. London: Macdonald, 1963, p. 69

Yagoda is no longer in charge of the NKVD…. I met Yezhov. The impression he made on me was a repulsive one…. He is a pigmy with the face of a murderer, a shifty look in his eyes and a perpetual twitching of the upper lip and left eye-lid….
He is young and does not know the past…and he is stupid to boot…. And a sadist. Pathological perversion with a sexual basis…. Such a chief for the "neighbors" will purge the

country as nobody else could…. And there is no danger, because he is stupid and will not be able to take advantage of his position. Yagoda is different.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 241

I saw Sasha who told me horrifying things. Yezhov ordered the prisoners to be brought to his office…. He humiliated them and called them the worst names in the Russian language. He spat in their faces and struck them with the butt of his revolver…. Then he had the wives brought in…. There were horrible scenes…. The women were undressed and threatened with rape…. The 18 year old daughter of… was actually raped…. He had refused to sign a confession…. Mezhlauk lost his self-control. He spat in Yezhov's face and was shot dead at once in Yezhov's office.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 259

I think I would have signed anything if only to say my daughter from…. Yezhov is a sadist and a madman.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 260

The formal indictment against Yezhov, dated February 1, 1940, reads in part: "Yezhov has been detected in treasonable espionage contacts with the Polish and German intelligence services, and with the ruling circles of Poland, Germany, England, and Japan, countries hostile to the USSR, and has headed a conspiracy in the NKVD."
… Yezhov and his confederates were in effect planning a putsch for November 7, 1938," the report continues.
… But there were points in the indictment which he [Yezhov] did not care to deny. "I had sexual relations with men and women, taking advantage of my official position…. In October or November 38 I had an intimate liaison with the wife of a subordinate and with her husband with whom I had a pederastic affair."
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 430

Ezhov was criticised strongly for sometimes having led NKVD into exaggerations in the hunt for traitors, exaggerations that meant that innocent people were imprisoned and submitted to severe hardships.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

Yezhov's biographers agree that ""the worst sides of his character revealed themselves,'' and they note his ""lust for power, arrogance, rudeness.''
Jansen, Marc & Petrov, Nikita. Stalin's Loyal Executioner: Yezhov, Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution Press, c2002, p. 9

If during this operation an extra thousand people will be shot, that is not such a big deal.
I. Ezhov, July 1937

Better too far than not far enough.
I. Ezhov, October 1937

YEZHOV RULES OVER STALIN ON SOME ISSUES

The Secretary-General's Office rang up to say that Bogomolov [Soviet Ambassador to the Allied Governments in London (1943-44), France, Czechoslovakia and Poland. Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister in 1950] must return to Moscow…. It means that even he, Stalin, gives in to Yezhov….
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 262

VOROSHILOV DETESTS YEZHOV

He [Voroshilov] is said to have already demanded from the Secretary-General the removal and arrest of Yezhov…. He threatened to shoot him personally, like a dog at the Party's Central Committee,… Yezhov knows it and fears him….
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 281

YEZHOV WORKED FOR THE CZARIST SECRET POLICE

The Instantia [Politburo] has held a secret meeting. Beria submitted a document from the archives of the Rostov Okhrana…. Yezhov was at one time a secret informer working for Colonel Vassilyev…. How horrible …. The chief purger, "the glorious head of Soviet intelligence," is a former petty agent of the Tsarist Okhrana…. It was decided to remove Yezhov without further delay and quietly….
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 282

YEZHOV WORKS TO UNDERMINE THE SOVIET GOVT

This is how the new head of the NKVD [Yezhov] was ruling and masterminding the provocations. Before that, he worked as a secretary in the Central Committee. At the decision of the Central Committee, he was to solidify the composition of secretaries of the Central Committee with good, solid, dedicated Bolsheviks. But soon enough, these were "Yezhov's gloves," who were at his command.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 76

Who was it that recommended such an unreliable scoundrel [Yezhov] to such a high position? It was Malenkov, Mikoyan, Khrushchev, and Kaganovich. Unfortunately, none of these people told Stalin that this drunkard, this loose-living scoundrel was like that before in the Secretariat of the party.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 77

Two years of arrests and executions had occurred, and it was known that a high proportion of the victims did not belong to the categories of people describable as "anti-Soviet elements.' It is quite possible too that Yezhov misled Stalin about aspects of the process.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 369

STALIN STOOD BEHIND LOYAL AND DEDICATED MARXISTS WHO WERE ATTACKED

Where there were party secretaries of districts that were honest Bolsheviks, dedicated and loyal Soviets, there were no problems of arrests of innocent people or provocations. One example was the dedicated party Secretary of the Stalingrad District Committee, Chuyanov. When the head of the NKVD Sharov and assistant Tsac presented him with a list of people to be arrested, he told them that he needed a day to think about this. He looked over the documents and saw that these people were innocent. He freed all of those arrested. Then he got an angry telephone call from Malenkov in Moscow, accusing Chuyanov of doing this on his own. Malenkov, fired up, came to Stalin and reported all this. Stalin did not support Malenkov, knowing Chuyanov well and Stalin knew from long working together with Chuyanov that here was a brave Bolshevik dedicated to Socialism.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 78

STALIN WANTS PEOPLE JUDGED BY THEIR BEHAVIOR & NOT THEIR CLASS & FAVORS FORGIVING

Speech by Stalin at the Enlarged Meeting of the Defense Counsel of the Ministry of Defense–June 2, 1937

STALIN: Comrades, about this, that a military-political plot was working against the Soviet State, I know now that no one can question these charges. The fact is that the admission of these conspirators themselves and the facts gathered by our people working in our Soviet Army, such an enormous mass of evidence, such numbers of comrades from all over the USSR who testified as to the work of these traitors, that everything points to the military-political undermining of the Soviet State, stimulated and financed by German fascism….
They say that Tukhachevsky is, or was, a landowner, someone else was from a religious family. Such talk and such an attitude does not yield any results at all… and it does not solve anything–absolutely nothing. When they talk about landownership, it means that this class is a class which is antagonistic to the working class, but this does not mean that some people from this ownershipclass cannot serve the people. Lenin was from a landowner class–did you know that?
VOICE FROM AUDIENCE: Of course we know.
STALIN: Engels was a son of a factory owner–you cannot say that it was a proletarian element. The same Engels managed this factory but at the same time was feeding Karl Marx. Chernishevsky was a son of a priest–he was a very good person. And on the other side… Serebryakov was a worker, and you know what kind of unsavory character he became. Lipshitz was a worker also, not well-educated, but became–a spy.
When we talk about our enemies, we talk about a class, but that does not mean that every person from that class cannot help the working class and these people worked well. From a section of the people, let's say from the lawyers, there were many revolutionaries. Marx was a son of a lawyer, not a son of a worker or farm laborer…. So, to use the saying that of course "he is not a son of a worker"–this is an old saying and cannot be used to describe everyone. This is not the Marxist way.

This is not a Marxist method. This is, I would say, a biological way-method, but not Marxist. We Marxist do not follow the biological path, but the sociological path. I will not analyze these people from this point of view at all.
There is among you another method which is also wrong. Many times I hear: “In 1922 someone voted for Trotsky.” This is not correct. A person could have been young not versed in the struggles that were taking place. Dzerzhinsky as you know also voted for Trotsky, not only voted, but openly supported Trotsky during Lenin’s time and against Lenin. Do you know that? He was not such a kind of person that could remain passive in any kind of debate or argument. He was a very active Trotskyite and even in the GPU, he wanted to raise an argument to defend Trotsky. In this, he was not successful. Andreev was also a very active Trotskyite in 1921.
VOICE FROM AUDIENCE: Which Andreev?
STALIN: Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU, Andrey Andreev. So you see, that the question of someone, some time ago voted for so and so, someone in the past was neither here nor there in his outlook, is not always absolute or correct.
Thus, this second prevalent attitude that we find in our ranks is not altogether correct and many times, it leads to misunderstanding and incorrect conclusions.
The most important way of judging people is by their own actions. There were people who were supporting now one side then another, but they left, and left peacefully and honorably and together with us, are struggling and fighting against Trotskyism. Dzerzhinsky, after seeing the reality, argued and criticized Trotsky as did comrade Andreev. There still are people of this caliber. I would surmise that there are scores among our top rank leaders who left Trotskyism, left in anger and now are criticizing and exposing this activity excellently….
This is not surprising, that people like Dzerzhinsky, Andreev, and scores of other former Trotskyites finally realized their mistakes, saw the correctness of Lenin’s position, and finally came over to our side of the party.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 104-107

[April 1937 resolution of the ECCI Presidium and the ICC Bureau]
Having announced the intention of continuing to pursue a vigilant policy toward “enemies” and their abettors, the resolution then echoed one of Stalin’s “invaluable instructions.”
“Pitilessly expelling from the Party traitors, alien and hostile elements, double-dealers, degenerates, demoralized elements, crooks, incorrigible factionalists and people who systematically violate the rules of Party secrecy, the control commissions must, however, be lenient with those Party members who have made a mistake [but] are still capable of being good Party members and, realizing the incorrectness of their actions, honestly undertake by their future conduct to repair their guilt before the Party.”
Chase, William J., Enemies Within the Gates?, translated by Vadim A. Staklo, New Haven: Yale University Press, c2001, p. 223.

US AND USSR ARE EQUALLY REPRESSIVE WHEN THEY FEEL CONDITIONS WARRANT IT

… in fact, there has been no qualitative difference between the civil liberties granted to those who attack the fundamental institutions of U.S. society and the civil liberties granted to those who attack the fundamental institutions of any other society. Whenever dissidence has

threatened to promote mass-based assaults on the prevailing property and state system, or the ability of the state to mobilize for external war or intervention, it has been repressed in the U.S. as surely and thoroughly as it has been in the Soviet Union…. Such is the nature of any state.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 152

During the American War of Independence from Great Britain (1775-83) there were few civil liberties for Loyalists in areas controlled by the rebels. In this respect, as well as others, the birth of the American Republic was no different from any other revolutionary war.
There was considerable Loyalist sympathy among the colonists. Approximately one-third of white adults sympathized with the crown and supported British rule against the Americans. It has been estimated that between 30,000 and 50,000 Americans served with the British army against the revolutionaries. In 1780 there were perhaps 8000 Loyalists in the British regular Army while Washington's army numbered only 9000. Loyalists were active in all aspects of mobilization and support of the British cause, as well as in direct military actions against the independence forces. Because the exercise of speaking, writing, and of other civil liberties in support of the King endangered the rebel cause, these 'human rights' were suppressed. Everywhere there was unlimited freedom to support the rebel cause, but support of the King, or even criticism of the rebels, brought tar and feathers, if not jail. ' Liberty of speech belonged solely to those who spoke the speech of liberty.'
Repression of loyalist sentiments began in the mid-1760s with the formation of the Sons of Liberty, who engaged in 'patriotic' violence and intimidation against Tory publishers and other vocal supporters of the King. Boycotts, riotous demonstrations, and mob violence became the fate of authors of articles, pamphlets, and newspapers that reflected support of Britain. Beginning in 1775, states started passing legislation making it a seditious act to libel or defame Congress or the state assemblies; by 1778 all states had such legislation. Eight states formally banished prominent Tories. In 1776, the Congress urged all the states to enact laws to prevent people from being 'deceived and drawn into erroneous opinion.' Loyalty tests and oaths became common. Those who refused to swear that 'a war of the Colonies was just and necessary' and 'renounce all allegiance and obedience to George III and promise fair and true allegiance' to his State were subject to political, legal, and civil punishments, including disenfranchisement, loss of legal rights, confiscation of property, banishment, disarming, special taxes, loss of jobs, and imprisonment. To practice a profession one had to secure a certificate of loyalty. In all states, Tories were deprived of the right to vote and prohibited from holding any office. Basic civil rights, such as the right to buy or sell land, travel, or serve on a jury, were denied to Tories in most states.
Denunciation of the patriot cause or utterance of remarks deemed to undermine it were severely punished. Legislation was common which imposed penalties from heavy fines or jail sentences to death and forfeiture of property for utterance of opinions denying the independent authority of the new states and asserting the sovereignty of the King. Loyalists were banned from the teaching profession. They were forcibly moved en mass from lesser to greater secure areas, especially when an area was under threat from the British. For example, Rhode Island forcibly relocated some of its Loyalists to the northern part of the state, and New York and New Jersey's Loyalists were shifted to Connecticut. In 1777 the Continental Congress advised the states to confiscate Loyalist estates. All the states levied special taxes on, or confiscated, considerable numbers of Loyalist properties, including the large Loyalist landed properties in the Hudson River Valley.

As the crisis between Britain and the colonies deepened after 1765, newspapers and printers came under increasing pressure to ban Loyalist or even neutralist material. By 1774, only Boston and New York had a Loyalist Press, and in 1775 only New York.
Editors who dared to publish articles critical of the rebels had their presses destroyed and were banished and Imprisoned. In early 1776 the printer of a Loyalist tract in New York City had his press broken into and the plates and copies destroyed. Every printer in New York immediately received a copy of the following communique:
"Sir, if you print, or suffer to be printed in your press anything against the rights and liberties of America, or in favor of our inveterate foes, the King, Ministry, and Parliament of Great Britain, death and destruction, ruin and perdition, shall be your portion…."
After this there were no more Loyalist publications printed in New York City.
The American revolutionaries systematically employed revolutionary terror to intimidate Loyalists and inspire revolutionary sentiments. Gen. Nathaniel Greene, commander of the American Southern Continental Army from 1780 to 1783 instructed his commanders that the American partisans were 'to strike terror into our enemies and give spirit to our friends.' Greene described a partisan raid against Loyalist supporters as follows. 'They made a dreadful carnage of them, upward on 100 were killed and most of the rest cut to pieces. It has had a very happy effect on those disaffected persons of which there are too many in this country.' Greene's scientific understanding of the role of terror in a revolutionary situation in intimidating counter-revolutionaries, while inspiring the morale of the revolutionaries, has been understood by other revolutionaries before and since.
Not until after the War of 1812 did the various laws discriminating against Tories finely disappear from the statute books. The conclusion of peace with Great Britain did not mean the end of persecution of the Loyalists, in fact in some areas persecution increased. Loyalists who had fled or been banished, and tried to return to their homes, often met violence, public humiliation, imprisonment, deportation, and even death. Loyalists who were allowed to settle peacefully in their old home areas were often fined and denied political rights.
A great many loyalist fled (or were forced out of) rebel areas. There was a total of between 80,000 and 100,000 Loyalist refugees who left the 13 colonies during the Revolution, about 4% of the white population….
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 153-154

The Jeffersonians were generally sympathetic to developments in France. In the face of rising public support for the Jeffersonians and growing disenchantment with Federalist principles, The Federalist administration of John Adams attempted to repress criticism through the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798. The sedition act punished 'false, scandalous and malicious writings' against the government. The text of its most relevant section follows:
"Section 2…. That if any person shall right, print, utter or publish, or shall cause or procure to be written, printed, uttered, or published, or shall knowingly and willingly assist or aid in writing, etc…. any false, scandalous, and malicious writings against the government of the United States, or either house of the Congress… or the president, with intent to bring them into contempt or disrepute or to excite against them… shall be punished by a fine not exceeding $2000 and by imprisonment not exceeding two years."
Twenty-five persons were arrested between 1798 and 1801 under the sedition law, 11 cases came to trial and 10 persons were convicted. The most important of the prosecutions were against the leading Republican newspapers in the country:… The trials against the leading Republican newspaper editors were heavily biased against the defendants with prejudiced

Federalist judges closely guiding the proceeding and juries selected on account of their Federalist sympathies.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 155-156

As in all civil wars, there were no civil liberties for opponents in the American Civil War…. Southern sympathizers, and even neutrals, were systematically repressed in the North. Habeas corpus was suspended by President Lincoln in April 1861 in the region between Washington and Philadelphia, and in July the suspension was extended to New York. In September 1862 there was a general suspension of the writ of habeas corpus because, according to Lincoln, 'disloyal persons are not adequately restrained by the ordinary process of law.' Lincoln's writ (ratified by Congress in March 1863), read:
"During the existing insurrection… all rebels and insurgents, their aiders and abetters, within the United States and all persons discouraging voluntary enlistments, resisting military drafts, or guilty of any disloyal practices… shall be subject to martial law and liable to trials and punishments by courts-martial or military commission:
Second, that the writ of habeas corpus is suspended in respect to all persons arrested,…"
Thus the Bill of Rights was suspended for the duration of the war for Confederate sympathizers and neutralists. Lincoln, towards the end of the war, justified suspension of civil liberties by arguing that it was necessary to protect the Constitution:
"… By general law, life and limb must be protected, yet often a limb must be amputated to save a life, but a life is never wisely given to save a limb. I felt that measures otherwise unconstitutional, might become lawful by becoming indispensable to the preservation of the Constitution through the preservation of the nation. Right or wrong I assumed this ground and I now avow it."
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 158-159

The Army of the Republic directly suppressed pro-Confederate papers. In St. Louis The Missouri State Journal, The Herald and The Evening News were suspended. All newspapers in Missouri, except those in St. Louis, had to furnish advance copy of each issue to the army for inspection before they could go to press. The Chicago Times was suppressed in June 1863 by order of the Department of the Ohio. In May 1864 The Baltimore Evening Transcript was suppressed and The Cincinnati Enquirer was forbidden to circulate in Kentucky, by order of the military.
From February 1862 to the end of the war approximately 13,500 civilians were arrested and confined in military prisons for activities in support of the Confederacy. In addition there were many imprisonments in state and Federal prisons. The total number of Northern political prisoners of all categories was approximately 38,000.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 160

At a rally in Chicago on May 4, 1886, called to protest at the killing of strikers by the Chicago police, a still unidentified person threw a dynamite bomb into the ranks of the police killing a number of them…. Two of those who were tried, Albert Parsons & George Engel, were not even at the rally when the bomb was thrown. However, these two anarchist leaders, along with two others, were hung, having been convicted at various times in the past of having 'uttered and printed incendiary and seditious language,…
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 162

In short, it appears that the attention given by the West to the repression of ‘human rights” in the USSR is out of all proportion to what is actually occurring there. This suggests that the immense publicity the dissident movement receives in the West must have other causes. Close parallels exist between restrictions on formal civil liberties in the U.S. during those periods in which there was a challenge to its hegemonic institutions, and the restrictions on civil liberties in the Soviet Union in the last generation. Both societies have deported those whom it considers undesirables, and both restrict the entry of foreigners considered to be undesirable, and the right of its citizens to travel overseas, although emigration from the USSR has been more restricted than it has in the US. Both societies have employed police harassment, surveillance, seizure of books, etc., against dissidents. There appears to be no significant difference in this regard between the U.S. response to the Red Scare periods of 1917-23 and 1947-56 and the response to dissident activity in the Soviet Union since the 1950s. Both societies have restricted the circulation of published works and the expression of subversive ideas in the mass media. The ban on the expression of leftist ideas in American radio, television, films, mass newspapers, etc. in the 1950s was as thorough as the suppression of anti-socialist ideas in the Soviet Union. On the whole, it appears that the level of repression in the Soviet Union in the 1955 to 1980 period was at approximately the same level as in the US during the McCarthy years (1947-56).
Cycles of suppression of civil liberties have occurred throughout U.S. history, corresponding to periods when the dominant institutions, namely, the state and the property of the upper class, have been challenged. When neither of these institutions was specifically endangered, but when mobilization for external wars was considered necessary, civil liberties were also repressed. Usually, a combination of both these factors has precipitated periods of the most intense repression of civil liberties in U.S. history.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 290

Stalin did indeed act more harshly than the democratic leaders, but Roosevelt and Churchill killed their millions too. The difference was there, but it was not so great as most Westerners like to think. It was a difference in judging the degree of emergency in the political and international scenes: Stalin saw emergencies constantly and everywhere, Roosevelt only sometimes and only at the theaters of war. But when an emergency was recognized, all the world leaders of Stalin’s day acted as if the end justified the means.
Randall, Francis. Stalin’s Russia. New York: Free Press,1965, p. 90

A GREATER PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE FLED THE AMERICAN REV. THAN THE RUSSIAN

But it should be noted that of the 20th Century revolutions only the Cuban (as a matter of deliberate policy) has produced, relatively, a significantly higher number of permanent refugees than did the American Revolution. The percentage of refugees from China or Russia was lower than that reached after the American Revolution. There were, for example, about 2.5 million refugees from the Russian Revolution–almost 1.5 percent of that country’s population [which is about a third of those who left during the American Revolution].
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 155

NEWSPAPERS WERE SUPPRESSED IN THE US WHEN DEEMED NECESSARY

Newspapers with Confederate sympathies were suppressed throughout the North, through imprisonment of editors and denial of the mails, as well as executive orders and the military forcibly suppressing papers or forbidding their circulation in certain areas. Henry Reeves of the Greenport, Long Island Republican was sent to military prison for the treasonable character of his paper. James McMaster, editor of the New York Freeman's Appeal, was arrested in September 1861 and charged with editing a disloyal newspaper. F. D. and J. R. Flanders of the New York Franklin Gazette were imprisoned without trial. James Wall, a contributor to The New York Daily News (which was suppressed by banning from the U.S. mails) was arrested and placed in military prison because of the pro-Southern articles he had written for the paper. Denial of the use of the mails (any class) became a tool to suppress insufficiently patriotic papers. In addition to The New York Daily News excluded papers included The South and The Exchange (both from Baltimore), The New York Day Book, The Brooklyn Eagle, The New York Journal of Commerce and The Freeman's Journal.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 159

US DEPORTED LEFTIST PEOPLE IN MASS WITHOUT SO MUCH AS A HEARING AS TO GUILT

The purpose of the 'Palmer' raids was to destroy the newly formed Communist parties in the U.S., primarily through seizing and deporting their alien members (who were a substantial proportion of their membership). Deportation was an especially efficient process, because deportation proceedings did not require the due process safeguards of criminal proceedings (no indictments, no judge, no jury, no lawyers). Deportation was a purely administrative matter handled by the Department of Labor.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 169

Many of the arrests were made without warrants, and of those detained many were held incommunicado and denied the right to counsel; many were not even radicals.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 170

PHYSICAL PRESSURE APPLIED TO POLITICAL PRISONERS IS LEGALIZED IN 1937

In 1937 this privileged status ended. For the next few years the regime for political prisoners was harsher than that for common criminals. The corrective labor camps were transformed into hard labor camps, with the primary function of punishing suspected counter-revolutionaries while forcing them to aid the socialist transition by physical construction work, with little or no serious attempt at rehabilitation….
For the first 20 years of the Revolution, in the words of Anna Louis Strong: 'The Soviet people had prided themselves on the absence in the jails, not only of the torture used by the Nazis, but of even the third-degree as practiced in the United States.' The year 1937 also saw the introduction of torture as a permissible police technique. An instruction from the party's General Secretary issued on January 1939 read:
"The General Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) explains that the application of methods of physical pressure in NKVD practice is permissible from 1937 on in accordance with permission of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party

(Bolsheviks)…. It is known that all bourgeois intelligence services use methods of physical influence against the representatives of the socialist proletariat and that they use them in their most scandalous form. The question arises as to why the socialist intelligence service should be more humanitarian against the mad agents of the bourgeoisie, against the deadly enemies of the working-class and the Kolkhoz workers. The Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) considers that physical pressure should still be used obligatorily, as an exception applicable to known and obstinate enemies of the people, as a method both justifiable and appropriate."

In Getty's words: "The increased tension of the spy scare/war scare/vigilance campaign was in vivid contrast to the preceding events, which constituted a lull of nearly two years since the death of Kirov. Concerning the period 1935-36 Getty argues that it would be: 'ridiculous to regard this period as one of rising hysteria or vigilance. With the exchange of Party documents, in fact, the vigilance theme had receded into the background.'
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 236

US CLIENT STATES COMMIT FAR MORE REPRESSION THAN THE SU EVER DID

It is no accident that day after day the Western mass media gives prominent attention to the dissidents in the Soviet Union, to the attempted 'escapes' from the German Democratic Republic, to the flight of 'boat people' from Vietnam, the restrictions on books at the Moscow International Book Fair, and so on. But these events are virtually insignificant in comparison with the denial of civil liberties, massive deaths through repression, malnutrition and preventable disease, and other sufferings in U.S.-supported states in Asia and Latin America. The relative handful of Soviet dissidents have been elevated to the status of international heroes and their every proclamation circulated around the world, but hardly anyone in the US realizes that repression is qualitatively greater in U.S. client states, and that very few know the names of any of the hundreds of thousands of people murdered for their political beliefs by 'friendly' governments in these countries in recent years.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 316

BLUMKIN WAS 1ST PARTY LEADER EXECUTED BUT OTHER MORE VOCAL TROTS WERE NOT

This was the first execution of its kind [in late 1929]. True, other Trotskyists had already paid for their convictions with their lives, perishing from hunger and exhaustion–the year before, for instance, Butov, one of Trotsky's secretaries, died in prison after a long hunger strike. Nevertheless, the rule that the Bolsheviks must never repeat the mortal error of the Jacobins and have recourse in their internecine struggles to execution had hitherto been respected, at least in form. Now that rule was broken. Blumkin was the first party member on whom capital punishment was inflicted,….
Curiously enough, no capital punishment was as yet inflicted on the avowed Trotskyists, who from their prisons and punitive colonies were in communication with their leader, who sent him collective greetings on October anniversaries and May Days, and whose names appeared under articles and "theses" in the Bulletin Oppozitsii [Opposition Bulletin].
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 89

FIGURES GIVEN BY SOLZHENITSYN REGARDING DEATHS IN THE SU ARE ABSURDLY HIGH

Western publications frequently give exaggerated figures for the number of people who died during the Stalin Terror or the years of war. Solzhenitsyn, for example, referring to the calculations of professor Kurganov, has declared on many occasions that 66 million lives were lost during the terror and a further 44 million during the war. In other words, it is claimed that over the period 1918-53 the USSR lost 110 million persons, for the most part male. The simplest demographic calculation shows this to be implausible. For if these figures were regarded as accurate, it would have to be the case that from 1918 to 1953 not one person died a natural death in the Soviet Union.
Medvedev, Roy. On Stalin and Stalinism. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 140

THE BOLSHEVIKS REPRESSED THOSE WHO EARLIER HAD REPRESSED THEM

(Foreign Delegation's Interview with Stalin on November 5, 1927)
QUESTION: Why are not the imprisoned Mensheviks released?

ANSWER: Evidently this refers to the active Mensheviks. Yes, it is true the active Mensheviks in our country are not released from prison until their sentence expires. But why wonder at this? Why did they not release from prison, for instance, the Bolsheviks in July, August, September, and October, 1917, when the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries were in power? Why was Lenin compelled to keep in hiding and underground in August, September, and October, 1917, when the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries were in power?… How can you explain the fact that… "Pravda," the organ of Lenin's Party, was smashed by the bourgeois Yunkers in spite of the fact that prominent and active leaders of the Second International (Mensheviks and Social Democrats) were then in power. This can be explained evidently by the fact that the struggle between bourgeois counter-revolution and proletarian revolution cannot but lead to repression. I have already stated that the Social-Democrats in our country are a counter-revolutionary party, and from this it follows that the proletarian revolution cannot help arresting the active leaders of this counter-revolutionary party.
Stalin, Joseph. The Worker's State. London: Communist Party of Great Britain. 1928, p. 7

STALIN HAD A STRONG SENSE OF JUSTICE AND FAIR PLAY

"It is difficult to describe the process," said Stalin when asked 30 years later why he became a socialist. "First, one became convinced that existing conditions were wrong and unjust. Then one resolved to do the best one could to remedy them…. Russian capitalism was the most atrocious and bestial in the world. The tsar's government was also the most corrupt, cruel, and inefficient."
"My whole atmosphere," observed Stalin, "was saturated with hatred of tsarist oppression, and I threw myself wholeheartedly into revolutionary work."
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 9-10

Peter Solomon, in his study of Stalinist criminal justice, combined an emphasis on Stalin's intentions with an analysis of the environment and structure in which he functioned. He showed how in the 1930s Stalin was working to consolidate a modern legal order with reliable courts, respect for laws, and predictable punishments all in the interests of a strong centralized state….
Getty, J. Arch. "Excesses are not permitted, "Russian Review 61 (January 2002) p. 116

When it had become clear that the battle for collectivization was won, the Stalinists thus sought to abolish mass operations and to stop the promiscuous use of punitive sanctions by local and nonjudicial bodies. As early as July 1931 the party ordered that all death sentences imposed by the secret police (OGPU) be confirmed by the Politburo, and the following spring removed the OGPU's right to judge criminal cases of exiled peasants, transferring them to the regular courts. In February 1933 the Politburo established a commission that recommended a substantial decrease in prison populations to be effected by early releases of many convicts and wholesale release of those illegally arrested. These measures were consolidated and extended in an important party-state decree of 8 May 1933, which official spokesmen would refer to often in the next five years. Although it is usually cited for its call to reduce prison populations by half, its real message was the end of mass operations. Signed by Stalin and Molotov, this directive stated that the moment has come…when we are no longer in need of mass repression. Blaming local officials for an "orgy of arrests," Stalin and Molotov argued that mass violence was inefficient and counterproductive. Repression was not to be ended, but rather focused and streamlined. "These comrades do not understand that the method of mass, disorderly arrests, if this can be considered a method, represents, in light of the new situation, only liabilities which diminish the authority of Soviet power. They do not understand that making arrests ought to be limited and carried out under the strict control of appropriate organs. They do not understand that arrests must be directed solely against active enemies of Soviet power…. They do not understand that if this kind of action took on a massive character to any extent, it could nullify the influence of our party in the countryside. The day before the 8 May 1933 decree was published, the Politburo had forbidden secret police (OGPU) troikas from passing any more death sentences at all, and according to the 8 May 1933 decree, police agencies could make arrests only with the preliminary sanction of a state procurator. Such a rule would make mass repressive operations practically impossible insofar as it required approval of individual arrests by an individual procurator.
Getty, J. Arch. "Excesses are not permitted, "Russian Review 61 (January 2002) pp. 118-119

In July 1933 an all-union USSR Procuracy was established for the first time to supervise the legality and rightness of actions undertaken by the OGPU, by the police, by the department of criminal investigation and by corrective-labor institutions. The most important institutional change limiting the ability of local and nonjudicial bodies to arrest, try, and execute was the formation of an All-union People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD SSSR). Taken in February 1934 on Stalin's motion, this decision abolished the former secret police (OGPU) and folded some of its functions into the new NKVD, but without any judicial powers. According to the new regulations, the NKVD did not have the power to pass death sentences or to inflict extralegal .administrative. punishments of more than five years exile. As Stalin's lieutenant L. M. Kaganovich put it, "the reorganization of the OGPU means that, as we are now in more normal times, we can judge through the courts and not resort to extrajudicial repression as we have until now." New NKVD chief G. G. Yagoda, perhaps wistfully, told a

secret police conference that the era of mass repression had ended, and that any calls to renew it were now an “enemy theory.” In January 1935, Stalin wrote to Vyshinsky that policing measures should now be “gradual, without shocks” and should be carried out “without extra administrative enthusiasm.”
Getty, J. Arch. “Excesses are not permitted, “Russian Review 61 (January 2002) p. 120.

Stalin certainly encouraged zeal in the hunt for “enemies of the people.” Both directly and through Ezhov he pressed for more and more arrests and he approved requests for increased limits. At the same time, he reserved the center’s right to approve those limits. Despite his murderous encouragement, after spending several years trying to secure his regional subordinates obedience to his commands, there is no reason to believe that he expected to be disobeyed or that he wanted the locals to exceed instructions. We do not have at our disposal a single document suggesting that he encouraged or planned for local spontaneity that went beyond his permission, and quite a few suggesting the contrary, beginning with the limits and restrictions against “excesses” and procedures in Order No. 447.
Getty, J. Arch. “Excesses are not permitted, “Russian Review 61 (January 2002) p. 133.

PEOPLE WERE REPRESSED FOR THEIR ACTS NOT THEIR IDEAS

It is said that you shot people even for ideas.
Not for ideas. Why for ideas at all? But who would believe that these old, experienced conspirators, using the experience of Bolshevik conspiracy and cooperation, underground organisation would not get together to form an organisation.
They did form an organisation. Tomsky and Zinoviev did get together. They met at their dacha. And what about the Ryutin Platform – these were not ideas. These people organised an uprising against the Soviet state and they could have headed a revolt.
The entire method of Lenin’s struggle against the bourgeoisie could have been used against us. They had their people everywhere, in the army and elsewhere. They had formed organisations spread out in chains.
THUS SPAKE KAGANOVICH by Feliks Chuyev, 1992

STALIN CONDONES TORTURE IN EXTREME CASES WITH TIGHT RESTRICTIONS

To the Secretaries of oblast and regional party committees,
To the CCs of national Communist parties,
To the people’s commissars of internal affairs, and to the heads of NKVD directorates

It has become known to the VKP CC that the secretaries of oblast and regional party committees, in checking up on employees of NKVD directorates, have laid blame on them for the use of physical pressure against those who have been arrested, treating it as something criminal. The VKP CC affirms that the use of physical pressure in the work of the NKVD has been permitted since 1937 in accordance with a resolution of the VKP CC. This directive indicated that physical pressure was to be used in exceptional cases and only against blatant enemies of the people who, when interrogated by humane methods, defiantly refuse to turn over the names of co-conspirators, and who refuse for months on end to

provide any evidence, and who try to thwart the unmasking of co-conspirators who are still at large, and who thereby continue even from prison to wage a struggle against the Soviet regime. Experience has shown that such an arrangement has produced good results and has greatly expedited the unmasking of enemies of the people. True, subsequently in practice the method of physical pressure was abused by Zakovsky, Litvin, Uspensky, and other scoundrels, converting it from an exception into a rule and beginning to apply it against honest people who had been arrested accidentally. For these abuses, they [the scoundrels] have been given due punishment. But this in no way detracts from the value of the method itself when it is properly used. It is known that all bourgeois secret services use physical pressure against representatives of the socialist proletariat and rely on especially savage methods of it. We might therefore ask why a socialist secret service should be any more more humane in relation to inveterate agent of the bourgeoisie and sworn enemies of the working class and collectivized farmers. The VKP CC believes that the use of physical pressure must absolutely be continued from here on in exceptional cases and against blatant and invidious enemies of the people, and that this is a perfectly appropriate and desirable method. The VKP CC demands that the secretaries of oblast and regional party committees and the CCs of national party committees bear in mind this explanation when they check up on the employees of NKVD directorates.
Stalin, Joseph. “On Applying Physical Pressure to Prisoners.” 10 January 1939. RGASPI, f. 1, op. 58, d. 6, ll. 145-146. Trans. by Dr. Mark Kramer, Harvard University. 1940.

In early 1939, Stalin informed the regional Party and NKVD chiefs that “from 1937 on in NKVD practice the use of physical pressure [on prisoners] was permitted by the Central Committee.” It was permitted “exceptionally,” according to Stalin), “only with respect to such overt enemies of the people who take advantage of humane interrogation methods in order to shamelessly refuse to give away conspirators, who for months don’t testify and try to impede the unmasking of those conspirators who are still free.” Stalin considered it a “totally correct and expedient method”–though later the practice had been soiled by scoundrels like Zakovskii, Litvin, and Uspenskii, Stalin added, after these NKVD executives had been liquidated themselves. They had turned it “from an exception into a rule,” applying it to “accidentally arrested honest people.”
Jansen, Marc & Petrov, Nikita. Stalin’s Loyal Executioner: Yezhov, Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution Press, c2002, p. 111.

PEOPLE UNJUSTLY TREATED STILL DEFENDED STALIN

Even some of those who were repressed continued to believe that “enemies” existed. In fact, they attributed their unjust fate to “enemy” machinations and believed that if only Stalin or Yezhov knew the facts of their case, Soviet justice would prevail, and they would be set free.
Chase, William J., Enemies Within the Gates?, translated by Vadim A. Staklo, New Haven: Yale University Press, c2001, p. 410.

Even after being tortured, Razumova, Valter, and Terziev did not believe the NKVD as an organization to be at fault. Rather, they believed that “Trotskyists” and “enemies” had infiltrated its ranks.
Chase, William J., Enemies Within the Gates?, translated by Vadim A. Staklo, New Haven: Yale University Press, c2001, p. 416.

ARRESTS DECLINED EACH YEAR FROM 1933 TO 1936

Mass operations in the 1933-36 period were on a dramatically reduced scale, incomparable with those of the preceding period. According to secret police data, arrests for "counterrevolutionary insurrection" (a common charge in mass operations, including the subsequent kulak operation) fell from 135,000 in 1933 to 2,517 in 1936. Each year from 1933 to 1936, the number of both political and nonpolitical arrests declined. In this period there was a three-fold decrease in arrests for "political," counterrevolutionary crimes (Article 58 of the criminal code) from 283,029 in 1933 to 91,127 in 1936. Arrests for nonpolitical offenses fell five-fold in the same period, from 222,227 in 1933 to 40,041 in 1936. Despite the continuation of certain restricted mass operations, the time of mass NKVD arrests was clearly on the wane.
Getty, J. Arch. "Excesses are not permitted, "Russian Review 61 (January 2002) p. 121.

LOCAL OFFICIALS MADE THE DECISIONS ON WHO DIED MORE THAN THE CENTER

Given that local authorities decided how many would be repressed, who would live and who would die, it is difficult to agree that everything was planned and administered from Moscow.
Getty, J. Arch. "Excesses are not permitted, "Russian Review 61 (January 2002) p. 133.

YEZHOV ADMITS BEING IN THE OPPOSITION EARLIER

After his fall, the Chekist S. F. Redens testified that Ezhov had on at least one occasion privately boasted about having come out against Lenin and having been an adherent of the anti-intellectual Machajski movement. In 1936 in a registration form Ezhov stated that he had belonged to the ""Workers' Opposition" within the Communist Party but had broken with it before the Tenth Party Congress of March 1921. Four years later, before the court, he admitted only to having sympathized with the Opposition, adding that he had never been a member and that after Lenin's criticism of March 1921 he had recognized its deceit and had lined up behind Lenin.
Jansen, Marc & Petrov, Nikita. Stalin's Loyal Executioner: Yezhov, Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution Press, c2002, p. 8

YEZHOV DOES NOT KNOW WHEN TO STOP

I don't know of any more ideal functionary than Ezhov. Rather, he is not a functionary, but an executor. After charging him with a task, you don't have to check up on him: he will accomplish the mission. Ezhov has only one, indeed essential, shortcoming,he does not know where to stop. . . . Sometimes you have to take care to stop him in time.
Jansen, Marc & Petrov, Nikita. Stalin's Loyal Executioner: Yezhov, Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution Press, c2002, p. 20

We may recall that, being the ideal executor, according to Moskvin, he had one essential shortcoming: he did not know where to stop. Summed up in his own words, his logic was:

“Better too far than not far enough.” This method of working could not infinitely be prolonged without great danger even for the Stalinist system itself.
Jansen, Marc & Petrov, Nikita. Stalin’s Loyal Executioner: Yezhov, Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution Press, c2002, p. 209.

At the end of his life, Stalin told his bodyguard that “the drunkard Ezhov” had been recommended for the NKVD by Malenkov: “While in a state of intoxication, he signed lists for the arrest of often innocent people that had been palmed off on him.”
In interviews in the 1970s, Molotov reasoned along similar lines. According to him, Ezhov had enjoyed a good reputation, until he “morally degenerated.” Stalin had ordered him to “reinforce the pressure,” and Ezhov “was given strong instructions.” He “began to chop according to plan,” but he “overdid it”: “Stopping him was impossible.” Extremely selective in his memory, Molotov gave the impression that Ezhov had fixed the quotas on his own and that therefore he had been shot. He did not agree that Ezhov had only carried out Stalin’s instructions: “It is absurd to say that Stalin did not know about it, but of course it is also incorrect to say that he is responsible for it all.”
Another former Stalin adjutant who justified the purges was Kaganovich. There was sabotage and all that, he admitted, and “to go against the public opinion was impossible then.” Only Ezhov “overdid it”; he even “organized competitions to see who could unmask the most enemies of the people.” As a result, “many innocent people perished, and nobody will justify this.”
Jansen, Marc & Petrov, Nikita. Stalin’s Loyal Executioner: Yezhov, Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution Press, c2002, p. 210.

YEZHOV WORKED FOR GERMAN INTELLIGENCE

As before, Ezhov suffered from bad health. By now he ranked high enough to earn the privilege of traveling abroad. In July 1934, the Politburo sent him to Italy for medical treatment, with a disbursement of 1,200 rubles in foreign currency (later supplemented with an additional 1,000 gold rubles); he had to be forbidden to return until the end of his rest. Instead of Italy he went to Vienna, where he was treated in a sanatorium for several weeks. (After arrest he gratuitously stated that while there he had had intimate intercourse with a nurse; when a doctor found out about it, he had himself recruited as an “agent of the German intelligence service.”)
Jansen, Marc & Petrov, Nikita. Stalin’s Loyal Executioner: Yezhov, Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution Press, c2002, p. 23

Later, in 1939, during interrogation, Ezhov confirmed that in 1935 he had indeed gone again to Vienna to be treated for pneumonia by Dr. Noorden and that he had been accompanied by his wife, who had gone shopping. (As was expected of him by then, he confessed to having used the visit for contacting the German intelligence service.)
Jansen, Marc & Petrov, Nikita. Stalin’s Loyal Executioner: Yezhov, Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution Press, c2002, p. 36

He [Yezhov] confessed to having been recruited as a spy for German intelligence in 1930, when by order of the People’s Commissariat of Agriculture he had visited Konigsberg for the purchase of agricultural machines and to having spied on behalf of Poland, Japan, and

England, to having directed a conspiracy within the NKVD, and to having plotted against Stalin and other leaders.
Jansen, Marc & Petrov, Nikita. Stalin's Loyal Executioner: Yezhov, Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution Press, c2002, p. 183.

YEZHOV DIRECTED MANY ABUSES AND CRIMES OF THE NKVD

Legality was of no concern to Ezhov's NKVD. In January 1939, after his fall, a commission consisting of Andreev, Beria, and Malenkov accused Ezhov of having used illegal investigation methods: "In a most flagrant way, investigation methods were distorted, mass beatings were indiscriminately applied to prisoners, in order to extort false testimony and "confessions.'" During twenty-four hours an investigator often had to obtain several dozen confessions, and investigators kept each other informed about the testimony obtained so that corresponding facts, circumstances, or names could be suggested to other prisoners. "As a result, this sort of investigation very often led to organized slander of totally innocent people." Very often, confessions were obtained by means of "straight provocation"; prisoners were persuaded to give false testimony about their "espionage activity" in order to help the Party and the government to "discredit foreign states" and in exchange for the promise of release. According to Andreev et al., "the NKVD leadership in the person of comrade Ezhov not only did not cut short such arbitrariness and excesses in arresting and conducting investigation, but sometimes themselves encouraged it." All opposition was suppressed. The functioning of the troikas was also sharply criticized. Andreev et al. reported that there had been "serious slips" in their work, as well as in that of the so-called Grand Collegium [bol'-shaia kollegiia], where during a single evening session from 600 to 2,000 cases were often examined. The work of the regional troikas was not controlled by the NKVD at all. Approximately 200,000 people were sentenced to two years by the so-called militia troikas, "the existence of which was not legal." The NKVD Special Board "did not meet in its legal composition even once."
As an executive of the Tiumen' operational sector of the NKVD testified later, arrests were usually made arbitrarily, people were arrested for belonging to groups that did not actually exist, and the troika duly fell in line with the operational group: "At a troika meeting, the crimes of the defendants were not examined. In some days during an hour I reported to the troika cases involving 50-60 persons."
Jansen, Marc & Petrov, Nikita. Stalin's Loyal Executioner: Yezhov, Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution Press, c2002, p. 108-109

The assistant chief of the Saratov police administration gave similar testimony: "The basic instruction was to produce as many cases as possible, to formulate them as quickly as possible, with maximum simplification of investigation. As for the quota of cases, [the NKVD chief] demanded [the inclusion of] all those sentenced and all those that had been picked up, even if at the moment of their seizure they had not committed any sort of concrete crime. After arrest, Ezhov's deputy, Frinovskii, explained that the main NKVD investigators had been the "butchers" [sledovatelikolol'shchiki], mainly selected from "conspirators or compromised people." "Unchecked, they applied beatings to prisoners, obtained "testimony' in the shortest possible time." With Ezhov approving, it was the investigator rather than the prisoner who determined the testimony. Afterward, the protocols were "edited" by Ezhov and Frinovskii, usually without seeing the prisoner or only in passing. According to Frinovskii,

Ezhov encouraged the use of physical force during interrogations: he personally supervised the interrogations and instructed the investigators to use “methods of physical influencing” if the results were unsatisfactory. During interrogations he was sometimes drunk.
As one of the investigators later explained, if somebody was arrested on Ezhov’s orders, they were convinced of his guilt in advance, even if all evidence was lacking. They “tried to obtain a confession from that individual using all possible means.” Under arrest, the former Moscow NKVD deputy chief A. P. Radzivilovskii quoted Ezhov as saying that if evidence was lacking, one should “beat the necessary testimony out of [the prisoners].” According to Radzivilovskii, testimony “as a rule was obtained as a result of the torturing of prisoners, which was widely practiced both in the central and the provincial NKVD apparatuses.”
After arrest both the chief of the Moscow Lefortovo investigation prison and his deputy testified that Ezhov had personally participated in beating prisoners during interrogation. His deputy, Frinovskii, had done the same thing. Shepilov recollects how after Stalin’s death Khrushchev told his colleagues that one day, while visiting Ezhov’s Central Committee office, he saw spots of clotted blood on the skirt and cuffs of Ezhov’s blouse. When asked what was up, Ezhov answered, with a shade of ecstasy, that one might be proud of such spots, for it was the blood of enemies of the revolution.
Jansen, Marc & Petrov, Nikita. Stalin’s Loyal Executioner: Yezhov, Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution Press, c2002, p. 109-110

YEZHOV ADMITS HE AND OTHERS PLANNED A COUP TO TAKE OVER THE GOVT

After his arrest, Ezhov was accused of having schemed against the Party leadership. He testified himself that after arrests began within the NKVD he, together with Frinovskii, Dagin, and Evdokimov, made plans to commit a “putsch” on 7 November 1937, the October Revolution anniversary, during the demonstration in Red Square. The plan was to cause a commotion and then in the panic and confusion to “drop bombs and kill someone of the government members.” Dagin, who was chief of the NKVD guard department, was to execute the plan, but on 5 November he was arrested, followed a few days later by Evdokimov. Ezhov alone could not prevent Beria’s initiative. “This way all our plans collapsed.”
Jansen, Marc & Petrov, Nikita. Stalin’s Loyal Executioner: Yezhov, Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution Press, c2002, p. 155.

Evdokimov gave similar evidence. According to him, in September he discussed the threatening situation after Beria’s appointment with Ezhov, Frinovskii, and Bel’skii. Allegedly, they agreed to prepare an attempt on Stalin and Molotov. Ezhov was also said to have had plans to murder Beria. Obviously, Ezhov’s utterances with respect to terrorism were no more than drunken talk, the fantasizing of somebody who had become embittered toward Stalin and his adjutants. After his arrest, Beria’s investigation, not taking it too seriously, did not delve into it deeply.
According to Konstantinov, some time in mid-November Ezhov told him that his song was ended, thanks to Stalin and loyal Stalinists like his deputy Beria: “If they could be removed, all would be different.” He suggested that Konstantinov should kill Stalin, but without giving any concrete form to his plans.

Jansen, Marc & Petrov, Nikita. Stalin's Loyal Executioner: Yezhov, Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution Press, c2002, p. 156.

There is evidence that beginning in the summer of 1938, when Beria was appointed his deputy and started arresting people from his circle, he became disillusioned with Stalin. A number of witnesses have testified that on several occasions after that he abused and insulted Stalin and other Party leaders. After arrest he himself confessed to having conspired against Stalin and having planned an attempt on him; this was confirmed by a number of accomplices and witnesses.
Jansen, Marc & Petrov, Nikita. Stalin's Loyal Executioner: Yezhov, Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution Press, c2002, p. 208.

WHEN YEZHOV FELL MANY OF HIS ACCOMPLICES FELL WITH HIM

He [Yezhov] dragged many people along in his fall. Besides his nephews Anatolii and Viktor Babulin, who were also arrested on 10 April, a few weeks later, on 28 April, his brother Ivan, by then already having lost his job, was arrested in Moscow, accused of plans to murder Stalin and of counterrevolutionary and anti-Semitic utterances. In addition, Ezhov confessed to having recruited him for the Polish intelligence service. A few days before Ezhov's arrest, on 6 April, his former first deputy, Mikhail Frinovskii, had been arrested, soon to be followed by his wife, Nina, and his seventeen year-old son, Oleg. He too was confined in Sukhanovka prison. Five days after his arrest he issued a forty-three-page statement for Beria, in which he confessed his crimes: "Only after arrest, after having been shown the charge, and after a conversation with you personally, I took the path of repentance, and I promise to tell the investigation the whole truth to the end."
Jansen, Marc & Petrov, Nikita. Stalin's Loyal Executioner: Yezhov, Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution Press, c2002, p. 184.

After Ezhov's fall, hundreds of his direct accomplices and other NKVD officers were arrested. This goes for all of Ezhov's deputies and department heads. Almost all former NKVD chiefs of the Union and Autonomous Republics as well as the majority of the provincial NKVD chiefs and other leading executives were dismissed and convicted. In the autumn of 1938, between September and December, 332 leading NKVD executives had already been arrested, 140 of them from the central apparatus and 192 from the provinces. Arrests continued in 1939; during that year 1,364 NKVD executives were arrested, 937 of them state security officers.
After Ezhov's dismissal as NKVD chief, many cases were reviewed. Several tens of thousands of people who were under investigation were liberated and the charges dropped. The Gulag was emptied somewhat: during 1939, unprecedentedly, 327,400 prisoners were liberated from the camps and colonies.
Jansen, Marc & Petrov, Nikita. Stalin's Loyal Executioner: Yezhov, Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution Press, c2002, p. 192.

STALIN COULD NOT HAVE HUMILIATED YEZHOV AT THE 18TH CONGRESS

[Footnote]: Yezhov was not on the list of Congress delegates from Moscow, which would have been his constituency, and his name was missing from the list of delegates, in the record of the Congress, which was published later that year. Thus it is impossible to give credence to the story in Medvedev, attributed to one Feldman, who was in fact, a delegate to the Congress. In this version Yezhov was humiliated by Stalin at the meeting of senior delegates to the Congress that met to select nominees for the new Central Committee. But as a non-delegate Yezhov would not have been present there. Moreover, the story has it that Yezhov sought to defend himself by saying that he had ‘unmasked’ his former aide Frinovsky, who in time was indeed purged. But at the time of the Congress Frinovsky was still in good standing and could not have been referred to as an arrested enemy. His name appeared in the list of delegates published later that year. According to Admiral Kuznetsov who was a delegate, it was during the Congress that Frinovsky asked to be relieved of the post of narkom of the Navy, to which he had been transferred from the police.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 366

GULag

SU HAS A PROGRESSIVE PRISON AND EXILE SYSTEM

The Soviet prison system, as applied to ordinary criminals, embodies a number of progressive penological ideas. Educational and manual training instruction courses exist in the more advanced prisons; prisoners are not required to wear uniforms; and the well-behaved prisoner receives a vacation of two weeks every year, which is certainly a unique Russian institution.
Chamberlin, William Henry. Soviet Russia. Boston: Little, Brown, 1930, p. 124

In the 1930s, as we have seen, the spread of industrialization and collectivization brought about a socialist state with a broad spectrum of social and political rights. As we would expect from such a state, the legal and prison systems that it established were essentially just and nonpunitive. In fact, they were praised and admired by liberal attorneys and penologists throughout the world. People's courts, in which ordinary citizens sat with a professional judge on the bench, tried 80 percent of all cases, and legal services could be obtained free of charge. As a desirable alternative to prisons, "agricultural and industrial labor colonies" were established where some prisoners brought their families and where they were allowed to marry. The basic objective of the system was rehabilitation, not just in words, as in capitalist states, but in reality, as was dramatically shown, for instance, in the film Road to Life, depicting the regeneration of teenage criminals. One of the most extensive industrial camp projects was the building of the Baltic-White Sea Canal by prisoners, a vast enterprise whose three chief engineers were former "wreckers." At the completion of the project, 300 prisoners received scholarships, 12,000 were freed, and 59,000 had their sentences reduced. Such was the normal course of working class justice in the USSR. Therefore, if changes were made in some aspects of the system, there must have been reasons for it.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 128

We built the Moscow-Volga Canal for the most part with convict labor. Back then, convicts were real criminals and were treated accordingly. Actually, I'd say that on the whole our convicts received fairly humane treatment. They were considered to be the products of capitalist society. Therefore, it was felt that our socialist society should re-educate them rather than punish them.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 99

Ordinary criminals, such as murderers and thieves, are mixed up indiscriminately in forced labor camps with members of the various disfavored groups such as the kulaks, nomads, ex-priests, and the like. In fact, the authorities seem to have a more friendly feeling for ordinary criminals than for social groups which have opposed their various reforms. They treat a brutal murderer, as a rule, with more consideration than a small farmer who didn't want to turn his domestic animals and house and garden into a common pool with his neighbors to make a collective farm.
In the winter of 1936, when my wife and I were making a trip by automobile into Yakutsk, the great northeastern province of Russia, our car ran into a ditch soon after crossing the

trans-Siberian railway. We had observed large groups of men under guard working on the double-tracking of the Railway, and decided to go back to ask some of them to help us put our automobile back on the road. We had run across many such groups in our travels through the Far East; great gangs of these laborers have been working on the railways being built out there for many years.

When we got back to the railway, there was no guard in sight anywhere; in this isolated country, prisoners could hardly get far off if they wanted to. These men were dressed in ordinary Soviet working clothes, and there was nothing to show they were prisoners, except that they were perhaps a little more ragged than the average worker. We asked them if they would help us out, and they readily agreed.

What struck as most about these people, and those like them whom we had seen elsewhere, was that they did not appear to be what we would call criminal types. It is probable that most of them were not criminals, in our sense of that word; they were rather members of social groups who had failed to co-operate with the authorities in their various schemes for reform.

I was told that political prisoners, including members of other revolutionary groups and disgruntled or disgraced Communists, are seldom if ever put into such prison camps or gangs. If they are considered dangerous, they are confined in concentration camps or isolated prisons. If they are considered merely a nuisance, they are given what is called free exile.

The “free exile” system is uniquely Russian; it is practiced today in very much the same forms as before the Revolution. I encountered free exiles almost everywhere I worked in Siberia, Kazakhstan, and the Far East. I have heard it said that one can meet more former aristocrats and well-to-do people in the Central Asian cities than in Leningrad, the former capital of the Tsars.

Free exile is a comparatively mild punishment. These people can hardly be distinguished from other residents; they move about as they please within certain limits, and usually have regular work. They have been given a “minus,” to use the Russian description. Say, for example, that some petty political offender is given a “minus six.” This is a very common penalty; the political police seem to give it out to anyone even faintly suspected of disloyalty to the regime. The man or woman with a “minus six” cannot live in or visit the six principal cities of European Russia for a number of years.

I came across some fairly distinguished exiles working in remote mining towns in Asiatic Russia. Usually they were doing routine work, such as bookkeeping; it is not easy for them to get responsible work, and most of them would not take it even if it were offered to them, since they would be held to account if anything went wrong. The Soviet police, like police in other countries, round up the most obvious suspects whenever anything goes wrong, and exiles are pretty obvious. Those I knew were very quiet and inoffensive; they usually had a melancholy air, being separated usually from the people and kind of life they had known before.

BUT IN GENERAL I BELIEVE THE HORRORS OF THE EXILE SYSTEM HAVE BEEN EXAGGERATED. BEFORE THE REVOLUTION, ACCORDING TO ALL ACCOUNTS, IT WAS PRETTY TERRIBLE. FORCED LABORERS IN THOSE DAYS, INCLUDING EXILES, WERE KEPT IN LEG -IRONS, WHICH IS NEVER THE CASE TODAY. THE PRESENT AUTHORITIES DO NOT USE LEG-IRONS, HANDCUFFS, OR UNIFORMS FOR PRISONERS IN ANY CASE WHICH IS KNOWN TO ME. But even before the Revolution, according to the books which I have read on the subject, most political exiles were allowed a considerable degree of freedom, similar to that of the free exiles today. If they proved

tractable, even in Tsarist days they were allowed to take jobs to eke out their pittance from the Government, and they boarded with small farmers in the cities, towns, or villages of Siberia, and visited among themselves. Some of them even were friendly with Tsarist officials and paid visits back and forth, according to the accounts of those days which seem to be reliable. I have never seen evidence of any friendliness between Soviet officials and exiles.

However, when one reads books written by exiles either before or since the Revolution it becomes apparent that exile is a terrible ordeal to the persons concerned. Why is this? Well, in the first place, no human being enjoys being sent off in disgrace, separated from his family, friends, and old associations, compelled to live for years in some distant part of the country during routine work for a bare pittance. And that is a fair description of the life of an average free exile in Russia today.

There is another reason, too, it seems to me. Exiles for the most part are city people; the dispossessed small farmers were not exiled but put to forced labor. These city dwellers, not being accustomed to existence in undeveloped, isolated country, are naturally unhappy. When I read Leon Trotsky's description of his periods of exile, for example, I didn't feel any sympathy for him, although it was clear that he felt very much abused because he missed the cities bright lights and political maneuvers. For myself, I would rather live in the places he was living in than modern cities, and for that reason I couldn't feel sorry for him.

The word "exile," and all its implications, arouse a sense of horror in the minds of Americans which I am convinced is seldom felt so keenly by Soviet citizens. The latter are so accustomed to being knocked about by their own authorities, under this as well as previous regimes, that they accept as a matter of course treatment which Americans would heartily resent. A friend of mind had an experience with a Russian family which throws light on this state of mind. The family had a daughter about 19 years old, who sometimes spoke out rather critically about the Government. An old lady who posed as a friend of the family one-day heard her talking, and reported her to the police. The police visited the family's apartment in the middle of the night, as they usually do in such cases, and took away the girl and a diary she had kept from the age of 15.

The girl was kept for two months in the Moscow prison for political suspects, during which time her family was not permitted to communicate with her. At the end of that period, the mother was called in and told she could talk with her daughter for 20 minutes. The girl told her the police had decided she had "counter-revolutionary moods," and would therefore be exiled for two years. My friend, talking to the mother, asked: "And what do you think of such treatment?" The mother replied earnestly: "Oh, we are very much pleased because our daughter received only two years of free exile; she might have been sent to a concentration camp."

As a matter of fact, there is not a great deal of difference, so far as I could observe, between the treatment accorded to those in free exile and those who are presumably entirely free.

FROM THE AMERICAN VIEWPOINT, ALL SOVIET CITIZENS ARE TREATED VERY MUCH LIKE PRISONERS ON PAROLE, ESPECIALLY SINCE THE OLD TSARIST PASSPORT SYSTEM WAS REVIVED IN 1932. Every citizen must have a passport and register it with the police at regular intervals; the must show his "documents" whenever he turns around. He has to get special permission to travel from one part of the country to another, and register with the police wherever he goes. He must have a very special standing with the authorities to get permission to leave his country; only a few hundred get such permission every year.

Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 135-139

Practically speaking, there's not much difference between the Soviet citizen sentenced to free exile and the citizen who is refused a residence permit in the larger cities of European Russia. The former knows that he cannot visit or live in certain cities, and this may be a very severe hardship upon him if his family lives in one of these cities. Husbands and wives, parents and children, are often separated for years as a result of this system. But the same is true, to a lesser degree, by the working at the passport system, which enables the authorities to refuse permission to any citizen to live in overcrowded cities. I have known them to refuse permission to a husband or wife to join the rest of the family in a city on the grounds that there was no more room.

In any case, if family ties are strong enough, a husband or wife will follow the other into exile or will rejoin each other in the provinces if it is impossible for both to get permission to live in some desirable city. The authorities never refuse permission to leave cities, although an official might lose standing in the bureaucracy if he left responsible work where he could not easily be replaced merely for the sake of having his family with him.

Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 141

The officials have become callous in this respect, at least from our viewpoint. A friend of mine told me about a former aristocrat who was arrested during a general roundup of suspects at Leningrad in 1934. He was held in prison for a couple of months, and then the police said they could find nothing against him, and let him go. He returned to his apartment, looking for his wife, from whom he had heard nothing all this time.

The apartment was empty, and his wife was nowhere to be found. Someone had broken into his apartment while he was in prison and taken off most of his personal possessions. That didn't bother him so much, but he was very fond of his wife and gave up his whole time to the search for her. He could get no clue in Leningrad, and finally came to Moscow, where he learned that she had been exiled to Central Asia. He immediately telegraphed to her that he was joining her as soon as possible, and started making preparations for the trip.

A Soviet official heard somehow what this man was planning to do, and called him into his office. "Apparently you have misunderstood the situation," said the official. "The police have cleared you, and you'll have no further trouble. You have a good job waiting for you either at Leningrad or here in Moscow. You have done good work for us in the past, and we will see that you get ahead. Under the circumstances there is no need for you to go to Central Asia."

"But my wife is there," replied the Leningrad resident. "She was exiled, and cannot get permission to return to European Russia for several years. She is not in good health, and I am concerned about her. She needs someone to look after her, and I will have to go to her."

Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 142

The Soviet official shook his head. "In my opinion, you are very foolish, my friend," he said. "Your wife has been branded with the mark of an exile, while you have been entirely cleared. You will lose your own favorable position with the authorities if you rejoin her now, and will never get ahead so long as you stick to her. It is better for you to break with the past once and for all."

The Leningrad man replied quietly: "My wife means more to me than my career, or a favorable status with the authorities."

The official shrugged his shoulders. "In that case, you are not the man we had believed," he said. "Go to central Asia, by all means."

Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 143

Persecution of prisoners already in the gulag took place under Yezhov; such reports cease after Beria took charge of the NKVD in late 1938.
Different kinds of camps and exile with widely varying features and regimens existed, indicating that gulag practice was not simply to hold or destroy innocent people. Prisoners were treated according to the nature and degree of the crimes for which they had been convicted. The NKVD colonel Almazov reported that inmates sentenced to administrative exile were often hired by the camps as free workers. The gulag administration did not need to house, guard, or feed such people, whose productivity was higher than that of the regular prisoners. And Avar man arrested in 1937 went to a state farm in Kazakhstan, part of a colony of such NKVD facilities. “We all worked very hard in the hope of eventual freedom.” He recalled. Nor did he report any starvation at his site. A young Russian man arrested in the same year was sent to a factory in Archangel. Not kept under guard, he was taught how to use a powersaw for wood. “I learned and worked hard on this machine,” he said later. This man was not a political prisoner; people in that category worked in the forests under guard and had a high mortality rate. Instead of being used for economic gain, politicals were typically given the worst work or were dumped into the less productive parts of the gulag.
The difference in treatment for the two categories of prisoners is also illustrated in the memoirs of Victor Herman. He contrasted the camps Burepolom and Nuksha 2, both near Viatka, in the north of Russia. In Burepolom there were about 3000 prisoners, all nonpolitical, in the central compound. They could walk around at will, were lightly guarded, had unlocked barracks with mattresses and pillows, and watched western movies. But Nuksha 2, which housed serious criminals and politicals, featured guard towers with machine guns and locked barracks and allowed no correspondence….
Earlier in the decade [the 1930s], prisoners and exiles more often worked at their specialties, as did a Russian man who lived near the Usbirlag after his arrest in 1933. At that time prisoners could shorten their sentences by overfulfilling the work norms. The newspaper Perekovka of the White Sea-Baltic Combine, marked “not for distribution beyond the boundaries of the camp,” lists 10 prisoners released early in 1936 for good performance. Here were powerful incentives to work hard.
Other productive options were open to inmates at this point. In early 1935, the same paper mentioned a course in livestock raising held for prisoners at a nearby state farm; those who took it had their workday reduced to four hours. During that year the professional theater group in the camp complex gave 230 performances of plays and concerts to over 115,000 spectators.
Up to 1937 free men and inmates, though never politicals, were used as armed guards. Camp newspapers and bond drives existed until then; although it is ironic and cruel to collect money for the state from prisoners, it is at least an indication that they were still regarded as participants in society to some degree.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 102-104

It [the Baltic-White Sea Canal] was finished, as far as it ever was to be, in May 1933. In July Stalin himself, with Kirov, Yagoda, Voroshilov and others, visited the canal and went on a short boat trip. This was the occasion for a vast public build-up of the project as not merely an industrial but also a moral triumph, in that the Soviet penal system was born humane and rehabilitatory. Many prisoners were quoted as expressing their joy at having been saved and turned into decent citizens. A group of writers, including Gorky, was sent to the canal, and a

ludicrous book emerged. Gorky seems to have been genuinely taken in. [Conquest has the ludicrous book]
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 186

In May 1934 civil rights were restored to labor deportees, and from January 1935 the right to vote.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism as a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 97

But the prison administration was held strictly responsible for the actual life of every prisoner. This was taken to such paradoxical lengths that “in the same cell you would find prisoners suffering severely from the effects of interrogation about which nobody bothered, while every conceivable medicine for the prevention and cure of colds, coughs, and headaches were regularly distributed.” And great precautions were taken against suicide.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 265

In the village of Palatka [north of Magadan on the Pacific Coast] I spoke to Boris Sulim, who had worked in one of the camps when he was a teenager and was now serving on the local raikom, the Party committee….
Under Stalin, Sulim worked in the Omsuchkan camp, about 400 miles from Magadan. “I was 18 years old and Magadan seemed a very romantic place to me. I got 880 rubles a month and a 3000 ruble installation grant, which was a hell of a lot of money for a kid like me. I was able to give my mother some of it. They even gave me membership in the Komsomol. There was a mining and ore-processing plant which sent out parties to dig for tin. I worked at the radio station which kept contact with the parties.
“If the inmates were good and disciplined they had almost the same rights as the free workers. They were trusted and they even went to the movies. As for the reason they were in the camps, well, I never poked my nose into details. We all thought the people were there because they were guilty.
Remnick, David. Lenin’s Tomb. New York: Random House, c1993, p. 425

From 1947 to the mid-1950s numerous individuals were denied the right to leave the U.S. on the grounds of their leftist political associations or beliefs, while blanket prohibitions were applied to travel to certain socialist countries. The U.S. State Department’s policy of denying exit from the country to those whose overseas activities might not be in the ‘best interests of the United States’ was incorporated into the 1950 McCarran act, which forbade the issue of passports to members of the Communist Party, and the 1954 Internal Security Act, which gave the Secretary of State discretionary powers to refuse to issue an individual a passport. At this time, individuals who left the U.S. without a valid passport (even to go to Mexico or Canada) were subject to criminal penalties on their return. As the Cold War diminished in the late 1950s the Secretary of State’s discretionary powers withered away. However, restrictions remained on travel to some countries, for political reasons (for example, Cuba, China, Vietnam, Albania) throughout the mid-1970s, and Iran in 1980, and were reinforced by the threat of criminal action. In 1981, the Reagan Administration once again restricted travel to certain countries–for example, to Cuba and Vietnam.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 21

…virtually all states, almost throughout history, have put serious difficulties in the way of those members of their populations who wished to leave their territory.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 23

According to Wheatcroft:
"The category of forced labor without confinement had existed from the 1920s. By the mid-1930s about half of all those sentenced to forced labor served this sentence without confinement, generally at their normal place of work. The sentences were normally for periods of up to six months or in some cases a year. Up to 25 percent of the normal pay was deducted from wages."
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 246

Russia's pre-revolutionary prison system was probably the most backward in Europe. Today Russia has the most advanced penal code in the world….
On must understand the underlying ideology of Marxism if one would comprehend the prison system of the USSR. With the Revolution the old penological theories were junked along with all the rest of the prevailing cultural bases. According to Marx, Engels, and their modern interpreter, Lenin, crime is the product of the capitalistic economic system. Change the economic order and the fountainhead of all crime dries up. Since, however, the revolution cannot accomplish the change from a capitalist to a communist society at once, there are forms of anti-social activity due to the transitional stage through which Russia is now passing.
Davis, Jerome. The New Russia. New York: The John Day company, c1933, p. 219

Russia's penal code is based upon no sentimental humanitarianism. Like her other laws it is the outcome of cold logic working from certain premises looked upon as self-evident with the same assurance as that of the mathematician who accepts the axioms of geometry. These axioms are the fundamental Marxian and Leninist principles. From these grow the fundamental penological principles. These principles may be summarized as follows:
1. "Wrongs" are the results of long centuries of acculturation in a capitalistic society.
2. Some individuals are unable to adapt their habits to a new social order.
3. Others can more easily form a new habit pattern and thus can adapt themselves to a new order of things.
4. The purpose of "punishment" is to protect society.
5. Society should attempt to change the attitude of "wrong-doers" by every method known to modern pedagogical and medical science.
6. Those who cannot be "reformed" should be eliminated from society for its protection.
No sentimentality here; just cold logic. No tears over the possible mistakes made in selecting those to be eliminated; some risk must be taken for social protection. However, every effort must first be made to correct the wrong-doer….
The Soviet leaders recognize that a capitalistic society cannot at once be transformed culturally into a communistic one. Socialism is the intermediate stage….
During this period of restraint society has a chance to order the life of these persons most closely and if possible convert them into good members of society. The first task is to train them in industry. So the prisons are great trade schools. Recognizing that in the transition period of socialism the economic motive must be kept alive for the individual, the Soviet authorities provide that the prisoner must be paid practically the same wage as the free man, consideration being given to the cost of his maintenance….

More interesting still, instead of conducting their prisons on the theory that prison labor and free labor are in inevitable conflict, Russia arranges the closest connection between prison labor and free labor. The prisoner must be brought to realize the solidarity of all labor. He is not an outcast, but a part of the labor-force of the nation. If he is a member of a trade union upon being sent to prison he does not lose that connection. In fact the prisoner who shows by his industry and conduct that he is one with the great body of free workers may be sent from the prison during the later stages of his sentence to work in a factory….
In accordance with their theory of the purpose of confinement the Soviet authorities have done away with life sentences; the longest sentence is 10 years. If a man cannot be changed in that time he cannot be changed at all….
As indicated above, capital punishment is reserved for incorrigible criminals….
It is clear that the system is devised to correct the offender and return him to society. The means employed are associated labor, social pressure, education for a trade, education in Sovietism and in certain stubborn cases disciplinary treatment. In all these institutions the Code provides that there shall be no brutality, no use of chains, no deprivation of food, no use of solitary confinement, and no such degrading devices as interviewing visitors through screens. Prisoners are transferred from one institution to another as the authorities see improvement in attitude and conduct. Work for all is compulsory. Two days of labor counts as three days of the sentence for those who make good progress. Labor conditions in the prisons are controlled by the same labor code as governs free laborers. Those condemned to labor in these institutions are entitled to two weeks' furlough each year after the first 5 1/2 months. If they belong to the working class, this furlough is deducted from the sentence. The wages paid the prisoners are about the same as those paid free labor less the cost of maintenance. Those condemned to forced labor receive about 25% less. The prisoner may spend a greater proportion of his wages as he advances in grade. The institutions must be self-supporting, so careful management is required….
The educational work in the prisons is a unique feature. There is regular class work, recreation with an educational aim, wall-and printed newspapers, clubs, theatrical performances, sports, musical activities, and self-government in the most advanced grades. Every sort of stimulus and pressure is brought to bear to socialize (" sovietize") the inmates. In the institutions I visited, including old Czarist buildings and modern farm industrial colonies, I saw these activities carried on with great enthusiasm and earnestness. Perhaps the most interesting of all I saw was the GPU industrial colony outside a Moscow, called Bolshevo. Founded by the GPU for homeless children, it has become one of the most progressive correctional institutions for young offenders, both male and female, I have ever seen. With 2000 inmates, without walls and with very few guards, it appears to be a great industrial village….
The disciplinary measures are limited to reduction in grade with loss of privileges, limitation of the use of personal funds, isolation of the individual up to 14 days and in removal to an isolator where harsher treatment prevails. However, solitary confinement in Russia does not exist in our sense of the word. It is prohibited by Paragraph 49 of the Code. It consists of a stricter separation from the outer world, disbarment from outdoor work and from furlough.
Davis, Jerome. The New Russia. New York: The John Day company, c1933, p. 221-229

However, as the writer visited prisons, especially the farm and industrial colonies, he was shown the pictures of many graduating classes and was told of many who had become agronomists and technicians on Russian state farms and collectives and in Russian industrial establishments….

The following appraisal is a summary of the writer's judgment of the Russian experiment in dealing with offenders. Space does not permit justification of his opinion. He can say only that these judgments are based upon what he was able to learn from those in Russia in a position to know what are the results of the system and upon his long and rather extensive observations in the prisons of a large part of the world….
For those who show by their conduct that they are amenable to correction every effort is made to prevent the development of a sense of social isolation; solidarity with the dominant group is cultivated in every possible way….
For those who show that they are incorrigible there is only one end — elimination. Before that end is reached every effort is made to correct them. From the Soviet point of view that is the purpose of the colonies of kulaks and other "enemies of the public" at Archangel and in Siberia….
The emphasis upon the role of economic opportunity and industrial and social training in correction is found nowhere else. Even negative disciplinary measures are conceived as reformative in purpose. There is no punishment for retribution.
Davis, Jerome. The New Russia. New York: The John Day company, c1933, p. 236

The introduction of a kind of self-government into the Russian institutions is the most thorough-going attempt to apply this principle [the principle of involving prisoners in prison governance] ever attempted. It seems rather complicated, but those with whom the writer talked about it said that it works remarkably well. It attempts to do away with some of the abuses found in the American experiments and yet brings to the prisoner a sense of participating responsibility.
Davis, Jerome. The New Russia. New York: The John Day company, c1933, p. 238

The farms and industrial colonies without walls and with a minimum of guards is an experiment worth watching. So far as the writer could learn, it works well, if proper personnel is in charge and if careful attention is given to the selection of the inmates….
The method used to keep intact the economic and social ties are unique and effective. The periodical furloughs with the family is a step forward. The prison wage is wholly commendable. The effort to keep in close touch the prisoner and free laborers and employers is most commendable.
Davis, Jerome. The New Russia. New York: The John Day company, c1933, p. 239

We were taken aback by the liberty that prevailed among the prisoners. In our previous prisons we had seen nothing like it. But greater surprises lay in store for us.
The following day comrades showed us papers published in the prison. What a diversity of opinion there was, what freedom in every article! What passion and what candor, not only in the approach to theoretical and abstract questions, but even in matters of the greatest actuality. Was it still possible to reform the system by peaceful means, or was an armed rising, a new revolution required? Was Stalin a conscious or merely an unconscious traitor? Did his policy amount to reaction or to counter-revolution? Could he be eliminated by merely removing the directing personnel, or was a proper revolution necessary? All the news-sheets were written with the greatest freedom, without any reticence, dotting i's and crossing t's and–supreme horror–every article signed with the writer's full name.
Our liberty was not limited to that. During the walk which brought several wards together, the prisoners were in the habit of holding regular meetings in a corner of the yard, with chairman, secretary and orators speaking in proper order. When the order of the day could

not cope with all the business, debates were postponed until the next recreation-time. At these meetings the most dangerous and forbidden subjects were discussed without the least restraint and without any fear whatsoever. The invigilating inspector would sit down somewhere or walk to and fro. He no doubt made his reports in the proper quarters, but nobody seemed to be in the least concerned with that. At these meetings Stalin came off very badly, being called all sorts of names. I have seen many things in the USSR but none so bewildering as this isle of liberty, lost in an ocean of slavery–or was it merely a madhouse? So great was the contrast between the humiliated, terrified country and the freedom of mind that reigned in this prison that one was first inclined toward the madhouse theory. How was one to admit that in the immensity of silence-stricken Russia the two or three small islands of liberty where men still had the right to think and speak freely were… the prisons?
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 199

The Amnesty Commissions periodically visited the prisons and the prison administrations prepared list of those recommended for amnesty. Candidates for amnesty came firstly from among the “activists,” the so-called “enthusiasts for socialism” re-educated in prison; secondly from those obviously sentenced in error; thirdly from the gravely ill whose upkeep cost far more than could be covered by any possible unpaid labor they might be able to do.
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 365

PRISONS IN SU REHABILITATE PEOPLE VERY WELL

Many former prisoners from the Baltic-White Sea Canal, after receiving freedom together with special prizes and high honors for their good work, went of free choice to help build the Moscow-Volga Canal, another convict-labor job. Here they were especially valued because through their own experience they understood the process through which new prisoners had to go and were especially skilled in helping them make themselves over….
So well known and effective is the Soviet method of remaking human beings that criminals occasionally now apply to be admitted. I met one such man in Gulin village. Notorious locally as a thief and drunkard, he had a dozen convictions to his discredit, till at last he went to the authorities saying: “I’m a man destroyed, but I want to be made over.” They sent him to a labor camp whence he returned a qualified worker. Bolshevo Commune, the most famous “cure” for criminals, can be entered only by application approved by the general meeting of members. It’s waiting list is so long that it accepts only the most hardened cases, priding itself on being able to make over persons who cannot become cured in any other institution. Its strength lies in its large membership of intelligent former criminals, who apply to new entrants their intimate knowledge of the criminal mind.
Crime today is rapidly diminishing in the Soviet Union. From 1929 to 1934 sentences for murder decreased by 1/2 while sex crimes fell off to 1/4. The cause is found in the growing strength of the Soviet environment to remake human beings; the penal policy is only a supplementary force. A striking example of the play of both causes may be found in the figures of prostitution. Pre-war Moscow had 25,000 to 30,000 prostitutes; these sank by 1928 to about 3000, a diminution clearly due to economic causes.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 261

Kulaks committed arson, cattle-killing, murder, and were exiled in large numbers; anti-Soviet engineers and officials sabotaged and were sent to labor camps. Today the kulaks have been amnestied, not only because many of them have recovered their civil status by honest labor, but also because the collective farms in the villages are strong enough to withstand their attack and absorb them. The labor camps which supplanted prisons are themselves diminishing, partly because they have “cured” their inmates, and still more because the normal free life of Soviet society is becoming strong and prosperous enough to have a direct regenerative influence on those social misfits that remain.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 264

I had received my background on the Polish question from members of the Polish government-in-exile when I was in London in 1943. I was entertained at dinner by the Minister of Information of the London group. Present at the dinner were some Poles who had been imprisoned in Russia. They told me what they considered worst in their prison experiences. It so happened that I had for a time been Director of prisoner of war work in Canada for the World Committee of the YMCA and their description of conditions did not show the Russian camps to contrast unfavorably with those of Canada. They had been put to work, but that was a policy I had continually urged upon the Canadian government.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 99

Sentences to prison are limited to 10 years, even for the most serious offenses, including murder. Up to 1921 the maximum was only five years. In practice, time off for good conduct cuts the ten-year sentence to five or six. The theory of this limited prison sentence is that Soviet prisons are intended to reform, not punish, and that if a man can’t be reformed in 10 years, he can’t be reformed at all. The death penalty, applied to a long list of crimes and rather commonly resorted to up to 1927, was abolished on the 10th anniversary of the Revolution for all cases except political crimes and armed robbery.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 65

The maximum prison sentence in Russia for any offense, criminal or political, is 10 years. The theory as applied to criminals is that if they cannot be reformed in that period they cannot be reformed at all, and so a longer time is useless. In political cases 10 years is evidently regarded as long enough for any offense not punished by death. The 10 years is, in practice, often reduced to six or seven by good behavior.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 203

[Jan. 27, 1925 NKVD circular on measures for developing work in areas of labor camps]
The Corrective Labor Code defines our basic mission as assigning inmates to productive employment for the purpose of imparting the benefits of corrective labor to them.
In order to develop inmates employment, inmates should be organized as self-supporting work units exempt from all national and local taxes and levies….
According to our information, it is obvious that work programs for inmates have not been organized at any large number of places of incarceration, thus depriving the inmates of the benefits of corrective labor, i.e., the places of incarceration are failing to accomplish their primary mission as defined by the Corrective Labor Code.

Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 141

… This book [a volume on the construction of the White Sea-Baltic Canal], with contributions by Gorky… and other notable writers, extolled the rehabilitative benefits of the prison labor project; many of those who worked on the canal were rewarded subsequently with pardons.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 153

The Governor came to see me in prison at 10:00….
"You see, Kleist, the essential difference between investigation and punishment in the USSR and in your capitalist countries is that with us the investigatory period is one of rigid discipline and inquiry, and the so-called 'punishment' period is a reformatory one in which we make it as easy as possible for the prisoner to adjust himself to normal society. With you, the investigatory period is one of leniency and the punishment period is one of savage reprisal of society against one whom in practice it henceforward rejects."
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 192

In August 1935 Pravda added a weighty editorial voice to this campaign when it announced that "to punish for mistakes–this is the last resort. It is necessary to teach how to avoid mistakes…. It's necessary to remember a basic rule: persuade, teach, help." Repression was to be used only in "extreme cases," but even then it should also educate.
Thus, during 1935 Party organs and the central authorities of the judicial system issued a series of strong warnings to lower courts and prosecutors alike that petty problems and infractions were not to be considered crimes, that cases of counter-revolution were not to be pressed unless serious, and that careful attention to evidence was the order of the day. Krylenko's and Vyshinsky's protests against NKVD behavior and the wide application of Article 58 had a similar thrust.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 14

All inmates of the institution have a classification. The citizens who have "gone wrong" and are sent to prison are at the beginning placed in the first category. They are left there until the observation committee approves of them being promoted to the second category. While they are under this first classification each is allowed three days' vacation a year–to go home or anywhere they please, but must report back to the prison on the assigned day. Those deserving a promotion are raised to the second category which gives them seven days a year vacation in addition to other privileges. When promoted to the third category they receive one month. These vacations are counted in each case as a part of their sentence.
If a prisoner is released on good behavior he is given a job. But if convicted of a crime again, the new sentence, plus the remaining part of the old sentence, is added to the time he must serve. Every prisoner is allowed to go anywhere in the prison he pleases and the trusted ones are given the right to be guards. If on account of bad behavior, a prisoner is punished by isolation in a cell and only allowed to walk around where there are no other inmates, this punishment the prison warden said is to remind him of his misbehavior and has produced good results.
The institution contained a factory where every prisoner had to work if able. The inmate who did not already know a trade is taught one, both by theory and practice, so when released he

is much abler to find employment. Each is paid a wage for his work and allowed to spend a certain amount for incidentals at the prison store, the remaining part is put in a bank account; and when released, each one has his savings account money returned so that he can care for himself and therefore would not be so apt to commit another crime. The wage ranges from 50 to 60 rubles a month. This is thought to be low enough so as not to compete with other labor, for if wages were equal or better the workers might have a tendency to commit crime to take advantage of it as the wage is a clear one, the prisoners being free of the expenses of food, clothes, and shelter.

All prisons are considered open prisons, the only isolated ones being in north Siberia and they are isolated only in the sense that prisoners are kept in a prison community. Only exceptionally bad prisoners are sent there and the repeaters who have a long list of crimes. These, however, are those classed as “incurables.”

This prison contained no confinement cells–I had the privilege of going anywhere I wished here and found nothing of this sort. The number of inmates in each cell were three. The condition of the cells would be classified as average, each having a good sized window which let in sufficient light. As for the food and clothes, these items, too, may be said to be average.

The Soviet idea of treating a criminal is not to beat and punish him by physical force, but to consider him as a citizen “gone to wrong” and help train him to be a law-abiding citizen. If a person has a prison record it does not in any way hinder him from getting employment. Quite different from our prison system!

There are only two things which every prisoner is forced to do and that is, learn to read and write while in confinement.

Sometime later I saw a group of prisoners doing harvest work with machinery on one of the government farms. There were only a few guards on hand and no evidence whatever of exploitation.

Wright, Russell. One-Sixth of the World’s Surface. Hammond, Ind., The Author, c1932, p. 33-34

The state proclaimed a policy of “reformation through forced labor.” Those who actively showed their worth in “the building of socialism” had a good chance of being pardoned, rewarded, even allowed to continue their careers. In the 1930s a highly popular film “Prisoners” depicted the rapid reeducation at the Baltic-White Sea Canal Construction Camp of both criminals and political prisoners, transformed into active participants in building socialism.

Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 89

Forced labor, in the strict sense, was imposed on peasants who had resorted to violence in resisting collectivization. They were treated like criminals and were subject to imprisonment. Here history played one of its malignant and gloomy jokes. Soviet penitentiary reforms of earlier years, inspired by humanitarian motives, viewed the imprisonment of criminals as a means to their re-education, not punishment. They provided for the employment of criminals in useful work. The criminals were to be under the protection of trade unions; and their work was to be paid at trade-union rates. As the number of rebellious peasants grew, they were organized in mammoth labor camps and employed in the building of canals and railways, in timber felling, and so on.

Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 336

QUESTION: Is the 0GPU under another name employing two or 3 million political prisoners in carrying out a program of forced labor?

ANSWER: The picture that these words aroused for the average American–of idealistic intellectuals condemned to heavy, unpaid, chain-gang work–does not exist in the USSR. There are, however, “labor camps” in many parts of the country, as part of the Soviet method of reclaiming anti-social elements by useful, collective work. They replace prisons, which have been steadily closing; I have found old prison buildings remodeled as schools. Men in the labor camps draw wages, have vacations in which they leave the camp, and rise in their profession like free workers. They work at their specialty; engineers do large-scale engineering, intellectuals do cultural work, teaching and clerical work; actors put on plays, unskilled workers are trained in trades and illiterate men get schooling. Their wives and families are often allowed to visit them for extended periods.
These camps usually work on some nationally famous project which is intended to stir instincts of creative energy and collective pride. Men who respond to these motives may rise to the highest honors. The Baltic-White Sea Canal, for instance, was celebrated not only as an achievement in construction, but as a place where criminals “made themselves over.” Many former thieves, saboteurs, murderers, received the Order of Lenin, the highest honor in the country.
Strong, Anna Louise. “Searching Out the Soviets.” New Republic: August 7, 1935, p. 358\

Likewise, throughout [until] 1936, except in extraordinary conditions (such as the Civil War of 1918-1920, and the rural conflict of 1930-31) very few opponents were executed. The standard remedy for active opponents of the regime (as it was for common criminals) was socialist re-education, in good part through productive labor. This represented a humane and largely effective strategy…. Until 1937 the conditions applying to those actually confined for active opposition to the regime were considerably better than those for ordinary criminals; until 1937 torture was officially prohibited in the USSR (and, in fact, was rare). It was standard practice for those sentenced to a term in labor re-education camps in the remote region of the country to return to their old positions (as engineers, party leaders, etc.) after a relatively short time;…
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 228

SCOTT DESCRIBES TREATMENT OF MAGNITOGORSK PRISONERS

There were almost no acquittals in Magnitogorsk in 1937, nor were there more than half a dozen death sentences. After the trial, the operative department of the NKVD turned the convicts over to the ULAG (criminal camp administration), whose job it was to get certain construction work done, using the labor of the convicts, and also to carry on re-educational work. The ULAG was a completely separate and independent part of the NKVD organization. They received a prisoner accompanied by a frayed document stating that he had been convicted on such-and-such an article. Beyond this they knew nothing. Their job was to build dams and railroads, and in the interest of high productivity, if for no other reason, they treated the prisoners as well as possible.
Arrived at the construction job, the prisoners received better food than they had had since their arrests and warm, sturdy clothes, and were told that from then on the thing that counted

was their work. Until 1938, twenty, forty, or sixty percent of their sentences were frequently commuted for good work….
Alexei Pushkov, the chief of the Magnitogorsk NKVD during 1937, was himself purged in 1939 for his excessive ardor in purging the people of Magnitogorsk.
Scott, John. Behind the Urals, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1942, p. 193

At the time of their arrest, “saboteur”-Communists apparently expected that they would suffer a relatively light punishment, much like the nonparty specialists at the beginning of the 1930s, who were given decent living and working conditions after their trial. John Scott tells how in 1932, the GPU sent to Magnitogorsk 20 to 30 engineers who had been convicted in the case of the “Industrial Party.” Upon arriving in Magnitogorsk with their families, they were given four-room cottages and automobiles. They worked under contracts according to which they were paid 3000 rubles per month (10 times more than the wage of an average worker). Although they were watched by the 0GPU, they were allowed to go hunting on holidays in the forests of the Urals located tens of kilometers from the city. “They were also given highly responsible positions and instructed to work hard in order to prove that they really intended to become good Soviet citizens.” One of the former “wreckers” worked as the chief electrician at the combinat, another as the main engineer at a chemical plant. Several of them were decorated with medals for labor achievements.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 269

SECRET POLICE ARE FAIR TOWARD PRISONERS

All the British subjects at the Metro Vickers trial, however, subsequently revealed that they had been treated with great politeness and consideration by the Soviet authorities. None of them had been subjected to any form of coercion, 3d agree methods or force.
Alan Monkhouse declared of his OGPU examiners in a statement in the London Dispatch on March 15th: “they were extraordinarily nice to me and exceedingly reasonable in their questioning. My examiners seemed first-rate men who knew their job. The OGPU prison is the last word in efficiency, entirely clean, orderly and well-organized. This is the first time that I have ever been arrested, but I have visited English prisons and can attest that the OGPU quarters are much superior. OGPU officials showed every concern for my comfort.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 175

But it is said by those who have dealt constantly with the GPU in behalf of prisoners, that the heads, when they can be reached, are solicitous to correct the injustices or abuses of their subordinates. Even Dzerzhinsky, head of the old Cheka, was scrupulous in such cases, though severe–and he was fairly accessible.
While the GPU is the strong arm of the Soviet state for the protection of the Revolution and to keep the way clear of obstructions to the State’s program, it is essentially an organ of the Communist Party under the control of the Central Committee, as its creator, Dzerzhinsky, insisted it should be. It does not get out of hand, as do the secret services in some other countries–as, for instance, in the United States under the Daugherty-Burns regime.
To the minds of opponents of the Soviet regime the GPU bulks big. It is to them the Red Terror, supreme, lawless, all-powerful, ruthless, shooting at will on suspicion. But to any sober student of the political phenomena of Soviet Russia the GPU must appear as an exceedingly well-organized and efficient military police, with the function of combating all

opposition, but working within definite bounds under the central political authority–to all appearances quietly, almost invisibly.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 194

Concentration camps and temporary prisons for political prisoners or hostages were established in Soviet Russia during the civil war that followed the revolution. But it was not until the early 20s that a more or less regular penitentiary system began to be introduced and laws elaborated to apply to it. The regimen for political prisoners in the ’20s was relatively lenient. They received extra food, were exempt from forced labor, and were not subjected to humiliating inspections. In political jails self-government was allowed; the politicals elected “elders,” who dealt with the prison administration. They kept their clothes, books, writing materials, pocket knives; they could subscribe to newspapers and magazines. Their imprisonment was regarded as temporary isolation during a national emergency.
For example, on December 30, 1920, when the civil war had barely ended, the Cheka issued a special order;
“Information received by the Cheka establishes that members of various anti-Soviet parties arrested in political cases are being kept in very bad conditions…. The Cheka points out that the above-listed categories of people must not be regarded as undergoing punishment, but as temporarily isolated from society in the interests of the revolution. The conditions of their detention must not have a punitive character.”
One incident highlights the prison customs of the time. When Kropotkin, the Anarchist patriarch, died in his home near Moscow, hundreds of Anarchists who had been put in Butyrskaya prison for anti-Soviet activity demanded permission to attend the funeral of their teacher. Dzerzhinsky ordered that the Anarchists be let out on their honor. After the military funeral they all returned, to a man…?
Of course, in the early 20s there were quite a few instances that could be classified as insulting treatment of prisoners by the GPU. Still, this was the exception, not the rule. The Corrective Labor Code of 1924, which regulated conditions for all prisoners, including criminals and “counter-revolutionaries,” stated:
“The regimen should be devoid of any trace of cruel or abusive treatment, the following by no means being permitted: handcuffs, punishment cells, solitary confinement, denial of food, keeping prisoners behind bars during conversations with visitors.”
In most cases this code was observed at the time.
In the early 20s Commissar of Health Semashko pointed with pride to the establishment of a humane prison regime, which could not exist in capitalist countries. To be sure, some deterioration can be noted even in the ’20s. At the end of 1923, for example, the exercise period was cut down, which provoked a much publicized crash between Social Revolutionaries and guards at Solovketskaia prison. There were other “excesses,” but at the time they were exceptions rather than the rule.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 501-502

The difficulty of correctly appreciating the treatment of political prisoners in the Soviet Union, due primarily to the lack of factual evidence, is increased by those who, wishing to make obscurance doubly sure, have created OGPU legends which one could describe as entirely fictitious were they not sometimes based on the fiction of others. It is unnecessary to recapitulate them: they are widely held as the truth about the GPU.
The narrative which follows, written from the notes of Peter Kleist, a German engineer accused of espionage and held in prison by the GPU for examination, should destroy at least

the more fantastic of these inventions and illuminate the obscurities of the remand period before the “Moscow Trials.” Kleist, whom I know intimately, is a person whose profoundest interests are his work and scientific truth. In the Lubyanka and Butirki prisons he observed the system and experienced the methods of the GPU; and without the passion either of resentment (he is disposed to objective thinking) or of partisanship (he is by no means a Communist) he has noted his experiences and observations. Apart from the changing of some names, necessary in order not to compromise certain individuals, the narrative faithfully adheres to Kleist’s notes. If it is unsensational, it is because the truth of his imprisonment is unsensational. For that reason, I consider Kleist’s narrative an important testimony in judging the GPU even for those who without wishing to surrender their prejudices, may yet wish to correct their misconceptions.
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 7

The warders at the Lubyanka alternated constantly and it was never possible to enter into their intimacy. The precise routine regulations prevented any great variation in the way in which they treated the prisoners. For the most part the behavior of the guards was unobjectionable. Prison regulations required that they should treat the prisoners courteously although they were not allowed to enter into general conversation with them.
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 105

[As Kleist crossed the Soviet border into Poland he was met with] I’m a detective of the Polish police. We like to know something of the intentions of our visitors from the USSR. Well, Kleist–and how do you feel?”
“I’m quite well.”
“I understand that you didn’t confess.”
“No. I had nothing to confess.”
“Tell that to your grandmother. Did they torture you?”
“No,” I snapped at him. “It was a Russian prison not a Polish one.”
He was unruffled. “Our prisons are quite humane,” he said. “Were you brutally treated?”
“No. I was treated as considerately as prison existence permits.”
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 199

[When I got off the train in Poland] One of the young men dashed up with a camera and said, “Look this way!” There was a flash and immediately the photographer dashed away with his camera.
“Polska Gazeta!” the other young man introduced himself briefly, speaking German. “Largest circulation in Warsaw. Offer you 500 zloty for your story.”
“What do you want to know?” I asked, looking over his head for my mother.
“Well, for a start– what tortures did they give you?”
“None.”
“Oh, come on, what tortures did they give you–did they keep you on bread and water, did they have a tom-tom beating day and night outside your cell, was your cell so small that you couldn’t stretch your legs out, did they shoot Trotskyists in front of your eyes? That’s the sort of stuff we want. Let it rip!”
He waited with his pencil poised.
“There’s nothing haggard I can tell you,” I answered, “that will interest you in that way. I was examined under as good circumstances as the situation allowed. I admitted anything that I had done and denied what I hadn’t done.”

He looked disappointed.
“H’m! What about your talking drug? Were you drugged at all?”
“Not to my knowledge.”
“Well, you’d know if you were drugged.”
“Exactly.”
“Well, I’m afraid your story’s not much use. Have to do something about it. Let’s see.” He started writing rapidly in shorthand, muttering as he wrote: “Kleist looked haggard and worn after his three months’ imprisonment in the Lubyanka…refused to speak. His senses seemed to have been numbed by his experiences. He could not remember his sufferings and seemed unable to think coherently. He refused to speak of the tortures of the GPU and cast hunted looks about the platform. Apparently he had friends still in the Lubyanka held as hostages for his silence. How’s that?”
I shrugged my shoulders.
“You’re a lickspittle, my dear fellow. Your bosses ask you for this. You’ve got to give it. Don’t expect any from me.”
Unabashed he folded his pocket-book, raised his fawn hat, and rushed away.
APPENDIX I
(Kleist on the Moscow Trials)
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 203

The NKVD hit lists [in the Baltic states] were very similar to those of the SS and the Gestapo: all members of parliament and senators, local mayors and heads of district administrations, landowners and businessmen, lawyers, priests, policemen, non-Marxist intellectuals and so on. In short, anyone who might possibly cause trouble was arrested and shipped out to the wastes of Kazakhstan or Siberia. Unlike the Nazis, however, the Soviet authorities could claim quite truthfully that their victims were not being treated any differently from their fellow citizens of the Soviet Union.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 360

Surprisingly, I was never actually beaten….
Kuusinen, Aino. The Rings of Destiny. New York: Morrow, 1974, p. 147

I should also record that, long and exhausting as the interrogations were, I myself was never treated with physical cruelty, though I had to listen to plenty of threats and insults during both periods of questioning, month after month.
Kuusinen, Aino. The Rings of Destiny. New York: Morrow, 1974, p. 197

My experience was not really one of a “police state.” The GPU was as much respected and trusted as feared, in my time. The ordinary urban police was neither respected nor feared, but rather pitied. Twice I witnessed the same scene: a civilian knocked down a policeman; bystanders came to his aid and held the attacker until a second policeman showed up; the two law officers then took the culprit to the station, without twisting his arms. Another time when a policeman admonished two young drunks, one of them, imitating the gestures of regulating traffic, shouted, “You, comrade regulator, just regulate traffic, and don’t hassle us!” The cop just replied, amid general laughter, “All right, boys, go home and sleep it off.”
…Subsequently, however, I was shocked on occasion to see large groups of men and women being roughly herded through the streets by soldiers. I found it hard to believe that they were all criminals. But I could not then, and for many years thereafter, believe that

people were physically mistreated, beaten, or tortured in the Soviet Union. It was contrary to the profound and general condemnation of physical violence which I had found prevalent everywhere. Verbal quarrels were often harsh enough, but they never came to blows; this was considered “uncultured.” In Makeyevka, where it cannot have been easy to maintain school discipline among tough kids, it was a great public scandal when a teacher ordered a boy To kneel in a corner of the classroom. When I lived and worked in the “East” I perceived a human face behind the mask.
Blumenfeld, Hans. Life Begins at 65. Montreal, Canada: Harvest House, c1987, p. 167

SOVIET PRISONS ARE DECENT FOR LIVING

Some of the bitterest stories of prison experiences under the Soviets have been written about these preliminary detention prisons. While these stories constitute a fair indictment of certain methods of the GPU, they are not a fair basis for judging the Russian political prison system. All such temporary jails the world over tend to be far below the average prison standard.
Even the larger detention prisons in Moscow and Leningrad, the Butirki and the Spalerna, are much better. Indeed, the Spalerna, built as a political prison by the czar, compares favorably with the “world’s best jails,” though it is often badly overcrowded. I do not recollect seeing a better jail, from a physical standpoint, anywhere in the United States.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 241

I went into about a dozen prisons of all types, from Georgia to Leningrad, and had no difficulty getting in–and out–except for the political isolators and the detention prisons in Moscow, all of which were closed to foreign visitors because of the excitement at the time over the break with England. They differed greatly in cleanliness and arrangement, just as they do in the United States. I saw none worse than some I have seen in the United States, and two were as clean and well ordered as America’s best. The average, however, is lower; but so is the whole Russian standard of living.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 244

…The whole system is operated on elastic lines in order to move prisoners about easily from one type of institution to another according to the authorities’ judgment of their ability to stand more or less liberty. A prisoner may progress from an isolator–the severest type, where the regime is like that of prisons anywhere–to a house of correction, where he is freer. That freer regime is marked by one of the most amazing privileges of Soviet prisons, a two-weeks’ vacation each year with pay for every well-behaved prisoner, and for those whose conduct is not first-class, proportionately less time off. Prisoners may take their two weeks all at one time, or divide it into short periods, or even into “weekends in town.”
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 245

Peasant prisoners get three months’ vacation in the summer–without prison pay–to help with the crops if their village Soviet does not object to their return home. The approval of the home-town soviet is now required in order to avoid trouble with the neighbors, following early incidents in which some prisoners were beaten, even killed, by indignant villagers. The officials say that very few prisoners fail to return from vacation. Those who do not return and

who are caught suffer no additions to their sentences, but they get no more vacations and may be sent back to prisons of more restricted liberty.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 246

In “intermediate” houses of correction located usually in cities, prisoners have still more liberty, as they are free to go to work outside, only coming back to sleep in them. Some work in the shops inside; but even they are allowed to go out. I heard envious comment in Leningrad from unemployed workers who thought these prisoners better off than they–with secure jobs and a comfortable home! Farm colonies, in which liberty is least restricted, are connected with most of the large prisons. One I visited near Leningrad was an old estate, surrounded by barbed wire in order to check up at the entrances on the comings and goings of prisoners to the fields and forests–and even to the railroad station a mile away, where they were allowed to see off their visitors. The whole atmosphere was natural and unrestrained. The warden and guards played games with the men, and worked and slept out with them in field and forest. Those who prove unfit for this increased liberty of farm colonies are sent back to the more restricted prisons.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 246

Within the prisons the relations between the keepers and inmates are unusually democratic, as prisons go. The prisoners share actively in running prison life, though thorough-going self government experiments are still in their infancy. The prisoners share in self government is so far confined to organizing education and recreation and conducting the prison cooperative stores.
…Most of the wardens struck me as more alert, less officious, and with a closer man-to-man relation to the prisoners, than any wardens I have had the privilege of meeting elsewhere–and I have met a good many, in one capacity or another.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 247

One of the great improvements in Russian prisons is that work is available to almost all prisoners. There is no forced labor, no contract labor, as in the United States. All prisoners are free not to work if they choose. But great inducements to work lie in the payment of wages and in the deduction of one-third time off the sentences of working prisoners. The wages are usually low, but enough to help support the prisoners’ families, to take care of their needs for tobacco, sweets, stationery, and toilet articles at prison stores, and to give them some money on release. In all but a few prisons there is plenty of work in the shops, making textiles, harnesses, shoes, furniture, wagons–and in printing. The goods not purchased by a government department are sold on the market, and the profits go to prison maintenance.
In several prisons where the men–common offenders–crowded around me with curiosity as to my mission, I asked for those who had served time also in Czarist prisons. Each time a few spoke up. In response to inquiry as to what improvements they noted, if any, under the Soviets, they usually laughed at the idea of asking such a question. “Of course this regime is better,” said one, “we can smoke, we don’t have to go to church, we can see the warden any time we ask, and we get pay and vacations.”
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 248

…There is, however, no solitary confinement in Russia, except temporarily for offenses committed in prison.

Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 249

The Soviet regime, while pursuing its policy of severity toward political or economic opposition, has made marked advances over the Czarist system in abolishing solitary confinement in single cells, the dungeons of military fortresses, and the brutalities of flogging and forced labor…. While the exile system remains quite as bad, possibly even worse, than under the Czar, the lot of political prisoners, bad as it is, has undoubtedly improved. In comparison with other countries, it is in many respects better–better, for instance, in relation to the lot of ordinary criminals than in the United States, which makes no distinction between political and other offenders, though physically American prisons average higher. But in relation to the standard of living of the people, Russian prisons are on quite as high a level as ours. I have seen far worse political prisons in other parts of Europe where political prisoners are presumed to enjoy a privileged status.
Baldwin, Roger. Liberty Under the Soviets, New York: Vanguard Press, 1928, p. 252

[March 3, 1937 resolution of the February-March 1937 Central Committee Plenum on "Lessons of the wrecking, diversionary, and espionage activities of the Japanese-German-Trotskyist agents"]
Even more intolerable are the prison procedures established by the NKVD of the USSR as it pertains to Trotskyists, Zinovievists, rightists, Socialist-Revolutionaries, and other thoroughly vicious enemies of Soviet power who have been convicted.
All of these enemies of the people were as a rule assigned to so-called political isolation prisons, which were placed under the command of the NKVD of the USSR. Conditions in these political isolation prisons were particularly favorable. The prisons resembled forced vacation homes more than prisons.
In these political isolation prisons, inmates were afforded the opportunity of associating closely with each other, of discussing all political matters taking place in the country, of working out plans for anti-Soviet operations to be carried out by their organizations, and of maintaining relationships with people on the outside. The convicts were granted the right to unrestricted use of literature, paper, and writing instruments, the right to receive an unlimited number of letters and telegrams, to acquire their own personal effects and keep them in their cells, and to receive, along with their official rations, packages from the outside in any number and containing any type of goods.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 423

[Extract from protocol #3 of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of June 10, 1939 regarding NKVD camps]
2. The main incentives for increasing productivity in the camps shall be an improvement in provisions and nutrition for good production workers who demonstrate high productivity, financial bonuses for this category of prisoners, and a lightened camp regime, with general improvement in their living conditions.
Probationary release may be granted by the Collegium of the NKVD or the Special Board of the NKVD at the special petition of the camp supervisor and the supervisor of the political department of the camp to certain prisoners who have proven themselves to be exemplary workers and who have shown, over a long period of time, a high level of work….
4. The work force at camp should be equipped with foodstuffs and work clothes calculated in such a way that the physical strength of the camp work force may be utilized to the maximum at any productive task.

Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 549

Harsh as nature was in the Kolyma region, few people died in the Dalstroi camps in the years 1932-1937. There existed a system of examinations which allowed 10-year sentences to be reduced to two or three years, excellent food and clothing, a workday of four to six hours in winter and 10 in summer, and good pay, which enabled prisoners to help their families and to return home with funds. These facts may be found not only in the book by Vyaktin, a former head of one of the Kolyma camps, but also in Shalamov's Tales of the Kolyma Camps.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 508

I do not exaggerate if I say that my cell in the Lubyanka was one of the cleanest and freshest rooms that I lived in during my whole stay in the USSR.
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 73

We rarely complained of the treatment re-received. The food was monotonous–a rotation of peas and cabbage, or potatoes, meatloaf or fishloaf–but there was always enough to satisfy one's hunger. The tea was sometimes not hot but this was remedied on our objecting. The cell was adequately warm and in addition we were supplied with four thinnish blankets.
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 106

Medical inspection in the Butirki was as systematic as in the Lubyanka. Each day at about 9:30, the doctor went the rounds of the cells with two orderlies, prisoners from the penal section of the prison who were training as male nurses. The doctor's stock question was, "Any patients?" There would be an immediate rush from all sides of the cell. Some prisoners complained of headaches, others of constipation; some of diarrhea and a dozen valetudinarian afflictions. The doctor, who wore civilian clothes, took it all good-humouredly, never charged anybody with malingering, although would-be malingerers were habitual, and rapidly and accurately dispensed diagnosis and advice. He was never deceived by malingerers nor did he ever reject a complaint of anybody genuinely ill.
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 163

…It is curious that despite the relative amount of freedom allowed within the prison, attempts to escape were negligible. A more effective deterrent than bars is the certainty of apprehension. There is also in Soviet prisons a sense of being on parole. This discourages that resentment which drives prisoners elsewhere to escape at any cost.
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 165

The company [in prison], apart from a plague of stool pigeons, was usually good, especially in Moscow, and innumerable cases are given of kindness and self-sacrifice–as when (a Hungarian Communist reports) a prisoner, back from even worse conditions, was allowed a bed to himself for a whole day by the 275 men crammed into a 25-man cell, and was given extra sugar from their rations….
All prisoners report cases of Party officials who remained loyal, and held either that Stalin and the Politburo knew nothing of what was happening or, alternatively, that they themselves were not qualified to judge these decisions, and simply had the duty of obeying Party rules, including confession….
Smoking was permitted. All games were forbidden….

Books are reported as available in two Moscow prisons, the Lubyanka & the Butyrka (though at the height of Yezhov's power, they seem to have been prohibited). These libraries were good, containing the classics, translations, histories, and scientific works–sounding much better than those of British prisons or, indeed, hospitals or cruise liners. The Butyrka was particularly fine. The reason was that it had been used for political prisoners in Tsarist times, and the big liberal publishing houses had always given free copies of their books to these jails. That of the Lubyanka was largely of books confiscated from prisoners.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 266

A special category of prison consisted of the half-dozen "political isolators," notably those at Suzdal, Verkhne-Uralsk, Yaroslavl, and Alexandrovsk. These dated from earlier days of the regime, when they had been thought of as a comparatively humane method of removing fractious Communists and other left-wing "politicals" from public life. Even in the early 1930s, treatment in these prisons was comparatively humane.
The Lubyanka was free of bugs, and the same is reported of some of the Kiev prisons, though bugs usually abounded….
The corridors of the Lubyanka were clean, smelling of carbolic and disinfectant.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 268

And, indeed, there had long been an alternative Soviet story. There were, it is true, corrective labor establishments of a highly beneficent type. Their operation could be seen in such works as Pogodin's play The Aristocrats, which showed how prisoners were reclaimed at labor on the White Sea Canal and elsewhere. Pogodin represents bandits, thieves, and even "wrecker" engineers being reformed by labor. A re-generated engineer, now working enthusiastically at a project, has his old mother visit him. The kindly camp chief puts his car at her disposal, and she is delighted at her son's healthy physical appearance. "How beautifully you have re-educated me," a thief remarks, while another sings, "I am reborn, I want to live and sing."
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 308

In the penal camps proper, however, there was considerable freedom of speech:
[A prisoner in Solzhenitsyn's A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich says, "…The great thing about a penal camp was you had a hell of a lot of freedom. Back in Ust-Izhma if you said they couldn't get matches "outside" they put you in the can and slapped on another 10 years. But here you could yell your head off about anything you liked and the squealers didn't even bother to tell on you. The security fellows couldn't care less.
The only trouble was you didn't have much time to talk about anything."
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 318

A meeting [during glasnost] took place between members of the local branch of Memorial [a group collecting signatures to establish a monument to honor the victims of Stalinism] and veteran members of the organs of the MVD (Ministry of Internal Affairs), who had done guard duty in the camps in the 1930s and 1940s. One of the latter shouted that writers of defamatory articles on the camps should be shot, and there was some applause. Others claimed that the inmates of the camps had been criminals and not political victims. No one remembered cases of inhumane treatment, food had been plentiful, medical care excellent. If one believed these witnesses, conditions had been similar to those of a holiday resort. True, some people had died, but then, others had died outside the camps.

Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 269

[On May 6, 1936 Zinoviev said in prison] I am treated humanely in prison here. I get medical attention etc. But I am old and badly shaken.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 339

Thus, those who, in the late 1930s, actually died in the camps of various causes were very few, probably a matter of not more than 10,000. According to the great anti-Soviet mythology especially after the war, the Soviet labor camps were almost exactly the same as Hitler's extermination camps: in the Soviet camps people "died like flies." In reality they were like the camp described by Solzhenitsyn in Ivan Denisovich. This, in recent years (when one could, at last, at least privately talk to those who had been in camps), was confirmed to me by a very large number of Russians…. In addition, most, though not all of the people I interviewed confirmed that until the war prisoners could–and did–receive letters and food-parcels from home.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co.,1971, p. 30

The prisoners went for their walks twice daily and these lasted one hour in winter, an hour and a half in summer. Four to five wards, that is to say from 25 to 35 prisoners, went at a time, and were allowed to do what they liked: walk, hold meetings, take exercise (football, tennis or gorodki, a Russian game of ninepins). In summer they were allowed to grow flowers or vegetables. Twice a month the prisoners went to the baths, and on those occasions sheets would be changed and body linen taken to the laundry.
The prison possessed a considerable library, the nucleus of which consisted of the books inherited from the Czarist prison (works from Russian, German, French and English literature). Many volumes, especially works on sociology, politics and history, were gifts made by prisoners at the time of their release; moreover, the administration would occasionally buy books. Thus I was able to read some very new books: Andre Gide's Voyage au Congo and Traven's Coton. On the whole the library was not at all bad. Apart from that, some of the prisoners brought with them an excellent choice of personal books, often as many as a hundred or even two or 300 volumes. A certain number of prisoners had new publications sent them by relatives. The use of these particular volumes was not limited to their owners, but all the owners ward-mates and the occupants of neighboring wards shared them alike. The prisoners, moreover, had the right to subscribe to any of the periodicals appearing in the USSR. As to the foreign papers, we were allowed only the central organs of the Communist Party, the Rote Fahne, l' Humanite and the Daily Worker, and then only one copy per floor of the prison….
Under such conditions, having enough reading material was not much physical occupation, the prisoners, who were mainly educated people, spent all their energy on the political life of the prison: the editing and publishing of news sheets, articles, the holding of meetings and debates. It is no exaggeration to say that the political isolator of Verkhne-Uralsk, with its 250 political prisoners, constituted a veritable university of social and political sciences–the only independent university in the USSR.
An important question was that of the communications between the prisoners. These communications, though prohibited, were actually tolerated to a certain extent by the prison authorities. There was a constant struggle concerning the "internal postal service," but both parties played this game according to certain accepted rules. Communications between the four or five wards of each floor were naturally easy. Less easy were "vertical" relations

between wards on different floors. But they took place all the same: at a given signal a bag would be lowered from the higher floor in which the “mail” was placed. The warders had long polls with which they tried to intercept the bags. They succeeded on very rare occasions only, for it was impossible constantly to watch all windows, especially as there were prisoners brave enough to fend off the warders’ poles with sticks. The rules of the game demanded that a victory was won as soon as the bag had been taken or raised again. The bars, with which the windows were provided, were far enough apart to allow all of these manifestations.
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 202-203

A peculiarity of our barrack-prison was the fact that one could sit for hours at a time with a considerable number of the inmates of the various blocks, talking as though one were at liberty–no, even more frankly than one would have done if free, since in the USSR free men are more afraid of frankness. Our talks took place in the two gardens and the 3 yards. One could also drop into a neighboring cell, visit the hospital, the rooms housing the cultural institutions, and stroll through the various coridors.
Looking into the prison library one was sure to encounter from five to ten readers and two or three assistants, all “our” people, that is, prisoners. There one could stay and browse….
Library regulations allowed two books a week to each cell. During the week books could be exchanged between cells. Those who were at liberty to circulate within the prison could go to the library and take out books….
Several courses were organized in the library. The illiterate were taught to read and write, and for the literate there were courses in arithmetic, geography, the natural sciences. Textbooks especially published for this purpose were used. I had a look at them. Some were graphically and interestingly written. Both pupils and teachers were prisoners. Arithmetic was taught by a little old man, a former merchant from the Ukraine who after the Revolution had worked as a book-keeper in Soviet enterprises….
We had also a drama circle, an orchestra, and a weekly cinema show. For all these “cultural activities,” as one calls them in the Soviet Union, a whole block was allocated, taking up the space of six to eight large cells. Half of them were occupied by the “cultural workers” and the musicians. They were the best cells in the prison.
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 353

My many meetings and long talks in Irkutsk prison were for me a return to the realities of Soviet life…. I felt much more free, here in prison, than I was later to feel at liberty, in deportation. This sensation arose not only from my freedom of movement within the prison, but also from my free contact with the outside world through the continual flow of thousands of prisoners bringing with them the living spirit of the country.
Even direct contact with the outside world was not lacking. There were among us not a few who worked individually in some outside institution or who were permitted visits from relatives. Since they were subjected to hardly any searching when they returned to prison, it was possible to receive and send letters. There was also an authorized correspondence. There was even a post office within the prison, next to the administration office, and it was open to all of us for normal postal transactions. Censorship was more a matter of form than of reality. This was not a GPU prison, that is, a political prison with its draconic severity, but a common “criminal” prison belonging to the People’s Commissariat of Justice, with almost the atmosphere of 1917….
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 357

But during my time in this “blessed” criminal prison one could write openly to friends abroad, just as one could from any part of Russia. I then and there wrote several letters to my friends in Russia and to relatives abroad. This for the first time in three years, since throughout that time the GPU had forbidden me to correspond with anyone.
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 358

In spite of hunger and overcrowding, the prison was a beehive of activity: courses, lectures and propaganda. The illiterate were taught the alphabet; courses in mathematics, geography, physics and so on were organized for those who had a modicum of instruction. There were orchestras and a theater, the musicians and actors being recruited from among the prisoners. Films were shown. The prison library provided books and newspapers for every cell. I was asked to give a course of Latin classes to the infirmary staff. The young people followed all these classes with avidity and showed no despair at all.
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 312

“For the moment you will go into the political section, corridor nine; you’ll find a couple of your comrades there. Your cell will be open all day. You will be able to walk around freely and do some sunbathing. You’ll receive “political’ rations; you’ve got nothing to complain about. Better than in Italy,” concluded the clerk, with a slightly mocking smile.
I did indeed find two political prisoners there…. They took me for a walk in the garden and acquainted me with the general lay-out of the prison. We politicals were given free run of the yards and some of the buildings. The same privilege was also permitted those who “worked” and in general to all who were well-dressed and looked like “intelligentsia.”
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 338

The organization of the Trotskyist prisoners called itself the “Collective of the Verkhne-Uralsk Leninist Bolsheviks.” It was divided into Left-wing, Center, and Right-wing. This division into three sections persisted during the three years of my stay, although the composition of the sections and even their ideologies were subject to certain fluctuations.
Upon my arrival at Verkhne-Uralsk I found three programs and two Trotskyist newspapers…. Right-wing and Center, between them, published Pravda in Prison (Truth in Prison), the Left-wing The Militant Bolshevik. These newspapers appeared either once a month or every two months. Each copy contained 10 to 20 articles in the form of separate writing books. The “copy”, ’.e. the packet of 10 to 20 writing books, circulated from ward to ward and the prisoners read the notebooks in turn. The papers appeared in three copies, one copy for each prison-wing.
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 211

All these preoccupations of the Trotskyist majority left me indifferent. Their outlook was not very different from that of the Stalinist bureaucracy; they were slightly more polite and human, that was all.
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 263

It should also be mentioned that all of Trotsky’s works, and those of socialists and anarchists that had lawfully been published in the USSR before the groups that produced them had been forbidden, were in no way subjected to a GPU ban and were therefore not confiscated when in the possession of prisoners. We could lawfully read the works of Trotsky, Plekhanov,

Martov, Kropotkin and Bakunin. But from 1934 onwards all these books, though lawfully published, were beginning to be confiscated.
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 231

The great mass of the prison population, the plebians as it were of that world, was made up of the most varied categories. In the first place there was a group of 200 employed on all sorts of work inside the prison; attending to and supervising the other prisoners, looking after the bath-house, working in the hospital, running the ambulance service, working in the kitchen, the store-rooms, the barbershop, in the prison office and the various “cultural” departments, cleaning the cells and doing internal guard duties. There were only a very few paid workers from the outside–in fact, only the Governor, the heads of the various departments, and the doctors.
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 347

One of the big differences between the Hitler and the Stalin systems was the treatment of the weak and sick. A man who fell sick in Auschwitz was at once gassed or shot. But in Stalin’s camps, for all their cruelty, the attitude to the sick prescribed from above was, if such a word can be used in this context, almost humane… The deaths were not planned. Those who were meant to die were killed outright, but a great number of others died through disorganization and neglect. As I mentioned earlier, daily reports had to go to the central administration of the camps and if the mortality rate surpassed a given level, something was done. Eighty per cent was too much. The camp commandant, Razin, and his whole staff were dismissed; the commandant was tried and condemned either to death or to a long term of imprisonment. The camp system was able to provide workers for remote regions and at the same time isolate those considered dangerous to the State, but it was not intended to kill them off. The corrective was the medical department. The doctors recruited from among the prisoners were good and devoted men who at great sacrifice saved many people from death. True, there were some monsters among them as well, but on the whole the hospitals were islands of humanity.
Berger, Joseph. Nothing but the Truth. New York, John Day Co. 1971, p. 197

LARGE NUMBERS OF IMPRISONED PEOPLE CONTINUED TO SUPPORT STALIN & STRONG METHODS

Why did large numbers of regime supporters continue to believe in Stalin, the Bolshevik Party, and the necessity for repression even after they themselves had spent years in labor camps as victims of that very system?
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 9

In the face of Hitler’s all too real conspiracy, the bogus conspiracies of previous years were as if forgotten. Survivors of the crushed oppositions, who could be useful in the war effort, were brought out of concentration camps and assigned to important national work. Tukhachevsky’s disciples, who had been cashiered and deported, were rushed back to military headquarters. Among them, according to one reliable report, was Rokossovsky, the victor of Stalingrad, a former Polish Communist, who had served as liaison officer between Tukhachevsky’s staff and the Comintern. Professor Ramzin, the head of the ‘Industrial Party’, who, in the early 30s had been charged with conspiracy and compact with a foreign

power, was released, acclaimed for his services, and awarded the highest prizes and metals. Professor Ustrialov, who had in fact advocated the transformation of the Soviets into a nationalist-bourgeois republic, reappeared as a contributor to leading Moscow newspapers.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 486

Galina Serebryakova, who spent nearly 20 years in Siberia from this time, had been married to two leading victims, Serebryakov and Sokolnikov. Through all this, she retained her Party-mindedness, and after her rehabilitation spoke up warmly at writers meetings in 1962 and 1963 against the liberalizing trends.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 165

Most of the close relations of those accused had been arrested, but more of the descendants of the second and third trial survived than had been assumed. The most prominent of the survivors was Galina Serebryakova, who was best known as an author of children's books and who had been married first to Serebryakov later to Sokolnikov; she had returned to Moscow under Khrushchev. Like some other prominent figures, such as Mrs. Karp-Molotov, her faith in the party was unbroken; she remained a conservative figure opposed to the anti-Stalinist thaw.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 81

No wonder so many people were delighted at the harsh sentences passed on most of the Old Bolsheviks. One sometimes heard a prisoner say that he would now willingly accept whatever fate was in store for him-it was enough for him to have lived to see this day.
Berger, Joseph. Nothing but the Truth. New York, John Day Co. 1971, p. 157

One day a very young, disheveled man was dragged in, resisting violently; he started hammering on the cell door as soon as it closed. and walked straight up to Dubinsky and Ivanov… He sat down on Ivanov's bed, and began to curse as I had rarely heard anyone curse before.
The terrifying thing was that he cursed the Government, the leaders and even Stalin himself by name. It was dangerous for all who listened. Ivanov reminded him that he might be overheard by spies.
'Let them listen,' said the boy. 'What have I got to lose?' He told us that he too had belonged to the Opposition-'and don't we see just how right we were!'…
We listened, too astonished to say anything. Then the door opened, the boy was removed and we never heard of him again.
The reaction of the prisoners was characteristic. Some remained silent. Others whispered: 'Poor chap! What he must have been through!' But nearly all said loudly: 'There's a really dangerous counter-revolutionary for you.' A former lawyer even made a speech, justifying the Government's repressive measures by its need to 'defend itself against such desperate criminals.' Had the unfortunate stranger been tried, not by a special court but by the inmates of this cell, all of them accused of counter-revolutionary activity, they would undoubtedly have condemned him to be shot. In other words, they might well have judged him more severely than the court.
Berger, Joseph. Nothing but the Truth. New York, John Day Co. 1971, p. 158

EXILES COULD WORK IN THEIR TRADE IN EXILE AREAS

[December 23rd 1935 NKVD/Procuracy circular on employment of exiles]
1. Persons exiled or deported administratively on the basis of a decision by the Special Board of the NKVD of the USSR as, for instance, engineers, technicians, physicians, agronomists, bookkeepers, and skilled laborers, may be employed in their specialties in institutions and enterprises in those localities where they have been permitted to reside, with the exception of those persons who have been deprived, by the decision of the special board, of the right to engage in their occupation in their places of exile or deportation.
NOTE: Persons mentioned in the Item #1 above may not be employed in work of a secret character or in institutions and enterprises pertaining to defense. Exceptions to this rule may be made in individual cases with the permission of the NKVD of the USSR.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 185

4. The children of persons mentioned in item #1 above, deported or exiled as dependents of their parents, are permitted to transfer to educational institutions in their places of exile or deportation.
5. In delivering the NKVD special board's decision to exiles or deportees, the organs of the NKVD are obligated to explain to them their right to work in their professional specialty in places of exile or deportation and to issue them the appropriate certificates.
Signed: NKVD Commissar, Yagoda and Procurator of the USSR, Vyshinsky
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 186

[Supplement to protocol #36]
1. Restrictions based on the social origin of the applicant or on the disfranchisement of the applicant's parents as they pertain to admission to institutions of higher education and technical colleges are to be abolished….
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 186

VYSHINSKY ARGUES FOR JUST TREATMENT OF PRISONERS

In February 1936 USSR Procurator Vyshinsky had complained to Stalin that NKVD officials were refusing to release prisoners whom procurators had ordered freed for lack of evidence. NKVD chief Yagoda had replied that procurators and courts were incompetent; procurators could "suggest" release of prisoners, but the decision should remain in the hands of the NKVD. On February 16th, Stalin wrote to Molotov, "Comrade Molotov: it seems to me that Vyshinsky is right."
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 219

Between 1932 in 1936, Vyshinsky stood for the opposite on each of these points, advocating instead due process, careful judgments on the basis of evidence, a strong role for defense lawyers in all cases, firm legal codes that applied equally to the entire population, and a strengthening of law.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 6

In February 1936 Vyshinsky wrote to Molotov, Stalin's right-hand man in the Politburo and chairman of the Sovnarkom (Council of Ministers), to call for a reduction of the NKVD's

administrative powers. The commissariat's Special Session, its internal tribunal, deliberated without calling witnesses or the accused, especially in cases of counter-revolutionary agitation and "expression of terrorist intentions." In the process, serious mistakes could occur. Vyshinsky wanted the "maximum limitation" placed on the Special Session's right to hear cases; he believed they should go instead through the regular courts, following normal judicial procedure. For cases that continued in the Special Session, the Procuracy should be allowed to make a "most careful check of investigative materials" and to obtain the release of prisoners if it found no basis for further action.
… Instead he believed that attention should be paid to objective evidence. He publicly attacked the NKVD's secret procedures, because, unlike open show trials, they "served no educative or legitimating functions." In an article published shortly thereafter, one of many similar pieces, he warned against violations of law and poor investigative procedures. He gave several examples of how not to operate,…
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 7

In discussing Yezhov's report, only two contributions struck a highly discordant note. One of them, no matter how strange this might seem at first glance, belonged to Vyshinsky, who spoke about actual shortcomings in the activity of the NKVD. First of all, he read several transcripts of interrogations which were filled with vulgar abuse from the investigators and which testified to their unconcealed application of pressure on the people under arrest. After citing the words of one peripheral investigator which were directed at a person under arrest: "Do not remain silent and do not play games…. Prove that this is not so," Vyshinsky explained to the plenum's participants that the accused should not have to prove his innocence, but, on the contrary, the investigator has to prove the guilt of the accused.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 278

In July 1934, Vyshinsky, as Deputy State Prosecutor, even issued an order to local prosecutors to cease making engineers and directors scapegoats for administrative failures. He strongly deprecated indiscriminate prosecutions. He stated that he had lately had to quash a large number of sentences wrongly pronounced by Siberian courts. He definitely forbade any further arrests of this kind.
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, p. 363

NUMBERS GIVEN FOR THOSE IN PRISON ARE FAR TOO HIGH

Until the Soviet government releases figures–if it has them–the controversy on numbers will continue. All that we can say on the present evidence is that an unusually large number of men–very few women seem to have been involved–appear to have been in labor camps at the time for one reason or another, and that an unknown number of those arrested were executed.
In addition to those executed, a large number were said to have died in the labor camps from malnutrition and ill-treatment. Conquest argues that 90 percent of those imprisoned in the labor camps perished. But this does not make any sense, for the camps were, after all, labor camps–lumbering, road building, Canal construction, mining, farming, and so on–and there would be no point in having 90 percent of the workers perish if the state wanted to get

the work done. No doubt some people died in the camps, as in any prison camp, but again, the numbers will remain speculative unless statistics become available.
But the question of numbers, however, of imprisonments or debts, is not the essential question. The basic issues are those of motivation and guilt. Why were these people arrested? What had they done? Why was the penal code amended to secure swift arrest and imprisonment? The underlying, indeed sometimes outspoken thesis of Khrushchev, Medvedev, Conquest, and others is that of a sadistic persecution of innocent people by an insane dictator. But this view smacks more of sensationalist journalism than of social analysis. Moreover, Stalin alone could not have initiated the prosecutions. Even if the whole Party leadership was not involved, the central leadership certainly was. At the time, this inner core of leaders included Molotov, Kaganovich, Zhdanov, Voroshilov, and Manuilsky. Thus, if the professional anti-Stalinists are to be believed, we are confronted with not one insane dictator but a group of insane dictators. When we consider the records of these men, their years of heroic revolutionary work, and their determined struggle for socialist industrialization, it is clear that, mistaken or not, they must have believed they were acting in the face of a threat to socialism. They were all responsible and serious men, not men who would persecute for the sake of persecution or who would lightly endorse executions.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 128

(Sheila Fitzpatrick)
From the recent researches of Zemskov and Dugin in the NKVD archives, it appears that the highest Western estimates on the size and mortality rate of the GULAG'S convict population were substantially exaggerated.
[Footnote: Conquest's estimate of 8 million political prisoners (not including common criminals) in labor camps at the end of 1938 is almost 20 times greater than the figure of under half a million "politicals" in the GULAG cited by Dugin from the NKVD archives, and four times as great as the total GULAG and prison population cited by Zemskov from the same source. According to Zemskov's figures, the entire convict population (including both "politicals" and "criminals") of the GULAG'S labor camps and labor colonies on January 1, 1939, numbered 1,672,438, with an additional 350,538 prisoners held in jails in mid-January of the same year–a total of a little over 2 million.]
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 248

(Alec Nove)
Figures purporting to represent the number of victims of "Stalinist repression" are also subject to definitional ambiguity. This particularly affects exiles. These range from those who were given a minus (i.e., could live anywhere "minus" a list of forbidden cities) through to those exiled to remote areas often under harsh conditions, but not kept behind wire.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 262

In 1937, the average number detained in the GULAG was given by the Soviet historian Zemskov as 994,000, the total rising to a maximum of 1,360,019 in 1939. It follows that the larger part of the detainees were not "technically" in the Gulag, but rather in prison, "colonies," and [special settlements]. The same conclusion is suggested by the evidence for 1939 (unless we suppose all the evidence to be faked in the archives).

Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 269

Dugin has studied tables showing numbers “in” and “out” of detention for the period 1930-53, and comes to the conclusion that the probable total number passing through camps, colonies, and prisons in the whole period came to 11.8 million or 8,803,000 for the period 1937-50. He also reproduces a table showing numbers in [camps and colonies] on Jan. 1, 1946, to be 1,371,986 of which 516,592 were condemned for counter-revolutionary activities (203,607 for “treason to the Motherland,” 15,499 for “spying,” etc.). These figures naturally exclude exiles and possibly also the prison population. He criticizes those (including Roy Medvedev & Solzhenitsyn, as well as Conquest) who persist in citing much higher figures that cannot be supported by evidence….
Another source gives the following figures: Emelin, a military historian, states that in June 1941 there were 2.3 million [detainees], which may be the total for the Gulag, colonies, and prisons, excluding [special settlements]. By the end of 1941, 420,000 of these detainees were serving in the Red Army. In 1941-43 a million “previously sentenced” persons were serving.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 271

The new material on labor camps and other repressed groups has tended to confirm my arguments that the level of population in the Gulag system in the late 1930s was below 4 to 5 million. Zemskov’s figures indicate that the Gulag population (excluding colonies) reached an early peak of 1.5 million in January 1941, and this can be reconciled with Nekrasov’s figures of 2.3 million at the beginning of the war, if we include prisoners in labor colonies and jail. There were also at this time a large number of [special settlements]: By 1939, according to both Ivnitsky & Zemskov, there were only 0.9 million of the original five or so million former kulaks in their place of exile. Even if we allow another 1.5 million for Baltic and other mass groups in [special re-settlements], there would still be in the order of about 4 million. Although this represents to my mind a sufficiently large and disgraceful scale of inhumanity, these are very much smaller figures than have been proposed by Conquest and Rosefielde in the West and by Medvedev & Ovseenko in the USSR.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 290

The question of how many [deaths of prisoners] will not be settled by this or any other discussion. In the former USSR claims continue to appear that high totals are correct, though they are not supported by substantial documentation. Those who see more deaths of prisoners than are indicated by existing data are abandoning the best kinds of evidence used in any other field in favor of speculation.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin’s Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 140

Throughout the 1930s and 1940s numerous people were arrested and sent to the labor re-education camps which, after their transformation in 1937, became penal colonies, functioning to aid the construction of the virgin regions. The number of people so confined has been subject to wild speculation in the extensive anti-Soviet literature that developed with the onset of the cold war. Estimates in these sources for those interned in 1938 range

from 2 to 12 million; many such estimates are based on the self-interested speculation and rumors of those once assigned to the camps. Others are based on such factors as alleged discrepancies in Soviet census data, where it is assumed that apparent discrepancies between different grand totals are equal to the number of people in (or on the pay-roll of) the labor camps, discrepancies between projections of populations assuming a particular 'normal' birth and death rate and the number of people actually reported in a census; the number of newspaper subscriptions (multiplied by the alleged number of people who read a paper) etc.. These highly speculative estimates have been subject to a careful review and criticism by British Soviet expert, Wheatcroft (1981). After examining the statistical discrepancies, population projections, etc. on which estimates in the Western literature are based, Wheatcroft argues as follows about the logical maximum of the number that could have been in the labor camps in 1939:
[In 1938 one of the 38 labor camp clusters, Vorkuta, was known to have 15,000 people under detention. To quote Wheatcroft], " Vorkuta was certainly one of the better-known camps, and there is no indication that it was smaller than average. Assuming the Vorkuta population to be typical gives an estimate of less than 600,000 for the total of those confined in 1938."
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 245

… The coincidence of the figures based on known information about the Vorkuta administration and the number of camp administrations, together with a reasonable ratio applied to the disenfranchisement data gives great credibility to an estimate of roughly one million people working in the labor camps in the 1937-38 period, or about .5% of the Soviet population.
For a sense of the significance of this figure it can be pointed out that in 1978, out of a total U.S. black population of 23 million, about 200,000 (roughly 1%) were incarcerated.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 246

To look a little further ahead, "forced labor" in the Soviet Union was to be used, especially after 1947, as the most potent weapon of anti-Soviet propaganda. The most fraudulent figures, bearing no relation whatsoever to the real facts, were produced by "Russian experts," the biggest fraud of all being the seemingly academic and scholarly work by two old Mensheviks, David Dallin and Boris Nicolaevsky. Anyone who dared challenge their assertion in their Forced Labor in Russia that the camp population was around 10 or 12 million people was treated ipso facto as a communist or Soviet agent, though even the most elementary study of the problem would have shown up the utter absurdity of the Dallin-Nicolaevsky figures."
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co.,1971, p. 34

It must be acknowledged that none of the data that we yet possess will allow us to arrive at an entirely reliable estimate of the number of arrests in those years.
The more so, since data that became available on the population in Soviet concentration camps are far from confirming traditional assessments.
… the fact that apparently 3,378,234 people had been sentenced "for counter-revolutionary and state crimes"… by courts and extra-judicial bodies during the whole period between 1930 and 1953, does not seem to signal anything near the order of magnitude of the estimates authors usually advance for the number of arrests in 1936-38…. Nevertheless, all

the indications are that the figures quoted by the traditional literature are incompatible with the available evidence….
It seems very likely that a less tendentious selection in a more systematic reading of the source material than those made by the authors of the traditional version would alter our view of this crucial period in Soviet history. Seeing how inadequate the literature is which provides our knowledge, it is unlikely that any researcher who devotes himself to the considerable task of sifting through such a vast and unexplored wealth of source material would be motivated merely by perversity. But of course it all depends on the sources which he analyzes and the problems with which he tries to come to grips.
Thus even if there is no reason to question the sincerity of most of the authors of those memoirs, on which most of the "classical" literature is based, the frequent occurrence in their accounts of themes like the role of Kirov as an opponent of Stalin as shown at the 17th Congress, or the systematic extermination of the old guard of the Party, is such as to throw a degree of doubt on the accuracy of the information that they give, and the relevance of their explanations of the whys and wherefores of historical events across the country at large.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 13-15

In 1993, for the first time, several historians gained access to previously secret Soviet police archives and were able to establish well-documented estimates of prison and labor camp populations. They found that the total population of the entire gulags as of January 1939, near the end of the Great Purges, was 2,022,976. At about that time, there began a purge of the purgers, including many intelligence and secret police (NKVD) officials and members of the judiciary and other investigative committees, who were suddenly held responsible for the excesses of the terror despite their protestations of fidelity to the regime.
…Despite harsh conditions, the great majority of gulag inmates survived and eventually returned to society when granted amnesty or when their terms were finished. In any given year, 20 to 40% of the inmates were released, according to archive records .
Almost a million Gulag prisoners were released during World War II to serve in the military. The archives reveal that more than half of all gulag deaths for the 1934-53 period occurred during the war years (1941-45), mostly from malnutrition, when severe privatization was the common lot of the entire Soviet population. (Some 22 million Soviet citizens perished in the war.) In 1944, for instance, the labor-camp death rate was 92 per 1000. By 1953, with the postwar recovery, camp deaths had declined to three per 1000.
Parenti, Michael. Blackshirts and Reds, San Francisco: City Light Books, 1997, p. 79

As to the dismal swamp of the aggregate numbers directly involved in the Terror, I did not write much about them, nor did I offer my own estimate. I simply said that my findings tend to support the lower of the available calculations, and they do. As for Weissberg's and Beck and Godin's estimates, I believe they are fraught with uncertainties.
First, as Weissberg admitted, he may have counted many prisoners twice; how many, he did not know. I have found numerous cases of prisoners transferred from prison to prison, from camp to camp, from camp to prison, and the like.
Second, as I have shown, there is serious reason to challenge his idea on prisoner turnover.
Third, his account does not make clear how he knew that all he counted came only from Kharkov and vicinity; any number may have come from much farther away [which would raise the total number], which would require lowering the percentage arrested.

Fourth, we simply do not know how typical Kharkov or any other place was. Moscow, Leningrad, and other large cities certainly had substantial prisons and inmate populations; but did Omsk, Vologda, and Kursk have them? I do not know, and I will wait for evidence.
Fifth, at least one of these careful calculations of a camp's size has been seriously undermined in light of more specific evidence: two Poles who were not in the Vorkutstroi system estimated that it contained 250,000 prisoners by 1938. Since they wrote, an actual inmate has published the figures of just over 15,000 in 1938 and 19,000 in 1941.
Sixth, I am not convinced that we should take the word of NKVD officers on the aggregate figures. They may have tried to protect themselves by arguing that they were part of some massive process that overwhelmed them along with everyone else; this impression is left by remarks one of them made to Weissberg. It is hard for me to believe that anyone much below Ezhov and Stalin could ever have learned hard information on the grand totals.
Finally, prisoners made their estimates of the numbers in all sorts of unscientific ways. Gustav Herling remembered that the amateur statisticians he knew in the cells based their estimates on "stories, scraps of conversation overheard in corridors, old newspapers found in the latrine, administrative orders, movements of vehicles in the courtyards, and even the sound of advancing and receding footsteps in front of the gate. Clearly, he and his fellow prisoners did not have numbered receipts at their disposal, and I have not seen them mentioned in this fashion in any other account. No prisoner was in a position to have firsthand knowledge of the total number of prisoners on any scale larger than a small quantity of cells or camps.
I am not saying that Weissberg's or any other estimate is wrong, merely that I have much less confidence in any method of calculation than Conquest does. To repeat a point made in my article, available evidence is so fragmentary that it must be interpreted with great caution.
Thurston, Robert W. "On Desk-Bound Parochialism, Commonsense Perspectives, and Lousy Evidence: A Reply to Robert Conquest." Slavic Review 45 (1986), 242-243.

BOLSHEVIKS TRY TO RE-EDUCATE PRISONERS FIGHTING AGAINST THEIR OWN INTERESTS

Menzhinsky, head of the OGPU, who died recently, once explained to me at length how absurd it was in principle to tax the political Party which directs the Soviet Union with cruelty or indifference to human life, since its ultimate aim is to bring everyone in the world together and to work for universal peace. And, in fact, he pointed out to me that the revolutionary police, brothers of the great mass of workers, are constantly on the lookout for any opportunity for "setting right" or "curing" not only common law prisoners (on this side of prison organization the Bolsheviks have carried patience and indulgence to an almost paradoxical point), but also political prisoners. Communists start from the double principle that transgressors of the common law are people who do not understand their own interests and are ruining their own lives, and that the best thing to do is to impress this upon them, and that the enemies of the proletarian revolution, the forerunner of universal Revolution, are equally (if they are sincere) people who are mistaken, and that the best thing is to prove it to them. Hence the constant effort to turn every kind of prison into a place of education.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 84

EXILED PEOPLE WERE ALLOWED TO RETURN

… he (Generalov) was sent to an obscure job in Siberia. Allowed to return at the end of 1933 and reinstated in the Party, he was, however, relegated to Dniepropetrovsk, again on low-level routine work under bureaucratic bosses of the new order, who treated him as an inferior creature. It was then that he married Shura.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 9

CC PLENUM COMPLAINS THAT PRISONS ARE TOO COMFORTABLE AND LIKE REST HOMES

[Resolution of the Plenum the Central Committee, March 3, 1937, on Yezhov's report of what was learned from the sabotage, subversion, and espionage committed by Japanese and German Trotskyite agents]

The major defects in the work of state security agencies that have decisively contributed to the delay in unmasking the Trotskyite anti-Soviet organization continue to be:

… d) Even more intolerable is the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs prison policy for the most vile convicted enemies of the Soviet government, the Trotskyites, Zinovievites, Rightists, Socialist-Revolutionaries, and others.

As a rule these enemies of the people have been sent to so-called political isolation facilities supervised by the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs. The political isolation facilities have been quite comfortable, resembling involuntary rest homes more than prisons.

Inmates in the isolated political prisons have had the opportunity to talk to each other, to discuss all political events in the country, to elaborate political plans of anti-Soviet activity for their organizations, and to establish contacts outside of prison. The prisoners have enjoyed access to literature, paper, and writing tools in unlimited quantity, and the right to receive unlimited numbers of letters and telegrams, to acquire their own equipment in their cells, and to receive along with prison food parcels from outside prison in any quantity or assortment.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 114

During the purges of the 1930s, he [Stalin] would support a proposal by Yezhov that the system for holding political prisoners be altered. At Stalin's instigation, the February-March 1937 Central Committee plenum introduced a special point into the decree on Yezhov's report, namely, that 'the prison regime for enemies of Soviet power (Trotskyites, Zinovievites, SR's, etc.) is intolerable. The prisons resemble nothing so much as compulsory rest homes. [The prisoners] are allowed to socialize, they can write letters to each other at will, receive parcels and so on. Steps were taken, of course. There was to be no question of 'universities' for these unfortunates.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 9

Neither orally nor in writing did Stalin ever call publicly for the repressions of 1937-38 to be intensified. Even the speech he gave at the February-March 1937 plenum, published in abridged form in Pravda, amounted only to a call for greater vigilance against the danger of

Trotskyism and so on…. he edited [rewrote] the resolution on Yezhov's report to the February-March 1937 plenum, including the following points:

…c. The system that has been created for enemies of the Soviet regime is intolerable. Their accommodation often resembles compulsory nursing homes more than prison (they write letters, receive parcels and so on).
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991 , p. 336

The resolution [of late Feb. 1937] on Yezhov's report repeated the formulation of the September telegram from Stalin and Zhdanov about being late in exposing the Trotskyists. It indicated that the NKVD "already in 1932-1933 had all the necessary threads in its hands to completely expose the monstrous conspiracy of the Trotskyists against the Soviet regime."

… It [the resolution] said that the previous leadership of the NKVD, having carried out "an incorrect correctional policy, particularly with regard to Trotskyists," had established "an intolerable…prison regime when it came to the convicts who were the most vicious enemies of the Soviet regime–Trotskyists, Zinovievists, Rightists, SR's, and others. As a rule, all these enemies of the people had been sent to so-called political isolators, which…provided beneficial conditions and were more apt to resemble mandatory rest homes than prisons…. Those under arrest were given the right to enjoy literature, paper and writing utensils in an unlimited quantity, to receive an unlimited number of letters and telegrams, to outfit their cells with personal effects, and to receive, along with official nourishment, packages from outside the prison in any quantity and assortment."
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 280

Still, compared with the camps of later years, Solovki was almost a luxury resort. It had a theater (" Paris of the North"), a newspaper, and visits from close relatives were occasionally permitted. The number of political prisoners counted in the tens of thousands rather than millions. According to official reports, there were 800,000 inmates in the labor camps all over the Soviet Union in 1934, but this figure may have included criminals. There were few Communists among the inmates; instead, the inmates were mainly people deemed to be "class enemies," that is to say, of "bourgeois" origin, rather liberally interpreted.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 72

PRISONERS WHO HELPED CONSTRUCT THE BALTIC-WHITE SEA CANAL GET REDUCED TERMS

[Resolution of the USSR Central Executive Committee, Sept. 1, 1932, on privileges for convict-workers at the White Sea-Baltic Canal construction site]

… In connection with the successful completion of the basic work on the White Sea-Baltic Waterway, this great new accomplishment of the Soviet regime, the USSR Central Executive Committee resolves:

1. To give the Unified State Political Directorate [OGPU] the right to free those prisoners who distinguished themselves on the construction project from serving the remainder of their sentences, and where needed, from serving supplementary sentences.

2. To instruct the OGPU to grant to all other prisoners (participants who worked conscientiously in the construction of the White Sea-Baltic Waterway), in addition to existing ordinary privileges in the corrective labor camps, a reduction in the term of measures taken to insure the defense of society.

3. To instruct the OGPU to present for review by the USSR Central Executive Committee the expunging of the convictions of those freed in accordance with paragraph 1 of this resolution.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 153

To trace down all the criminals, old and new types, is a big enough job, and requires a large police force. But the Soviet police also have many constructive tasks, as I have already suggested. Because they are in charge of all the men and women put at forced labor, and because tens of thousands of people have been sentenced to such labor, the police operate some of the greatest construction and industrial enterprises in Russia. They have built such great public works as the Baltic-White Sea canal and the Moscow-Volga canal; they have double-tracked the trans-Siberian Railway for 2200 miles, using an army of at least 100,000 men and women prisoners for this purpose, who labored without any pause during three of the severe Siberian winters. The police also construct many of the main highways of Russia, especially the great new strategic motor roads.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 202

[In 1931] at first specialists were returned to their former places under the supervision of OGPU bodies, then a “pardon” was declared for a number of individuals previously labeled “saboteurs” in view of their readiness to work for the good of socialism.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 98

Being human, the prisoners whose labour brought Norilsk into being naturally hoped their work and their devotion to their country would be recognized, and that their sentences would be shortened, but I can testify that their primary motive was to defeat Hitler.

At the end of the war what happened was that the free salaried men, who directed the work, received decorations and promotion while some prisoners who had overfulfilled their norms, even some held under Article 58, were let off one, two, three or four years of their sentence. Of course, if they were serving a sentence of twenty or twenty-five years this did not mean very much, but at least it was taken as a good omen.
Berger, Joseph. Nothing but the Truth. New York, John Day Co. 1971, p. 206

THOSE PRISONERS WHO FOUGHT FOR THE POLES IN SEPT 1939 RECEIVE FAIR TREATMENT

[NKVD order, Oct. 3, 1939, on disposition of prisoners of war in Soviet camps]

The following resolution of the Central Committee of the all Russian Communist Party dated October 2 concerning prisoners of war is reproduced below for your information and guidance:

Approve the following proposals of comrades Beria and Mekhlis:

… 1. Prisoners of war of Ukrainian, Byelorussians, and other nationalities whose homes are located in the western Ukraine and western Byelorussia will be allowed to go home.

2. 25,000 prisoners of war will be kept to build the Novograd-Volynskii-Korets-Lvov Road until the end of December.

3. Prisoners of war whose homes are located in the German part of Poland will be assigned to a separate category and will be detained in the camps until negotiations with the Germans begin and the issue of their repatriation is resolved.

… 6. The Czech detainees (approximately 800 individuals) will be released after they have signed a pledge not to fight against the USSR.

… 8. Officer prisoners of war will receive better rations than enlisted prisoners of war.

… 10. All prisoners of war, including officers and enlisted men, will be required to surrender all valuables and any money over the limit established by the POW Affairs Administration to the administrations of the camps for safekeeping in exchange for a receipt.

… 3. All POWs whose homes are located in the German part of Poland will be temporarily confined to camps. We must explain to them that they will be repatriated in an orderly manner after our negotiations with the Germans on this issue.

4. All other enlisted POWs, including Ukrainians, Byelorussians, and other nationalities whose homes are located in our territory, should be immediately sent home. They should be given all possible assistance, including advice, in getting home. Major political indoctrination efforts should be initiated for these POWs to remind them that they will soon be citizens of the USSR. The soldiers should be informed of the forthcoming sessions of the two popular assemblies and the issues they will decide. The platform we are using in the election campaign should be explained to the soldiers. The indoctrinators should try to get the soldiers to become activists and advocates for our platform.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 163

VYSHINSKY DEMANDS FAIRER AND MORE JUST TREATMENT OF PRISONERS

With the object of “overinsuring” themselves, procurators were wrongly classifying cases under Article 58. Clearly trying to slow the momentum of the Terror, [in February 1938] Vyshinsky now stipulated that procurators at each level had to have approval from a superior procurator to bring counter-revolutionary charges.

In mid-March [1938] Vyshinsky continued to work against mass political arrests when he complained to Stalin and Molotov about improper counterrevolutionary charges against railroad personnel. He noted that during 1937, procurators took cases to the courts and obtained convictions with ten-year sentences for mere "formal violations of the rules of technical exploitation, in the absence of harmful consequences and evil intentions." Vyshinsky proposed that all such cases be reviewed in the four months following….

In early February Vyshinsky also began to condemn the use of torture. He informed Yezhov's assistant Frinovsky that, according to a military procurator in Kiev, prisoners there had been beaten and forced to stand for long periods. Vyshinsky's concern was partly practical: the ill treatment had become widely known in the area after some of the abused had been released "owing to the complete groundlessness of their cases." Yet Vyshinsky appeared to be genuinely angry; he referred to "direct fabrication of cases" and demanded that the guilty NKVDisty be arrested. "Slanderers," or false denouncers, were convicted of wrongdoing by July 1938 at the latest and were sent to prison.

In late March the Procuracy Council referred in general to the "beating of honest Soviet people," which it ascribed to penetration of its own agency by enemies. All procurators were now instructed to "strengthen the principles of judicial Soviet democracy" and to oppose sentences they disagreed with. At the same time Vyshinsky wrote to Yezhov to protest sleep deprivation and threats against a prisoner, which induced him to sign a statement that he was in an anti-Soviet group. The procurator-general planned to investigate and bring the guilty to justice.

Two days later Vyshinsky wrote to Malenkov, again mentioning enemies within the Procuracy. "In a number of places," he indicated, citizens had been prosecuted without cause. As a result, higher levels of the Procuracy and judiciary had quashed many cases. Within weeks Vyshinsky's officials were busy across the country investigating charges against prisoners and cases already decided, with an eye to weeding out the groundless ones. In June he ordered procurators to refer all cases involving the death penalty to him personally or, in his absence, to a deputy. Then on July 25 the Procuracy Council required all counterrevolutionary cases to be cleared by the procurator-general's office in Moscow; a staff of 12 people would be assigned to review them. As of August 1, no new cases were to go to the troiki, though in fact some did. These changes represented further major steps toward halting the Terror.

By early August an oblast-level prosecutor had been tried, on Vyshinsky's initiative, for bringing political charges without sufficient evidence. The accused had also classified some ordinary crimes, for example, malfeasance, as counter-revolutionary. Pravda announced that this "overinsurer," who had carried out orders of enemies of the people, had received a 5-year sentence. In October the former prosecutor of the city of Omsk was sentenced to two years for sanctioning illegal arrests without "penetrating the essence of the case." These reports were powerful indications to the justice system about how not to operate.

… By this time the judiciary had switched almost completely from facilitating the Terror to opposing it.

Vyshinsky, never a hero but brave enough to criticize the NKVD while Yezhov ran it, remained in important positions for the rest of Stalin's life. Without the Gensec's approval, the Procuracy would never have taken the steps it did to protest and curb the Terror.

… But by this point, or earlier, the NKVD had relinquished a great deal of power; conscientious party officials could thwart the agency, while Vyshinsky repeatedly challenged its practices.

Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 109-112

SCIENTISTS WHO CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIETY FROM PRISON HAVE THEIR SENTENCES REDUCED

Scientists whose lives were spared were put to work in camp and prison laboratories under the supervision of the 4th special section of the Ministry of the Interior…. Quick results were what mattered, and when they were achieved, Stalin could even show a little kindness, sometimes reducing a sentence or even releasing a prisoner. Beria'a agency kept Stalin constantly informed of the work of the scientists in the prisons and camps….
And on February 1951 Kruglov reported that:
"in 1947 prisoner-specialist Abramson (sentenced to 10 years) proposed a new and original system for an economic automobile carburetor. Tests on a ZIS-150 produced a fuel saving of 10.9%. It is proposed that Abramson, mechanical engineer Ardzhevanidze and engine-builder Tsvetkov have their sentences reduced by two years.
I request your decision.
Stalin gave his consent.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 556

PRISONERS CHANGED THEIR VIEWS OF MARXISM IN PRISON

There is no doubt that not only nonpolitical defendants, but even strong political opponents can be broken by the "Yezhov method." In this connection the statements of the Bulgarian Protestant pastors in their February 1949 Trial are the most relevant, since no one could possibly argue that loyalty to Party or creed induced them. In their confessions, they all remarked that they now saw Communist rule of their country "in a new light." In their final pleas, Pastor Naumov thanked the police for their "kindness and consideration" and said, "I have sinned against my people and against the whole world. This is my resurrection"; Pastor Diapkov was in tears as he admitted his guilt and said, "Do not make of me a useless martyr by giving me the death sentence. Help me to become a useful citizen and a hero of the Fatherland Front"; Pastor Bezlov, who had earlier stated that he had read 12,000 pages of Marxist literature while in prison and that this had entirely changed his outlook, declared, "I have now an intellectual appreciation of what the new life means and I want to play my part in it."
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 126

LENIN WANTED THE PENAL CODE TO GIVE A BROAD DEFINITION OF COUNTER-REV. ACTIVITY

In his [Lenin] amendments to the project for the penal code, he insisted that the notion of "counter-revolutionary activity" should be given the widest possible interpretation. This definition was to be linked with the "international bourgeoisie" in such a way that this kind of crime became quite imprecise from a juridical point of view and thus left the way wide open for every kind of arbitrary action. Among other things, the crime would cover "propaganda and agitation" and "participation in or aid to an organization" which might benefit that part of the international bourgeoisie that does not recognize the Soviet regime's equal rights with

capitalist states and seeks to overthrow it by force. This definition was already broad enough, but what was worse, in view of the fact that the crime could carry capital punishment, was that it could be extended by analogy. Whoever “gave help objectively to that part of the international bourgeoisie” (which actively opposed the regime), and similarly whoever belonged to an organization within the country whose activities “might assist or be capable of assisting” this bourgeoisie, will also be guilty! This case shows that at this time Lenin was anxious to leave room for the use of terror or the threat of its use (not through the Cheka alone but through tribunals and a regular procedure) as long as the big capitalist countries continued to threaten the USSR.
Lenin, then, was very far from being a weak liberal, incapable of taking resolute action when necessary.
Lewin, Moshe. Lenin’s Last Struggle. New York: Pantheon Books. C1968, p. 133

GOOD PRISON ADMINISTRATORS WITH A GOOD KNOWLEDGE OF MARXISM WERE HARD TO FIND

One of the major difficulties in Russia, as everywhere else, is the matter of proper personnel. With the emphasis upon loyalty to Marxian and Leninist doctrine it is difficult to get men who are good Communists and at the same time have those personal qualities which make them good prison administrators and subtle molders of anti-social personalities. Here is where most of the departures from the ideals occur. Doubtless they happen in Russia as elsewhere. While the usual prison cruelties are forbidden by the Code, it is probable that they occur, due to this difficulty.
Davis, Jerome. The New Russia. New York: The John Day company, c1933, p. 238

WHICH COUNTRY HAS THE MOST PEOPLE IN PRISON

Countries with the most people in prison, 2004 (in thousands):
United States 2,079
China 1,549
Russia 847
India 314
Brazil 308
Thailand 214
Ukraine 198
South Africa 181
Mexico 175
Iran 164
Source: Newsweek International, January 2005

From Hitler to Hearst, from Conquest to Solzhenitsyn
In the United States of America, for example, a country of 252 million inhabitants (in 1996), the richest country in the world, which consumes 60% of the world’s resources, how many people are in prison? What is the situation in the US, a country not threatened by any war and where there are no deep social changes affecting economic stability?
In a rather small news item appearing in the newspapers of August 1997, the FLT-AP news agency reported that in the US there had never previously been so many people in the

prison system as the 5.5 million held in 1996. This represents an increase of 200,000 people since 1995 and means that the number of criminals in the US equals 2.8% of the adult population. These data are available to all those who are part of the North American Department of Justice. The number of convicts in the US today is 3 million higher than the maximum number ever held in the Soviet Union! In the Soviet Union there was a maximum of 2.4% of the adult population in prison for their crimes – in the US the figure is 2.8%, and rising! According to a press release put out by the US Department of Justice on 18 January 1998, the number of convicts in the US in 1997 rose by 96,100.
As far as the Soviet labour camps were concerned, it is true that the regime was harsh and difficult for the prisoners, but what is the situation today in the prisons of the US, which are rife with violence, drugs, prostitution, sexual slavery (290,000 rapes a year in US prisons). Nobody fees safe in US prisons! And this today, and in a society richer than ever before!
Sousa, Mario. Lies Concerning the History of the Soviet Union, 15 June 1998.

Deportation of Nations

DEPORTATION OF NATIONALITIES DURING THE WAR WAS NECESSARY AND JUSTIFIED

CHUEV: How do you explain the forced resettlement of entire ethnic groups during the war?
MOLOTOV: …The fact is that during the war we received reports about mass treason. Battalions of Caucasians opposed us at the fronts and attacked us from the rear. It was a matter of life and death; there was no time to investigate the details. Of course innocents suffered. But I hold that given the circumstances, we acted correctly.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 195

CHUEV: Why were the Kalmyks deported during the war?
MOLOTOV: They helped the Germans.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 195

There have been many and varied oppositionist groupings. The first was that of Yenukidze, Sheboldayev and Metelyov…. In 1934 there was a plot to start a revolution by arresting the whole of the…17th Congress of the Party. In 1942 there was the armed uprising of the North Caucasian peoples, more especially of the Chechen nation, who tried to establish their independence against both Stalin and Hitler. These are representative instances of opposition.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 37

By the autumn of 1942 the axis forces had reached those districts of the Northern Caucasus which were least loyal of all to Stalin–Checheno-Ingushetia, Dagestan, Dzaudzhikau and Grozny.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 237

… A number of Caucasian and near-Caucasian people had shown themselves disloyal. The Chechens, Ingushes, the Balkarians, the people of Karachay, the Tatars of Crimea and the Kalmyks had indeed fought equally against the Nazis and the Soviet ‘imperialisms’. The

Karachay people had openly welcomed the Germans under General Kleist and the prime mover in this astonishing act had been none other than the Chairman of the Provincial Executive Committee of the Soviets of the Karachay Autonomous Province. The Crimean Tatars were still working together with the Germans exterminating all the Russians they could, especially the Party members. There was an anti-Soviet partisan war in progress.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 245

… It was not till June 28, 1946, nearly three years later, that they [the Russian people] learned about it…. The Secretary of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Socialist Federal Republic, then Bakhmurov, [made] the announcement.
"Comrades," he said, "the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR places before you for confirmation the draft of a law to abolish the Chechen-Ingush ASSR and for the transformation of the Crimean ASSR into the Crimean province…. During the Great Fatherland War, when the peoples of the USSR were heroically defending the honor and independence of their Fatherland in the struggle against the German-Fascists conquerors, many Chechens and Crimean Tatars, giving ear to German agents, entered volunteer units organized by the Germans and together with the German armies fought against units of the Red Army. On German instructions, they set up saboteur bands for the struggle against the Soviet regime in the rear. The main body of the population of the Chechen-Ingush and Crimean Tatar ASSR's offered no resistance to these traitors to the Fatherland. For this reason the Chechens and Crimean Tatars have been transported to other parts of the Soviet Union. In the new regions they have been given land as well as the requisite state assistance for their economic establishment…."
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 268

Towards the Moslem peoples, the Germans pursued a benign, almost paternalistic policy. The Karachai, Balkars, Ingush, Chechen, Kalmucks, and Tatars of the Crimea all displayed pro-German sympathies in some degree. It was only the hurried withdrawal of the Germans from the Caucasus after the battle of Stalingrad that prevented their organizing the Moslem people for effective anti-Soviet action. The Germans boasted loudly, however, that they had left a strong "fifth column" behind them in the Caucasus.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 373

Remembering the response of the Sudeten Germans to Nazi appeals, Stalin considered them [the Volga Germans] a risk and ordered their removal, but as a precaution rather than a punishment. They were nevertheless treated harshly. NKVD troops descended suddenly on the Volga German Republic, and gave the people only a few hours in which to get ready for the long journey by cattle truck. Many died of hunger and hardship on the way. On arrival at their destination in uninhabited regions of Kazakhstan in Siberia, the survivors were given agricultural tools and left to build a new life. [From Conquest]

After Stalin's death five of the Moslem peoples were allowed to return to their homes. The Crimean Tatars and Volga Germans were not permitted to return. [Werth page 581]
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 504

As a result of these three operations, some 650,000 Chechens, Ingushes, Kalmucks and Karachays have been deported to the eastern regions of the USSR.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 445

Early in 1943 Stalin had taken a decision on an operation against a section of…his own citizens. In this case it was the smaller nationalities of the Caucasus and the Crimea who had, in Stalin's view, either welcomed or not opposed the Germans.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 258

German attempts to play off Caucasian nationalities and tribes against one another and to recruit collaborators among them were not without success–the fact was to be officially admitted after the war, when several hundred thousand Chechens and Ingushes, as well as Crimean Tartars, charged with helping the enemy, were punished with deportation to Siberia.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 480

Others, such as mass collaboration with the enemy, especially in the Ukraine and Caucasus, resulted from grievances and resentments lingering on since the '30s….
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 485

But the real story of Sevastopol was of how the Soviet authorities treated collaborators. The Crimean Tartars had welcomed the arrival of the Germans. They had hunted down Russian soldiers in disguise, had formed a police force under German control, had been active in the Gestapo, and had supplied the Wehrmacht with soldiers. Now the moment of reckoning had arrived. The whole Crimean tartar community of something between 300,000 and 500,000 men, women, and children was rounded up and sent into exile in Central Asia, and they have never been allowed to return.
Knightley, Phillip. The First Casualty. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975, p. 263

Only in the North Caucasus, in the Chechen-Ingush and Kabarda-Balkar "autonomous republics" did Hitler obtain some semblance of collaboration by exploiting the hatred of Moslems for Russians.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 481

During their occupation of the Caucasus the Germans had promised independence to the Chechens, the Ingush, the Balkars, and the Kalmyks. Members of these ethnic groups did sometimes collaborate with the Germans. The same was true of the Crimean Tartars.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 502

As regards collaborators sent to camps during and after the war, no reliable figures are available either. During the war, a number of "disloyal" nationalities– Volga Germans, Crimean Tartars, Kalmuks and several Caucasian Moslem nationalities–had been deported en masse to Siberia, including all the women, children and even communists and Komsomols. The operation was in the nature of a resettlement, and if some were sent to actual forced labor camps, they were in a small minority….
But the vast majority in the three Baltic States were bourgeois kulak and, therefore, pro-German and often pro-Nazi and savagely anti-Semitic….
Since the great majority of the population is [in the Baltics] (apart from the Jews) could be said to have "collaborated" in some measure with the Germans after having been re-incorporated by Russia for only a year, no particular loyalty to the latter could in fact have been expected, and the Baltic deportees, though numerous, did not apparently run into more than 10,000 or 20,000–fewer than had been deported during the first Russian takeover in

1940. Moreover, the most violently anti-Soviet people had fled in very large numbers to Germany when, in the summer and autumn of 1944, the Russians were about to overrun or had already overrun the Baltic states.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co.,1971, p. 26

Proportionately to their numbers, very many more people were deported from the Western Ukraine than from the Baltic states. Cities like Lvov were hotbeds of the most extreme Ukrainian nationalism, fascism, and anti-semitism ; and the Western Ukraine was by far the most pro-Nazi part of the Soviet Union to have been occupied by the Germans. For at least two years after the war a savage guerrilla war was waged by Ukrainian nationals, with Nazi officers, against the Russians.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co.,1971, p. 27

One disturbing fact revealed a new and terrible danger and threw a fresh light on the state of mind prevailing in the south: on 10 August 1942 Mannstein's advanced guard of armored cars was welcomed with enthusiastic cheers from a portion of the inhabitants of Vorochilovsk, whose recollections of collectivization were only too painful. It was the same at Ordzhonikidze. This made it possible for the Germans to begin to form regiments from the Cossack's of the Terek and the natives, who enlisted in their thousands. This was the prodrome of a separatist rot, although for the present it was local. In vain did Stalin send into the Caucasus plenipotentiaries whose duty it was to inquire into the situation.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 322

This danger was revealed in all its amplitude in the Northern Caucasus. Despite the capture of Rostov on the Don, Mannstein, cut off from the bulk of the Wehrmacht, was still holding the Northern Caucasus. His army was revictualled by way of the Straits of Kertch; and he was able to form more and more numerous detachments of Cossacks from Terek and Kuban, of Tartars from the Crimea, of native Caucasians and of volunteers. When these troops withdrew they were followed by a great proportion of the population.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 332

CHECHENS WOULD NOT COOPERATE WITH THE RED ARMY

Only in the Chechen area was the local population reluctant to cooperate with the Red Army.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 149

HUMANE RESETTLEMENT OF GERMANS FROM THE UKRAINE

[Resolution of the State Defense Committee, Sept. 22, 1941, on removal of Germans from certain areas of the Ukraine]

… 4. To allow the re-settled persons to bring with them their personal property and a supply of provisions for the journey in the amount of 200 kg for each member of the family.

5. Buildings, agricultural implements, livestock, and cereal/grain fodder belonging to the resettled persons will be handed over to the following commissioner representatives: the local executive committee, the People's Commissariat for Agriculture, the People's

Commissariat for Meat and Dairy Production, and the People's Commissariat for State Purchases, and will be restored at the place of settlement in accordance with confirmed instructions from the Council People's Commissars, the People's Commissariat for Agriculture, and the People's Commissariat for Meat and Dairy Production.

Structures for kolkhozes and kolkhoz farm personnel will be provided at the place of settlement by delivery of prefabricated houses.

Those re-settled persons not provided homes at the place of supplement will be given loans for construction and, if necessary, repair of housing from the Agricultural Bank in the sum of up to 2000 rubles to be repaid in five years at 3% annual interest with amortization of the loans starting the second year after received.

… 7. To task the People's Commissariat of Foreign and Domestic Trade with providing food to the resettled persons at locations as ordered by the NKVD.

8. To task the USSR People's Commissariat for Health with providing medical service for the re-settled persons in transit, for which medical personnel, medicines, and first-aid supplies will be allocated as ordered by the NKVD.

9. To release from the reserve fund of the Council of People's Commissars and the NKVD the sum of 15 million rubles for resettlement expenses.

10. To put the chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the Kazakh SSR and the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan in charge of organizing the reception, settling, and household arrangements for the resettled persons.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 203

… The Volga Germans, whose position was similar to that of the Japanese Americans, became suspect owing to their particular language and culture, and were largely relocated to non-strategic areas but, unlike Japanese-Americans, without confinement.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 257

In fact, the resettled peoples were allotted land and given state assistance to build a new life in the areas in which they were resettled. The Volga Germans, for example, were resettled:

"with the promise that the migrants shall be allotted land and that they should be given assistance by the State in settling into new areas."

(Decree of the presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, 28 August 1941).

while the resettled Chechens and Crimean Tatars

" were given land, together with the necessary governmental assistance for their economic establishment."

(Decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, 25 June 1946)

The Enforced Resettlements Speech to the Stalin Society by Bill Bland, 1993.

HUMANE RESETTLEMENT OF CRIMEAN TATARS

[Decree of the State Defense Committee, May 11, 1944, signed by Stalin, on deportation of Crimean Tatars to Uzbekistan]

During the Patriotic War many Crimean Tatars betrayed the Motherland, deserted Red Army units that defended the Crimea, and sided with the enemy, joining volunteer army units formed by the Germans to fight against the Red Army. As members of German punitive detachments during the occupation of the Crimea by German fascist troops, the Crimean Tatars particularly were noted for their savage reprisals against Soviet partisans, and also helped the German invaders to organize the violent roundup of Soviet citizens for German enslavement and the mass extermination of the Soviet people.

The Crimean Tatars actively collaborated with the German occupation authorities, participating in the so-called Tatar national committees, organized by the German intelligence organs, and were often used by the Germans to infiltrate the rear of the Red Army with spies and saboteurs. With the support of the Crimean Tatars, the “Tatar national committees,” in which the leading role was played by White Guard-Tatar emigrants, directed their activity at the persecution and oppression of the non-Tatar population of the Crimea and were engaged in preparatory efforts to separate the Crimea from the Soviet Union by force, with the help of the German armed forces.

Taking into account the fact cited above, the State Defense Committee decrees that:

1. All Tatars are to be banished from the territory of the Crimea and re-settled permanently as special settlers in regions of the Uzbek SSR….

The following procedure and conditions of resettlement are to be established:

a) The special settlers will be allowed to take with them personal items, clothing, household objects, dishes and utensils, and up to 500 kilograms of food per family.

… Exchange receipts will be issued in every populated place and every farm for the receipt of livestock, grain, vegetables, and for other types of agricultural products.

By July 1 of this year, the NKVD, People’s Commissariat of Agriculture, People’s Commissariat of the Meat and Dairy Industries, People’s Commissariat of State Farms, and People’s Commissariat of Procurement are to submit to the USSR Council of People’s Commissars a proposal on the procedure for repaying the special settlers, on the basis of exchange receipts, for livestock, poultry, and agricultural products received from them.

… d) To each convoy of special settlers, the People’s Commissariat of Public Health is to assign, within a time frame to be coordinated with the NKVD, one physician and two nurses, as well as an appropriate supply of medicines, and to provide medical and first-aid care to special settlers in transit;

e) The People's Commissariat of Trade will provide all convoys caring special settlers with hot food and boiling water on a daily basis….

… e) To grant plots of farm land to the newly arrived settlers and to help them build homes by providing construction materials;…

… 4. Seven-year loans of up to 5000 rubles per family, for the construction and setting up of homes, are to be extended by the Agricultural Bank to special settlers sent to the Uzbek SSR, in their places of settlement.

5. Every month during the June-August 1944 period, equal quantities of flour, groats, and vegetables will be allocated by the USSR People's Commissariat of Procurement to the Uzbek SSR Council of People's Commissars for distribution to the special settlers.

Flour, groats, and vegetables are to be distributed free of charge to the special settlers during the June-August period, as re-payment for the agricultural products and livestock received from them in the areas from which they were evicted.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 205-207

HUMANE RESETTLEMENT OF CRIMEAN TATARS, BULGARIANS, GREEKS, & ARMENIANS

[State Defense Committee resolution, June 2, 1944, to evict from the Crimean Republic 37,000 Bulgarians, Greeks, and Armenians, cited as German collaborators]

The State Defense Committee resolves to:…

3. … Direct the People's Commissar of Agriculture, the People's Commissar of the Meat and Dairy Industry, the People's Commissar of Procurement, and the People's Commissar of State Farms to ensure that the evicted Crimean Greeks, Bulgarians, and Armenians receive livestock, grain, and collective farm products using exchange receipts….

5. Direct the People's Commissar of Trade to provide food for 37,000 people during the convoy of special settlers from the Crimea in accordance with the schedule set by the NKVD….

8. Direct the People's Commissar of procurement to determine the methods to be used by the oblast executive committees… in distributing provisions to the special re-settlers during the first three months after resettlement (July-September) in equal monthly portions…. The distribution of foodstuffs to the special re-settlers during July-September will be free of charge taking into account the collective farm foodstuffs and livestock received at the place of eviction.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 209

BERIA SAYS THE RESETTLED PEOPLE FOUND GOOD LIVING CONDITIONS AT THEIR DESTINATION

[Report from Beria to Stalin, July 4, 1944, stating that re-settlement of Tatars, Bulgarians, Greeks, Armenians, and others from the Crimea has been completed]

… All of the special settlers who have reached their destination have found satisfactory living conditions. A significant number of the resettled, able-bodied Tatars special settlers have been engaged in agricultural work on collective and state farms, in logging, in industry, and in construction. There were no incidents during the resettlement operation on site or during transit.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 211

US ALSO DEPORTED NATIONALITIES WHEN DEEMED NECESSARY

One of the most massive repressions of civil liberties in American history occurred during the war in respect of those of Japanese descent. All Japanese living West of the Mississippi, regardless of the degree of Japanese blood, whether are not they were citizens, or how many years they, or their ancestors, had been in the U.S., were forcibly removed to isolated relocation camps. The 85 percent of Japanese Americans who lived West of the Mississippi, a total of 112,000 persons, were given between 48 hours and two weeks to prepare for evacuation to camps in the barren areas of the West. They were allowed to take with them only what they could carry, thus being forced to dispose of their houses, cars, appliances, and other possessions–typically to unscrupulous buyers who offered extremely low prices for Japanese possessions, knowing that they had to sell immediately. The Japanese Americans lost hundreds of millions of dollars in this period.
The West Coast Japanese were put under the authority of the U.S. Army. Relocation (concentration) camps were opened in the most desolate areas of California, Arizona, Colorado, Utah, and Arkansas. Until the relocation camps were ready, the Japanese were put into 15 temporary assembly centers, usually race tracks or fairgrounds. The camps were enclosed by barbed wire, with military sentinels stationed in towers to prevent escape. Families were crowded into single rooms. Employment was offered at the rate of $16 a month (which often, although promised, failed to materialize). Strikes against labor conditions in the camp were systematically repressed by the army, which confined strike leaders, isolating them from the rest of the population, for the duration of the war. The celebration of Japanese culture and the use of the Japanese language were strongly discouraged, and Japanese schools were forbidden.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 175

VOLGA GERMANS WORKED WITH THE NAZIS

The measures of enforced resettlements in these cases were presented not as a mass punishment, but as a Preventive measure to avoid the necessity of mass punishment: “According to trustworthy information received by the military authorities, there are among the German population living in the Volga area thousands and tens of thousands of

diversionists and spies, who, on a signal being given from Germany, are to carry out sabotage in the area inhabited by the Germans of the Volga.
None of the Germans living in the Volga area has reported to the Soviet authorities the existence of such a large number of diversionists and spies among the Germans; consequently, the German population of the Volga conceals enemies of the Soviet people and of Soviet authority in its midst.
In case of diversionists acts being carried out at a signal from Germany by German diversionists and spies in the Volga-German Republic or in the adjacent areas and bloodshed taking place, the Soviet government will be obliged, according to the laws in force during the war period, to take punitive measures against the whole of the German population of the Volga.
In order to avoid undesirable events of this nature and to prevent serious bloodshed, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR have found it necessary to transfer the whole of the German population living in the Volga area into other areas."
(Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR: Decree of 28 August 1941).
The Enforced Resettlements Speech to the Stalin Society by Bill Bland, 1993.

Adam Geisinger wrote From Catherine to Khrushchev: The Story of Russia's Germans; Battleford (Canada); 1974; and on pages 304, 313 said:
"As German troops overran western Russia in July and August 1941, they came across German villages
When German (or Romanian) soldiers arrived in such a village, they were greeted as liberators
Some of them (the Soviet Germans,Ed.) volunteered to work in the Reich during the war. Some of these defected fully to the Nazis and served in the German armed forces."
The Enforced Resettlements Speech to the Stalin Society by Bill Bland, 1993.

TATARS AND CHECHENS WORKED WITH THE NAZIS

"During the Great Patriotic War many Chechens and Crimean Tatars, at the instigation of German agents, joined volunteer units organized by the Germans and, together with German troops, engaged in armed struggle against units of the Red Army; also at the bidding of the Germans they formed diversionary bands for the struggle against Soviet authority in the rear; meanwhile, the main mass of the population of the Chechen-Ingush and Crimean ASSRs took no counter-action against these betrayers of the Fatherland.
In connection with this, the Chechens and the Crimean Tatars were resettled in other regions of the USSR."
(Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR: decree to 25 June 1946).
The Enforced Resettlements Speech to the Stalin Society by Bill Bland, 1993.

Alexander Werth said in Russia at War: 1941-1945; London; 1964; pages 579-80, 838:
Altogether the Tatars' record was as bad as could be. They had formed a police force under German control and had been highly active in the Gestapo."
The Enforced Resettlements Speech to the Stalin Society by Bill Bland, 1993.

Alan W. Fisher said in The Crimean Tatars; Stanford; 1987; on pages 153, 155, 159:

“In most Crimean cities, the German advancing army was met with jubilation and calls of ‘liberators’ from the local Tatar population
Manstein was relatively successful in his attempts to gain active support from the Tatars. According to both German and Tatar evidence, the Germans persuaded between 15,000 and 20,000 Tatars to form self-defense battalions that were partially armed by the Germans and sent into the mountains to hunt down partisan units From the various Caucasian peoples over 110,000 volunteers were recruited; and the Kalmyks provided about 5000 volunteers
Large numbers of Tatar villagers as well as six organized Tatar self-defense battalions fought hard against the Soviet partisans.
The Enforced Resettlements Speech to the Stalin Society by Bill Bland, 1993.

Alan W. Fisher: The Crimean Tatars, the USSR and Turkey, in: William O. McCagg and Brian Silver (Eds.): Soviet Asian Ethnic Frontiers; New York; 1979; page 12:
“A large part of the Crimean Tatar population did not consider the government in Moscow to be their ‘sovereign’ nor the USSR to be their country
“Tatar collaboration; with the Germans took the following forms
First, early in 1942, the Germans encouraged the creation of ‘self-defense’ battalions of Tatars to ‘defend’ their villages against the activities of Soviet partisans in the Crimea. According to German records, between 15,000 and 20,000 Crimean Tatars formed these military units. Second, with German aid, Tatars established local ‘Muslim Committees’ to take over the responsibility for most non-political and non-military affairs.”
The Enforced Resettlements Speech to the Stalin Society by Bill Bland, 1993.

Walter Kolarz stated in Russia and her Colonies; London; 1952; on pages 185, and 187:
“When the German armies occupied the Northern Caucasus region many mountaineers manifested their hostility towards the Soviet regime. They attempted to use the retreat of the Red Army to free themselves from what they considered the ‘Russian yolk.’ Over 20 years of Soviet rule had not altered their imagined conviction that Russia’s foes were their friends….
In Chechnya, it would seem that Muslim opposition to the Soviet regime was never quite suppressed. The mullahs, who were powerful opponents of the Soviet regime, even managed to keep alive the illegal Sharia courts.
The hostile attitude of the Chechens toward the Soviet Russian regime was often manifested
The Enforced Resettlements Speech to the Stalin Society by Bill Bland, 1993.

DEPORTATIONS AND RESETTLEMENTS WERE LEGALLY JUSTIFIED

While there were individual traitors among all the nations of the Soviet Union, a few small nations were guilty of mass treachery.
An authoritative textbook of Soviet law (Ilya D. Levin [Ed.]. Soviet State Law; Moscow; 1947) tells us:
“In the background of patriotic enthusiasm which inflamed the nations of the Soviet country united against the common enemy… there stand out strangely the monstrous, criminal and treacherous acts of some small, backward nations which gave support to the enemy in the expectation of receiving ‘privileges’ from him at the expense of the other nations of the Soviet Union. These acts called for necessary and extraordinary measures by the Soviet state in the interests of the USSR as a whole.”

The Enforced Resettlements Speech to the Stalin Society by Bill Bland, 1993.

“But an authoritative book on Soviet law (Administrative Law of the USSR ; Moscow; 1950) sets out the circumstances in which groups of citizens may legally be resettled in other parts of the Soviet Union:”
‘Resettlement is carried out by the state organs of the USSR:
1) for the purpose of realizing measures connected with state security and defense of state frontiers;
2) for the purpose of acquiring lands for agricultural production.’
The first function is carried out by the organs of state security.”
The Enforced Resettlements Speech to the Stalin Society by Bill Bland, 1993.

Anti-historians often describe the enforced resettlements as acts of ‘genocide.’… But enforced resettlement of national groups can in no way be identified with intent to destroy them. Indeed, even such a hostile commentator as Conquest is compelled to admit:
“Nothing here matches the horror of the Nazi gas chambers. These nations were not physically annihilated.”
The Enforced Resettlements Speech to the Stalin Society by Bill Bland, 1993.

KARACHAI PEOPLE IN CAUCASUS WORKED WITH THE NAZIS

Alexander Dallin recounts in German Rule in Russia: 1941-1945: A Study of Occupation Policies; London; 1981; pages 244, 246, 258 that early in the Soviet-German war:
“…Revolts broke out among some of the Caucasian Mountaineers. Most widespread in the Muslim areas, particularly among the Chechens and Karachai, these rebellions prepared the ground for a change of regime…. Faced with a concentrated German onslaught and a lack of support from the indigenous population, the Red Army retreated from Rostov to the Greater Caucasus Mountains without giving battle….
In the Karachai region the bulk of the Muslim Mountaineers accorded the Germans a more genuine welcome than in most other occupied areas.
The Germans…announced the formation of a Karachai voluntary squadron of horsemen to fight with the German army
During the entire occupation, there was no evidence of anti-German activity in the Karachai area”
The Enforced Resettlements Speech to the Stalin Society by Bill Bland, 1993.

THE BALKARS WORKED WITH THE NAZIS

Robert Magidoff said in, The Kremlin Versus the People: The Story of the Cold Civil War in Stalin’s Russia; New York; 1953; pages, 20, 22,
“The Germans were welcomed by practically the entire population of the Crimea and the Muslim areas of the Northern Caucasus
The Balkars were Muslims and unlike the Christian Kabardinians, collaborated en masse with the enemy.”
The Enforced Resettlements Speech to the Stalin Society by Bill Bland, 1993.

Alexander Werth said in Russia at War: 1941-1945; London; 1964; pages 579-80, 838:

“The Muslim Balkars were more outspokenly pro-German than the mostly non-Muslim. Kabardinians. Although the Germans did not penetrate far into the Chechen-Ingush ASSR (south of Grozny), these two peoples appear to have made no secret of their sympathy for the Germans
The Enforced Resettlements Speech to the Stalin Society by Bill Bland, 1993.

Katyn

GERMANS COMMITTED THE KATYN FOREST MASSACRE

All the evidence I secured showed that the Polish group in London was more interested in doing something against Russia than in doing anything for Poland. This made it easy to understand why they accepted and spread the Goebbels story about the murder of 10,000 Poles in Smolensk. Their unhesitating acceptance of this Nazi propaganda caused the Soviet government to sever relations with the Polish government-in-exile in 1943. It will be remembered that the Germans captured Smolensk on the night of July 15th 1941. Almost two years later Goebbels broadcast to the world that the Russians had killed 10,000 Polish prisoners there, and that their bodies had been found in the Katyn Forest. The Polish government-in-exile immediately gave credence to the Nazi allegation by asking the international Red Cross to investigate. It seemed a preposterous charge. If the Russians had really killed the Poles it would have been known by the people of Smolensk and the Germans would certainly have found out about it almost immediately. It was not the sort of thing that the Germans would have kept quiet about for two years. The Red Army retook Smolensk on September 25, 1943, and the Soviet government immediately instituted an investigation of a massacre.
I visited the Katyn Forest with American, British, Chinese, and French correspondents. Dr. Victor Prozorovsky, Director of the Moscow Institute of Criminal Medical Research, showed me about. The 10,000 bodies had been dug up, and the Russians were systematically examining everything found on them as well as performing autopsies. Eleven doctors were working continuously. I watched some of the autopsies, which were very thorough. The bodies, including the internal organs, were remarkably well preserved. The doctor said that this alone was sufficient to prove the falsity of the charge.
The Russians found letters on the bodies dated after the Germans occupied the city, thus proving that the victims could not had been killed at the time alleged. We talked with a Russian priest whose parish was in the Katyn Forest. He had been driven out of this church by the Germans, and then the building had been surrounded by barbed wire and SS men. The priest declared that the Germans had killed the Poles there. A Russian who had served under the Germans testified that the German authorities had ordered the death of the Polish prisoners. The diary of the Mayor who fled with the Germans contained clear evidence that the Germans had committed the murders. However, the fact which impressed me as much as any other, was that the corpses still had their fine leather boots. I had seen, traveling at the front, that it was general Russian practice to remove the boots of the dead. It seemed unlikely that they would have made an exception in this case, and left 10,000 pairs of good boots behind. Every correspondent who visited Katyn Forest came away convinced that it was another Nazi atrocity.

Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 99

In 1943, near the railway station of Katyn, in the forest near the village of Kozy Gory, a vast burial ground of several thousand Polish officers was discovered. The Nazis at once declared that this was the work of Soviet hands', while a special commission in Moscow stated that it was simply another example of Nazi brutality. A series of documents have been found in a special section of the Main Soviet Archives which make it plain that Katyn was in fact the work of Beria'a agency, though no single document has yet been found bearing his signature or that of any of his henchmen actually ordering the massacre. The order must either have been destroyed after the act or have been given orally.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 360

Each one of them [Polish officers] had been shot in the back of the neck with a German bullet.
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 404

KATYN GRAVES STORY DECLARED GRIM FRAUD
STOCKHOLM, Sweden, June 28.
The story of the mass graves at Katyn, which caused a world sensation two years ago, was a propaganda stunt staged by Goebbels and Ribbentrop to cause a split between Russia and her western allies, says a report received here through special channels that is supported by a message from Oslo tonight. A Himmler close collaborator, SS Brigade Leader Schellenberg, is declared to have given this sensational information during an examination at Allied Headquarters in Germany last Tuesday. He is quoted as saying that 12,000 bodies were taken from German concentration camps and attired in old Polish uniforms to make them appear to be Polish officers.
Tonight a corroborative report was received from Oslo, where Erik Johansen–recently repatriated prisoner from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in Germany–tells an interesting story about German production of false identification documents for bodies in Katyn mass graves.
Johansen says a special section of the concentration camp was completely isolated and strongly guarded by SS men, whereupon forty to sixty Jewish prisoners were picked out to forge the documents. They received the best optical instruments obtainable so the work could be done to perfection. They made passports, letters, etc. and even wallets, which were treated with a special chemical fluid to make them look worn.
Before the German capitulation all machines, instruments and material used were destroyed and the Jewish specialists were killed to prevent the secret from getting out, he said.
New York Times, June 29, 1945 p. 2

Katyn Forest Massacre
from Military-Historical Journal, 1991
by Romyald Sviatec

Who gained more from the murder of the Polish officers?
In order to answer this question, it is necessary to, at least sketchily, clarify the relations of the Germans and the Russians toward the Poles. It is known that the Germans started the war with Poland, as they required Polish lands and Polish workers. From the first days of the

occupation, they began to destroy the Polish intellectual elite. The movement of the Russians into the eastern part of Poland had a different character, which was expressed in the note of the Soviet Government handed to the Polish ambassador in Moscow. The Polish-German war exposed the insolvency of the Polish state. In the course of ten days of military (German) operations, Poland lost all of its manufacturing and cultural centers. Warsaw, as a Capital of Poland, did not exist any more. The Polish government fell apart and did not show signs of life. This meant that the Polish state and its government factually ceased to exist.

With this, the agreements that had been concluded between the USSR and Poland were no longer valid–left to itself and abandoned without direction. Poland became a convenient field for all kinds of the accidental and unexpected, capable of threats to the Soviet Union. Because of this, being until then neutral, the Soviet government could not be in different to these facts any more, as also to the fact that the Ukrainians and the White Russians,–being of the same blood (as the Russians)–and living on the territory of Poland, and having been thrown to the mercy of such destiny, remained unprotected.

In view of such a situation, the Soviet government gave an order to the High Command of the Red Army that the army should cross the frontier and take under protection the life and property of the population of Western Ukraine and Western White Russia. After this took place, the war between Poland and the Soviet Union was officially ended and Poland represented no more of a danger for the USSR….

The situation with the Germans was exactly the opposite. In spite of the fact that the German armies were occupying Poland, the war between the two states was continuing, as some of the Polish army were fighting against the Germans in France and England, and therefore, any Polish officer presented to the Germans a potential danger.

Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 197-198

Being in Varkut, Camp No. 10, [Romyald Sviatec] met a Major of the German Army who, from 1941, found himself in Smolensk. From him, I found out that it definitely was the Germans who operated several camps for Polish war prisoners. In one conversation, I got interested in his knowing about Katyn. He answered me directly that this was the work of the hands of Germans, as it was in the interests of Germany to commit this massacre.

He was sincerely surprised that the Polish officials were blaming the Russians. The Major stated that a good soldier, especially an officer, must die, if his Motherland is perishing. He stated that after he had fallen to the Russians as a prisoner, he understood very well that he might die, and if that would be his fate, he would accept that as a good German soldier. He also knew the attempt by General Sikorski in Moscow to free the Polish officers and soldiers, which he said would assist the Soviet-Polish agreement. This German major did not, in the slightest, consider his Polish officers' massacre by Germany as a crime. To his way of thinking, these Polish officers represented a danger to the German Reich. This was also the opinion of most of the other German prisoners of war.

In Camp No. 11 in Varkut, I met Vlodzhimir Mandryk, who, before the war and during the period of occupation, worked in the main post office in Smolensk. He absolutely insisted that near Smolensk, from 1940 there were German camps for Polish prisoners of war. He was adamant that the Germans murdered the Poles.

By his account of the period between August and October of 1941, letters to Polish prisoners of war ceased to arrive and be processed by the post office. Any letters that kept on coming to the prisoners, the Germans gave the post office orders to destroy all these letters. Also, at

this time, Mandryk recalls the Germans told everyone in Smolensk that the Polish officers were relocated back in Polish territory.
…Amongst the many recollections which I read about Katyn, there was a book by Stanislaw Svjanevich by the name of “In the Shadow of Katyn,” and also in the book by Joseph Chapskov, “Upon the Inhuman Earth.” I learned that Polish war prisoners were treated very well by the Russians. In 1940, there were three Polish generals in POW camps–Minkewich, Smorovinsly and Bakhaterebur. When these prisoners were departing the camps, the Soviet authorities gave them a farewell banquet, especially for the higher officer corps. The Russians wanted to show the Germans that they are civilized and knew how to treat prisoners. This might be looked upon as having little meaning, but if you lived with the Russians during those hard times of war, you would appreciate the real meaning of that gesture.
The Russians wanted to show the Polish officers that they, the Russians and Poles have one common enemy, therefore, uniting together would be in the interests of everyone. No one can convince me that it was the Russians who murdered these Polish officers. [This was also shown by] the Polish-Russian agreement of 1941 when thousands of Polish prisoners of war were freed from the camps, and the formation on Soviet territory of the Polish army took place.
In July 1952, together with a group of invalids, I was directed into the region of Irkutsk to camp No. 233. Here, I got acquainted with Father Kozera, who showed a great interest in the Katyn massacre. During the eight years we were together in many camps, he accumulated many interesting materials, which brought him to the final conclusion that the Katyn crime was perpetrated by the Germans.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 206-209

…Altogether, I spent nine years in the Soviet Union–two years in exile and seven years in camps. During that time, I went through much, met thousands of interesting people, but I also know that if the Soviets had wanted to get rid of the Polish officers, they would have sent them to the ” Novaya Zemlya” to work and thus, be productive.
I am far from praising the Soviet system…. I also do not pretend that I am not guilty of many things. There were people that got into the NKVD and the party who were real enemies of the system. They got rid of many dedicated people. But I cannot keep quiet on this Katyn event. I must defend the Russian people, if only to correct the existing lie that is being nurtured and promoted to this day about the Katyn massacre.
Even though I do not like the communist system, I must admit that this system has shown decency and follows the established law and order of the system….
With all the documentation that I have in my hands, I state categorically that the accusations by the Polish government in London, England were made solely for political reasons.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 206-211

Katyn Forest Massacre– Conclusion of Romyald Sviatec
In conclusion of this sad history, I would like to advise the Poles that they once-and-for-all discontinue and stop the insults regarding their Eastern neighbor, since the borders of Poland have been enlarged as the result of the Second World War, for the benefit of Poland. Every true Pole must not only be satisfied with this, but also appreciate the country which was responsible for saving Poland from practical extinction. I returned from the Camp in

1956 and visited our Western territories. Only then did I realize the economical importance of the new Polish borders and in my heart I forgave the Soviets for their jailing me, because it was Stalin and the USSR which brought and formed these new important borders for Poland.
For all those who still stubbornly dream about Poland from the Baltic to the Black Sea, I suggest that they read the letter by Winston Churchill to the Poles. It calls for those Poles who are not aware of history or what it is they want, nor what they now possess, and do not wish to know or admit that it was the Soviet Union through its sacrifices of many millions of its people and soldiers, so the Poles could have their own independent state–which they were never able to gain by their own strength:
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 222

[In a November 7, 1944 letter Churchill stated:]
1. …
2. …
3. Moreover, without the Russian army, Poland would have been destroyed or brought into slavery and the Polish nation itself would have been wiped off the face of the earth. Without the valiant Red Army, no other power on earth would have been able to accomplish this. Poland now will be an independent, free country in the heart of Europe with wonderful and better territories than the one she had before. And if she will not accept this, Britain removes from itself all obligations and lets the Poles themselves work out their own agreement with the Soviets.
4. I don't think that we can be asked to give any further assurances and promises to Poland regarding their borders or their attitude regarding the USSR. Poland fell in days to German Nazis, while the Polish government at that time refused to receive help from the Soviet Union.
Those Poles that are now vying for leadership in Poland must think that we, the British, are stupid that we would start a war against our USSR ally on behalf of the demands to restore the Polish eastern borders which had the majority of non-Poles living in those territories. A nation that proved to the world that it could not defend itself, must accept the guidance of those who saved them and who represent for them a perspective of genuine freedom and independence.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 224

POLAND 'S NOV 1939 ATTACK ON THE SU CHANGED THE STATUS OF POLISH PRISONERS

In the Soviet intervention into Poland, the USSR detained between 250-300 thousand Polish soldiers and officers. Most were released from detention centers. However, some 130,242 persons were maintained in detention camps of the NKVD, before their situation changed.
In November 1939, the Polish government in exile, as arrogant and bullish as ever, declared war on the USSR, supposedly in reply to the Soviet-Finnish War. The Poles went as far as creating a special brigade to be sent to fight the Red Army in Finland. By this act of war, the Polish government changed the status of the Polish soldiers still detained in the USSR. They

now become automatically prisoners of war, and thus those still remaining in NKVD camps could not be released.
Mukhin, Y.I., Katyn Detective,1995

20,000 POLISH PRISONERS COULD NOT BE RELEASED UNTIL THEIR CASES WERE JUDGED

After the official inclusion of the territory captured by Poland in 1920 into the USSR, the Polish prisoners of war automatically became citizens of the USSR. By decision of court, it was named illegal for the NKVD to detain and force these soldiers to work. Therefore, most soldiers and petty officers were all released into civilian life as citizens of the USSR. However, there was a group of people that could not be released. These were those charged with crimes against the non-Polish and Polish population in the newly liberated areas as well as for war crimes against the USSR. This group comprised members of Poland's military and governmental elite, gentry, landlord and manufacturers. There were plenty of war crimes committed by these people, such as the mass execution of Soviet prisoners of war in 1920 and active support for diversionary and terrorist groups against the USSR. It was decided to keep these individuals, numbering more than 20,000, in detention camps of the NKVD until a Special Commission of the NKVD examined their cases and decided upon a sentence for them.
Mukhin, Y.I., Katyn Detective,1995

POLISH CASES WERE JUDGED BY A SPECIAL COMMISSION AND THE RESULTS WERE AS FOLLOWS

The Decision of the Special Commission of the NKVD

The action of sentencing these foreign officers to war crimes was against international laws of the time. It was also not the time for the USSR to take such steps. War would soon come, and to publicly announce that some of the Polish officers were being considered as war criminals, could not help the USSR. Foreign imperialists, who were only looking for an opportunity to attack the USSR, would see this as an opportunity. Therefore, it was decided to keep this as secret as possible. A Special Commission of the NKVD was organized to individually investigate each case of the persons accused of crimes against the people or war crimes. Starting from December 1939, the administration of each camp in which the prisoners were being detained, started selecting those prisoners to be investigated by the Special Commission of the NKVD. On December 31, 1939 L. Beria sent the order for the camps to deliver the names of the suspected officers. By February 20, 1940 the order was issued to release from camps all those individuals who were sick, invalid or representatives of the working intelligentsia. After a lengthy review by the members of the Special Commission, a decision was reached. The first time the conclusion of the NKVD was made publicly available in its entirety was in September 1993 in the "Military-Historical Magazine." This document was found in the Archives of the USSR. The decision of the Special Commission of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) was the following:

1. To give the status of war criminal to the persons considered socially dangerous; to exile for the period of up to 5 years under public supervision in the districts specified by the

NKVD; to sentence them for the period of 5 years under public supervision with the prohibition of residing in the capitals, large cities and industrial centers of the USSR; to imprison in correctional-working camps and isolate in the camps for a period of up to 5 years, and to send outside the limits of the USSR foreign citizens considered socially dangerous.

2. To give the status of war criminal to the persons convicted of espionage, sabotage, diversion and terrorist activity and to imprison for the period from 5 to 8 years.

Starting from March 16 1940, individual cases were reviewed by the Special Commission of the NKVD and sentences were established for them. Some individuals were found not guilty of wrong doing and were returned to the prisoner of war status or were released. It was decided by the Special Commission that the privilege of correspondence be removed from the prisoners that were sentenced. The reason for this was that they were no longer prisoners of war, but war criminals, and thus the Soviet authorities were under no obligation to allow this privilege.

Furthermore, the fact that the Polish officer elite had been sentenced as war criminals could not be released publicly. Releasing such information to the world would have been damaging to the USSR, especially in this time when allies, even half-hearted ones, were necessary. However, not all the detained prisoners were sentenced. Those that were not, were placed in prisoners of war camps from where they could freely correspond. Furthermore, the Special Commission of the NKVD issued orders to the Starobelsk prisoners of war camp, where the Polish officers were previously held, to destroy the documentation regarding their prisoner of war status. An order was issued from L. Beria on September 10, 1940 to the commander of the camp to destroy the stock-taking documents of the prisoners of war. This order from Beria had no security clearance, and therefore could be viewed by anyone. The existence of this order has been seen by the western “historians” as evidence that the officers had been executed and that the Soviets were trying to cover their tracks. This is not the case. In the order of Beria and in following orders to the Starobelsk camp, the camp administration is asked to make copies of the prisoner’s photographs and some other additional files which were to be sent to the Kharakov UNKVD. The reality of this order is that the status of the officers had changed, from prisoners of war to war criminals. They had moved from the jurisdiction of the NKVD to that of the UNKVD, which dealt with such cases. Documents about their prisoner of war status could be destroyed, since they served no more purpose. But the pictures of the prisoners were sent to the UNKVD, where new criminal files were opened for the prisoners.

With this, the work and jurisdiction of the Special Commission of the NKVD was finished. The prisoners were moved from the Starobelsk camp to three separate camps near the Smolensk area. These camps were specially set up by the UNKVD for the Polish officers.

Since 1943, the USSR was forced to publicly admit that the Polish officers and other individuals were sentenced to imprisonment in correctional and working-camps for the period of 5 to 8 years without the right of correspondence. Since that time, the USSR has been accused of lying. Indeed, it was concluded by the Nazis and the western imperialists that the USSR had sentenced these individuals to death instead of imprisonment. However, the discovery of the actual decision of the Special Commission of the NKVD, has proved beyond

a doubt that the USSR was not lying. The prisoners were indeed sentenced to terms of imprisonment, or as in the case of foreign nationals, to exile. The decision of the Special Commission of the NKVD should never have been doubted because in 1941 several individuals of foreign nationality were exiled outside the USSR. Among them was a Polish officer of German origins, R. Shtiller, who was deported to Germany and revealed information about the sentencing. Furthermore, those Polish officers found not guilty were returned to their prisoner of war camps, from where they could freely correspond. The entire investigation of the NKVD begs the question, that if the intention was to kill the prisoners, why carry out such a lengthy investigation of individual cases and release persons found not guilty? If the intention was to execute them, none of this would have been done. However, as with most truthful evidence on Katyn, this information is rejected and kept hidden as much as possible by the western and Russian revisionist historians. Instead, these “historians” and the Gorbachievite gang, resorted to forgeries and lies on the decision of the NKVD.

On June 22 1941, Germany launched its invasion of the USSR. At the time, Poland still held its declaration of war against the USSR. It wasn’t until after the war had started, that the Polish government in exile retreated its declaration. In July 30 1941, the government of Sikorsky entered into negotiation with the USSR about the release of the remaining Polish prisoners and about the organization of a Polish Army from these. By early August 1941, it was decided to create a Polish Army in the USSR under the command of Polish General Anders (who was one of the prisoners), called the Anders Army. Sikorsky promised Stalin that the Anders Army would remain in the USSR and fight against the Germans. All he wanted in return was that 25,000 Polish soldiers be sent to the Middle East to join the British Army. Stalin agreed, and in 1941 the Anders Army was created and armed. Sikorsky also asked Stalin about the fate of the missing Polish officers. Stalin avoided the question, giving the answer that he did not know (while the Soviet press made up imaginative theories of what happened). But the truth was that Stalin indeed did not know what had happened. By that time the Germans had taken Smolensk and the Polish camps and the Soviets did not know what happened to them. Also, this was not a priority for the Soviet Union. In any case, Stalin organized a committee to find out what happened to the Polish officers. They could not find out what happened to them, except that they had been captured by the Germans. On this, we shall talk about later.

Anders, being of the Polish military elite and as arrogant as usual, had a deep hatred for the USSR. The USSR was sacrificing much by arming these Polish soldiers. At a time when weapons had to be taken out of museums to arm the defenders of Moscow, the Anders Army was being armed with the best weapons. In an act of treachery, which was second nature for the elite Polish officers, Anders led his army of 114,000 into Iran. He abandoned the Red Army and abandoned the fight for his homeland to run away to Iran to join the British. This was indeed a great blow to Polish-Soviet relations. Never again would Stalin trust the Polish government in exile, and proved once more their treacherous and cowardly nature. Nevertheless, hundreds of thousands of Polish soldiers and officers still remained in the USSR. these were organized into the Polish People’s Army, under the command of the PKKA. This was created in October 1941 and fought alongside the Red Army until the end of the war. By the Battle of Berlin, the Polish People’s Army numbered 400,000. They were the only Polish troops to participate in the liberation of their country from the Nazis.

First, lets begin with the “proofs” of the Nazis. Following the liberation of Smolensk from the Germans in September 1943, a Special Commission was established, headed by Academician N.N. Burdenko. Following a lengthy investigation of the area, questioning of witnesses and the excavation and study of 925 bodies, the Burdenko Commission wrote a 56 page report. This report was made public in 1944. Since then, the revisionist historians have accused the report of being simply a propaganda document with no truth in it. However, this assessment does not hold. In 1990, a “Top Secret” version of the Burdenko report was discovered. This “Top Secret” document was sent by Burdenko to the heads of the Soviet government.

The Burdenko Commission refuted all the points of the German and International investigation, except for the fact that there were 12,000 bodies. First to be examined was the location of the burial itself. The Germans claimed that the Katyn forest was an isolated area which had served as an execution ground for many years. In reality, Katyn was a popular area of vacationing. The NKVD vacation home was located only 700m away from the burial places. There resided the wives and children of the NKVD officers on vacation there. The city and surrounding population frequented the Katyn forest as a place of vacationing. Villagers came to the forest for picking mushrooms or for pasturing their animals. The area was not closed off the public in any way. Furthermore, the burial was only 200m from the Smolensk-Vitebsk highway. This was a heavily traveled road, with thousands of people crossing it every day. Could this be an area where executions were carried out for many years? Could this be the area where for months, 12,000 people were buried? It was not possible for the Soviets to carry out this act in such a place. Surely the NKVD could have found an area which was far more secure than this, an area where the only witnesses would have been bears. Most importantly, this revelation about Katyn proves the Germans were lying. According to the findings of the Burdenko Commission, it wasn’t until the Germans occupied the area that the woods were closed to the population. Signs were put up, warning anyone who entered that they would be shot. A German military unit was stationed on the grounds of the Katyn forest, closing off the area.

And about the cabin found by the Germans directly next to the graves (where the Germans said the executions had been carried out). It was in actuality a cabin for the Pioneers! It appears, that the exact area of the burials was a favorite ground for the Pioneers to set up their summer camp. Therefore, a permanent cabin was build on that area for housing materials for their use (while the Pioneers themselves slept in tents).

The Burbenko Commission also answered the question of what had happened to the Polish prisoners after their camps were overrun by the Germans. The directors of the prisoner camps were located and questioned. The director of camp 1ON, Major of Security V.M. Vetoschinikov, testified about what happened. According to him, he received orders about the evacuation of the prisoners from the camp. However, he had not received any instructions on how to carry this out, since phone connections had been cut off. He and some employees of the camp drove to Smolensk to clarify the situation. He met with Engineer S.V. Ivanov, head of transportation on the western stretch of the Smolensk railway. Vetoschinikov asked Ivanon for a few train cars to transport the prisoners. However, at the time the evacuation of the city population was being carried out. Therefore, Ivanon told him not to expect any train cars since none were available. Vetoschinikov tried to contact Moscow about permission to evacuate by foot, but could not contact them. By that time, the

1ON camp was cut off from Smolensk and the director had no idea what had happened to the prisoners or their guards.

Officer Ljubodzetsk witnessed what occurred in the 1ON camp after Vetoschinikov did not return. According to him, the evacuation of the camp started to be carried out by foot. However, the Polish officers rebelled. They said they wanted to wait for the Germans and surrender to them. At least the Germans, they thought, would treat them in accordance to international norms. The majority of the prisoners decided to remain in the camp and wait for the Germans. Only a few of the prisoners agreed to the evacuation – those of Jewish origin. Therefore, it has been proven that the Polish officers were alive and in the camps by the time the Germans captured them. The Burdenko Commission gathered testimonies from a number of other eyewitnesses from the neighboring villages. According to several of them, they had seen Polish prisoners in the area near Smolensk as late as September 1941.

The Burdenko Commission went on to investigate if anyone had actually seen the process of execution of the Polish officers by the Germans. They found three women, the cooks of the NKVD vacation house, A.M. Aleksejava, O.A. Michailova, and S.P. Konachovskaja. At the time, the house was the base for a German military unit. According to the women, this was the Staff building for a Construction Battalion No.537-1. There were 30 persons stationed at this place, according to the cooks. They could not remember the names of all of them, except for a few. The commander of the battalion was Lt. Colonel Arnes. Others were Lt. Colonel Rekst, Lt. Hott, Sgt. Luemert and few others whom the women could remember. They witnessed the entire procedures of the Germans. Though they never witnessed an execution, they were aware of what was going on. According to all three women, several trucks regularly arrived at the residence starting from September 1941. They would not come directly to the residence at first. Coming off the main highway, the trucks would stop somewhere between the highway and the residence. The officers of the 537th would go into the woods. About half an hour later, individual shots in succession begun to be heard. About 1 hour after the trucks had stopped, they reached the building and all would disembark. They would go into the house and wash themselves in the bathroom. They would then proceed to drink heavily. The women were not allowed out of the kitchen when the drivers and the other members of the convoy arrived. They were kept in the kitchen, cooking meals for them. On several occasions, the women noticed fresh blood stains on the uniforms of at least two officers. The cooks usually left their work in the evening. According to them, the officers had the unusual habit of sleeping until 12 o'clock. They suspected that they conducted the same business during the night. They also saw Polish officers on at least two occasions. On one occasion, one of the women was allowed to go home after her usual hours, in the evening. Walking on the road, she noticed a group of 30 prisoners. She recognized them as Polish because she had seen their uniforms before, while they were conducting construction work for the Soviets. On another occasion, two of the women accidentally saw two Polish officers inside the residence, surrounded by German officers. The women were chased back into the kitchen and there was a large fuss around the officers. A few minutes later, the women heard two shots. They had been warned several times to be careful about what they saw and not to tell anyone. As punishment for their intrusion, one of the women was locked in the basement of the building for 8 days while the other two for 3 days. After they realized what was going on, they quit their jobs on various excuses.

The conclusion that can be drawn from the testimonies of these three women is that the Polish officers were being executed by the Germans in the autumn of 1941. Apparently, several trucks were carrying groups of 30 or so prisoners to the Katyn woods. Stopping “between the highway and the residence”, or approximately 200m from the highway, the prisoners were unloaded. There awaited them the 30 members of the 537th in addition to the drivers and escorting soldiers. The prisoners were individually executed directly above their burial grounds and were thrown into their graves. This is a scene which can be seen many times in German footage of executions, where a German officer stands behind a kneeling prisoner, shoots him in the back of the head and throws him into an open grave. Following their work, all the German officers, soldiers and drivers went into the residence to clean off the blood or dirt and to celebrate with drinks. Now it was finally proven what had happened to the Polish officers.

The Burdenko Commission started excavation of the burial grounds in Katyn on January 16, 1944. The Commission dug up 925 bodies from those which had not already been examined by the Germans. There was a multitude of physical evidence on the bodies themselves. An obvious feature of the bodies was the heavy gray overcoat of the Polish officers. The question must then be asked, if the Polish officers were shot in the spring of 1940, as the Germans claim, why were they wearing coats? The only explanation for this is that they were not killed in the spring, but in a cold season, perhaps in autumn.

The hands of some Polish officers had been tied using a white braided cord. At the time, the USSR was the largest producer of hemp rope. In fact, the only kind of rope produced in the USSR in the pre-war years was hemp rope. Smolensk was one of the main centers of production. Therefore, the conclusion can be drawn that this was not rope produced in the USSR, but in some other foreign country.

The most obvious forensic evidence to look for in a murder case is the bullet and the bullet case. It was determined by the investigation on the 925 bodies, that most bullets had made an exit whole in the front of the head or in the face. In 27 cases, the bullet had remained inside the head. It was determined, the kills were made with low-velocity pistols. Many bullet cases were found in the graves. These were primarily of a 7.65mm caliber, but there were also a few 6.35mm caliber and even fewer 9mm bullets. The inscription on the 7.65mm bullets were “Genshov and K”, a German producer of cartridges known also as “Geko”. So the bullets were produced in Germany! The question must then be asked, did the USSR make use of such weapons? Perhaps there was some export of 7.65mm cartridges to the USSR from Germany? The truth is the USSR made no use of any kind of gun with a 7.65mm caliber. The standard bullet size for Soviet pistols, including the TT, was 7.62mm. The USSR did make use of several types of guns with a 6.35mm caliber, but Germany also produced 59 types of pistols with a 6.35mm caliber. Also, USSR did not have a 9mm pistol until after the war, the Makarov pistol. Therefore, it is proven beyond a doubt that the executions were carried out with bullets produced in Germany and with guns which the Soviet Union did not possess. The only explanation is of course that these were carried out by the Germans. As for the German claim of having found bullet cases with Soviet inscriptions on them, this can only be propaganda since no producer, caliber or type of case was mentioned (on all Soviet cartridges the name of the factory of production is mentioned).

The bodies were searched for documentation of any sort. Many documents and papers were recovered. Among them, were at least 9 documents with dates from 12 November 1940 to 20 June 1941. These included 2 letters, one received and another not sent out, one icon and a number of camp receipts. The existence of these papers is proof that the prisoners were still alive until at least the German invasion started.

And what about those leaves the Germans supposedly found in the graves? If these leaves had fallen into the graves, and 3 years later (the Germans claimed the Poles were killed in 1940) they were still distinguishable to be birch leaves, then they must have been dry at the time of their fall. A fresh leaf would decompose very quickly and there would be nothing left of it. A dry leaf, especially birch leaves, can maintain their form for a long time if buried. But even they, cannot maintain their shape after 3 years. So there must be a different explanation. If the murders happened in the spring of 1940, then there would have been no dry leaves. And as is known leaves fall from the trees in the fall. Perhaps in the fall of 1941, or one and a half years before they were exhumed.

Investigation of the PKK and International Commission

Even more physical evidence about the bodies in Katyn comes from the investigators of the International Commission itself, who examined the bodies in 1943 under German supervision. Two members of the forensic team of the International Commission, Czechoslovakian Professor of forensic medicine F.Gaek and Bulgarian forensic scientist Marko Marks, were questioned on the matter. Marks was arrested in 1944 by the Bulgarian People's Government and accused of lying on his Katyn investigation. Instead, Marks told them he did not lie, but that his real report was never made public by the Germans (thus Marks was freed). According to his experience, on May 1 1943, the team was flown from Katyn to Berlin. On the way to Berlin, their plane landed in an isolated military airfield. There, the members of the commission ate dinner. They were then given a prepared report on what they saw, which they had to sign. According to Marks, the report the Germans made public was only signed by the members of the commission, but not written by them. Instead, as Marks accounts, the members wrote individual reports which the Germans did not make public. In these reports, the conclusion of the commission was that the bodies in Katyn were too well preserved to have been buried 3 years earlier. Instead the commission concluded the bodies had been killed one to one and a half year earlier, in late 1941 or early 1942.

The findings of the Polish Red Cross (PKK) were also the same. On the death certificates they made for the victims at Katyn, they specified no date of death. According to its members, who testified after the war, they could not agree on a conclusion. Most thought the killings had been carried out one to one and a half years earlier and not 3 years as the Germans claimed. However, they could not write such a thing. Therefore it was decided to leave the time of death simply blank.

The PKK and the International Commission, as well as experts invited from other countries, examined in detail the bodies the Germans had laid out for them. The way in which these examinations were carried out was bizarre. The PKK members were present in the exhuming of the 4143 bodies they examined. The Germans had rounded up people from the neighboring villages to dig out the bodies. Once the bodies were out, the peasants were forced to search their uniforms for documents and papers of any kind. Once these were

found, they were placed in individual folders with a number. The same number was placed on the body with a metal tag. The documents found in the bodies were not given to the PKK. By order from Berlin, all diaries, letters, receipts and orders were to be sent to Germany immediately for translation into German. The PKK members were given only the passports and other identification papers of the prisoners. Now it becomes obvious why the investigators found no documents with dates after the spring of 1940. Any document which would have contained a date was taken to Germany for “translation”, and only then made public. The PKK and other commissions were given only documents which did not contain any dates or hints of when they were killed.

The examination of the bodies themselves was even more revealing as to their time of death. According to the pathologist and forensic experts, the bodies were in a good condition. The tissue on the bodies was still attached. The skin on the hands, face and neck had turned gray, and in some cases greenish brown. There was no complete decomposition of the bodies and no putrefaction. In the bodies, muscles and tendons were still visible. Limbs were also still attached. When the bodies were carried out by the peasants, no parts of the bodies came apart. The uniforms of the bodies was still in good condition and held together well. The metallic parts of their uniforms, such as belts, buttons and nails, was still metallic and shiny in some areas. They were not rusted completely.

Bodies decompose faster in the warm seasons of the year, spring and summer. In winter bodies decompose very little and are as if in refrigeration. If the German version of the story were true, and the officers were killed in the spring of 1940, then there would have been 3 summer seasons between that time and April 1943. However, if the bodies had been killed in the autumn and winter of 1941, as the Soviet version of events goes, then there would have been only 1 summer season between that time and April 1943. In 3 summer seasons, the bodies would have been in a far more advanced stage of decomposition than the commissions found. For this reason the conclusion of both PKK and International forensic experts was that the bodies were killed one to one and a half years earlier, during the German occupation of the area. However, such a conclusion could not be made public by Germany.

The decomposition of the bodies was also the reason for the German delay in excavating the area. According to them, the location of the graves was discovered in March 1942. Excavation of the bodies started more than 1 year later. The Germans knew that since the bodies had been buried in the autumn and winter of 1941, they were still not decomposing by March 1942. Therefore, it was necessary to wait at least one summer for the bodies to decompose, and then excavate them in the spring of 1943.

Revisionist Evidence Refuted

The two eyewitnesses presented by the Gorbachevites are indeed lying about what really occurred. But it is not them who are to be blamed. They had no other choice. Soprunenko refused to admit that he received such an order for several months. The daughter, fearing for her and her fathers safety, said it was true that her father had seen an order from Stalin to kill the prisoners. The old man denied it, until after months of intimidation and threats was forced to tell them what they wanted to hear. But the Gorbechevite inspectors had not taken into consideration one detail. Soprunenko had already been asked the question of what

happened to the Polish officers. He was asked this by the Committee that Stalin organized in the fall of 1941 to find out what happened to the Polish officers (on behalf of Sikorsky). The documentation the general-major received and sent on this matter was found in the Archives of the USSR as “Top Secret” documents. The truth, that Soprunenko had said in the fall of 1941, was finally found out and shattered the lies of the revisionists. One of the first persons questioned in 1941 on what happened to the Polish officers was precisely General-Major Soprunenko. Soprunenko wrote several documents under the title “Top Secret”. In these documents Soprunenko says the UNKVD “is at a loss” about what happened to the Polish officers. It did not know! He also wrote a document about the release of prisoners of German origin to Germany in a prisoner exchange program. But his reply to the Commission was that the UNKVD did not know. If the general-major had indeed been ordered by Beria to execute the Polish officers, he would have replied “on the indication of Comrade Beria, the Polish officers were shot.” Remember that the documents were “Top Secret”. No one would have seen them, except for people who would have sent such on order themselves! Why hide an order of Stalin and Beria…from Stalin and Beria? Yet Soprunenko made no such comment. He never received or saw such an order. He placed the responsibility for the disappearance of the prisoners on himself and on the UNKVD. So the truth of what the old man knew became known in the “Top Secret” documents, and the testimony he was forced to give to the Gorbachevite inspectors was proven to be false.

The testimony of Tokarev was false as well. He knew the Gorbachev inspectors would not quit until they heard what they wanted to hear. So Tokarev, being smarter than these revisionists, told them exactly what they wanted to hear, and at the same time hinted in his testimony he was only pulling their tail. The whole story of how the executions were carried out makes absolutely no sense. Even according to the German investigation, the pistols used in executing the Poles were low-velocity pistols. Tokarev says the executioners used TT pistols. TT pistols are very high-velocity guns, with a muzzle velocity of 420m/s. It is very powerful, and at a point blank range, it would not have produced a simple entry and exit wound. At that range, it would have carried away with it half the head! To give an impression of its power, even today the only hand guns that compare to its power are magnum revolvers. Furthermore, when shooting indoors against brick or cement walls, it ricochets off the walls and hits the executioners themselves! Therefore, TT pistols are never used for executions at close range and inside buildings. TT pistols also have a caliber of 7.62mm. No such bullets were found in the Katyn graves. Of course, Tokarev was aware of this, but his questioners were not.

The most obvious aspect of Tokarev’s false testimonial is his description of the execution process. Tokarev says the executions were carried out in the UNKVD buidling in the middle of Smolensk. How can executions of 300 prisoners per day be kept secret in a large prison in the middle of a city? It cannot. The executions, if they were 6000 per month, went on for 2 months. If the executions were to be carried out in absolute secrecy, the building had to be emptied of personnel for 2 months. All the other prisoners, the guards, the office personnel, the telephone operators, the janitors, the cooks and storekeepers of the complex had to be sent home for 2 months and operations of the UNKVD had to be shut down for that period. Guards would have to be placed outside the building, indeed a long way out of the building, to keep people from coming near enough to hear the shooting. Could all this have been carried out in secret in the middle of a city? Of course not. It makes no sense, and Tokarev knew this. Furthermore, is it possible for 10 guards to execute 300-200 prisoners every day?

According to Tokarev, they were executed in groups of 10-40 people. The entire process, according to Tokarev, was to take them out of their cells, take them to an office room to be identified and to complete necessary documentation, take them to special room to be executed. Afterwards, they were loaded into trucks from the back door of the building and taken to their burial sites. This entire process would have taken a very long time, especially for a small group of 10 guards. The prisoners would have been less than cooperative. It is hard to drag 10-40 men who know that they are going to be executed. So the time elapsed in this process is even longer. If there are 10 hours of daylight in April, and Tokarev said the executions were carried out during the daylight hours, then there was a 2 minute time period for the execution of every person in order to kill 300 persons per day. This is the time if the guards take no breaks and eat nothing during this process. Furthermore, if the prisoners were killed in the UNKVD building in the middle of the city, why were there bullet cases in the graves of the Polish officers? It is simply impossible. The Burdenko Commission already showed how the Germans, who were master executioners, carried out their actions.

Forged Documents

As a final chapter to the Katyn drama, the Gorbachevite “historians” announced in 1992 the discovery of three documents, undeniably proving Soviet guilt in Katyn. The first document was a request by Beria to the Political Bureau, to give the order to execute the Polish officers. The second document, is the protocol of the Political Bureau for its Session No.13, where the request of Beria is noted. The third document is a letter from Shepelin to Khrushchev dated March 3 1959, informing him that all documentation on Katyn would be destroyed.

All three of these documents are false, and this article shall prove so. The letter of Beria to the Politburo is of most importance. It is also the most obvious fake. In the letter dated March 5 1940, Beria says he thinks it necessary that “the NKVD” propose to “the NKVD” to transfer the cases for 14,700 prisoners of war and 11,000 arrested people. It asks the Politburo in request I, to order “the application to them of the highest measure of punishment – execution”. In request II, it asks that the sentences for the persons be carried out without their presence and without representation for them. In request III, it asks the Politburo to appoint this matter to a “troika” made up of Kabulov, Merkulov and Bashtakov. This letter is under the title “Top Secret”. On the first page of the document, it is signed by Stalin, Molotov, Mikoyan, Voroshilov. The names of Kaganovich and Kalinin are added under these, where they express “after”.

The mistakes and inconsistencies in this letter are many. To start, the letter is “Top Secret”. Standard procedure for a “Top Secret” letter were to write on the letter the name of the person who typed it, the names of all the persons who have seen the document, the names of all persons to whom this letter is to be sent, the number of copies made of this letter, the carbon paper used to make a copy of it and finally the tape of the typewriter used to make this paper. For the “Beria document”, none of these exist. Without these precautions, it is not a “Top Secret” letter. The forger of this document either was not aware of the requirements of a “Top Secret” paper, or such requirements could not be forged by them. Either way, this paper immediately looses its value, and furthermore shows it is a forgery.

But the mistakes do not stop here. The signatures of the members of the Politburo go against the form. In this letter, 4 members of the Politburo have simply signed their names. By this act, they have rejected the request of Beria. You see, if the members of the Politburo agreed to send out an order or to carry out a request, it was necessary for them to sign the document, and to write next to their signatures “agreed” or “after”. In order for the request to be agreed and the order to be sent out, the members had to express their agreement to the request or their agreement to an order being sent. If they simply signed the paper, it meant that the members had read the document, but had not agreed to it and had not sent out any orders. The forger was obviously not aware of this and has made the mistake. Even if this request is authentic, which it is not, it was not accepted by the Politburo.

On the first page of the document, along with the four signatures of Stalin, Molotov, Mikoyan and Voroshilov, the forger added the names of Kaganovich and Kalinin underneath these. What the forger was not aware of, is that both Kaganovich and Kalinin were absent from the 13th Session of the Politburo in March 1940. They could not have placed their signatures on this document.

Beria’s requests contain even more proof that it is a forgery. Beria’s requests that he finds it necessary for the NKVD to propose to the NKVD, makes no sense. Why would Beria find it necessary to propose to Beria? This is a mistake which the forger accidentally made. Why he made this mistake shall be discussed below.

In Beria’s third request, he asks for the creation of a “troika” of three individuals mentioned by name. This entire request makes no sense. When a troika is created, its members are never mentioned by name. They are mentioned by their post. What was to happen if one of the members died or was removed from his post? Was the troika destroyed or was this person, who was no longer in position, still in the troika? It could not have been done in this way. For an example, the reader should refer to the above decision of the Special Commission of the NKVD, where its members are identified only by their post. It is not important who the individuals are. The individuals in the posts may change, but the troika still stands.

Furthermore, this document gives no indication as to who should receive or should be informed of the decision of the Politburo. The only person mentioned is L. Beria. But in a document such as this, the names of the persons to receive it are also included. Otherwise, how is Kabulov to know he is a member of the “troika”? This document is “Top Secret”. It is given to him only by the Politburo. Furthermore, the persons in charge of carrying out the orders of the Politburo, in this case the people or organs to carry out the executions, must also be named. Otherwise, if it is simply announced to them by a second or third party, it is no longer a “Top Secret” decision, but something for the whole world to know. This document contains no such names.

The request for execution to the Politburo is a further mistake of the forger. Such a request would never have been made. The Politburo did not have the authority to make such an order. The only body capable of issuing an order for execution was the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, specifically the Supreme Court of the USSR. Only by decision of the Supreme Court could an execution be carried out. The Court also established special “troikas”, which by authority of the Court had the power to sentence to execution. In this document, Beria is

asking the Politburo to create a “troika” to sentence people to death. It was impossible! Only a decision of the Supreme Court could have created such a “troika”. An example of how such a process was carried out, happened in 1941. The German advance was threatening to capture the prison at Orel, where important members of anti-Soviet groups were being held. It could not be allowed for them to fall into the hands of the Germans, who would use them against the USSR. Therefore, a meeting of the Supreme Court was called where it issued an order for execution, and only then were the prisoners executed. Even in the most pressing of times, 1941, the rule of Soviet law was not broken. So why was Beria asking the Politburo for such a decision?

The question must be asked, why did the forger make such mistakes? The reason for them is that the forger used an original document from Beria to the Politburo. The forger needed an original document to have a document number and to keep the same characteristic style of Beria. He did not change the first page, except for adding the names of Kaganovich and Kalinin (which the forger thought should have been there). However, the forger changed the second page, Beria’s requests. So in the original document of Beria it read “…the NKVD finds it necessary to propose to the Special Commission of the NKVD…” Then it would make sense. The forger however, removed the Special Commission, since its decision was to sentence the officers to a maximum of 5 years of imprisonment. Therefore, in the original document, Beria’s request was not to execute the prisoners, and thus disagree with the conclusion of the Special Commission. It was in agreement with the Special Commission. Instead of ordering an execution, the original document should have read ” with the application to them of the sentence of 5-8 years of imprisonment as specified by the Special Commission of the NKVD”. Also, in the original there was no request for the creation of a troika. Only then would this document make sense. It was only asking the members of the Politburo to agree to allow the NKVD to propose to the Special Commission of the NKVD the transfer of files to them and to allow the NKVD to propose to the Special Commission to carry out its investigation of individuals without their presence and without the presence of their representation. This original request of the document is supported in the fact that on March 16, 1940, the Special Commission started receiving personal information on the prisoners and began its individual sentencing. This is the exact request of Beria’s original letter to the Politburo.

If the original document had read as such, then the signatures on the first page are transformed into an agreement. This is not bizarre, but if the Politburo was not asked to carry out an order or to take any action, but only to agree, then a simple signature would have sufficed. If there were no orders or actions to be carried out, then none had to be specified next to the names. So by changing the requests of Beria, the forger also changed the decision of the Politburo. Nevertheless, this document so proudly displayed by the revisionists is no doubt a fake.

The second document is the protocol of the Politburo on the request of Beria. It confirms all the requests of Beria, the execution of the prisoners and the creation of the “troika” with the members Beria mentioned. This is the letter that is taken from the logs of the Politburo and sent to the persons specified in Beria’s request are to receive it. However, since no such persons were indicated on the letter of Beria, to whom was this protocol sent to? Furthermore, since by their simple signatures, the members of the Politburo did not agree to Beria’s request, why was a protocol of the Politburo made for it? Also, it does not contain the

signature of the Secretary of the Politburo. Without the signature, it means nothing. This second document is simply a continuation of the first one, an attempt of the forgers to show the Politburo agreed and sent out an order. Just as the Korger changed the original Beria document to suggest execution, so was changed the original protocol of the Politburo.

The third document is very poorly made and seems to have the purpose of telling all other historians not to search documents on Katyn any more, Khrushchev has destroyed them all! On this letter of Shepelin to Khrushchev, there is no number at all and there is no signature. It follows no form. Nevertheless, in this letter Shepelin tells Khrushchev that all documents on Katyn will be destroyed since they have no “historical value” to anyone. How did Shepelin think that documents on executions of thousands of foreign nationals, had no value to anyone? Among the documents Shepelin mentions, are the stock-taking documents of the prisoners of war from their camps, mentioned among them is Starobelsk camp. As we have already seen, an order was sent from Beria to the commander of Starobelsk in September 1940, to destroy the stock-taking documents of the prisoners of war since criminal cases for them would be opened. How did these stock-taking documents reappear in 1959 for Shepelin to destroy? For the prisoners of war sentenced to prison by the Special Commission of the NKVD, criminal cases were opened and there existed no more documents of their prisoner of war status. Also, in this document, the protocol to execute the Poles is said to have come from the Politburo of the CPSU. Shepelin simply refers “to the protocol of the Politburo of the CPSU to execute…” The problem with this is that the CPSU did not exist until 1952. In 1940, there was no such government body! In 1940, it was called the Politburo of the AUCP(B) (All Union Communist Party – Bolshevik). Also, Shepelin cannot simply refer to such a “Top Secret” document without quoting it or without including a copy of it for Khrushchev. Otherwise, how would Khrushchev know what Shepelin was talking about. Yet all these simple mistakes are made by the forger.

All three documents are forgeries. There are only a few authentic documents recovered on Katyn (the resolution of the Special Commission, the orders to Starobelsk ext.) Any additional documents on Katyn, such as the criminal cases of the prisoners, were located in the Smolensk Archives. Unfortunately, the Smolensk Archives were captured by the Germans during WW2 and later by the Americans. If these documents exist anymore, they are in the hands of the Americans, and will thus never be revealed. Nevertheless, it is important to show that the revisionists have no documents implicating the USSR, but instead resort to forgeries and lies.

Conclusion

What conclusion can be drawn from the evidence, counter-evidence, documents, forgeries and heaps of propaganda on Katyn? For 60 years the anti-communist forces of the world have told us Katyn was a Soviet responsibility. The Nazis proclaimed this as a crime of the Jewish communists. They used it as one of the many pretexts for placing into concentration camps and slaughtering tens of millions of Soviet citizens and Jews. The western imperialists used the Nazi pretext in the 1950s, to place on trial communists. They used it to launch a crusade against communism, to protect their empires and colonies, slaughtering more millions. The anti-communists and scoundrels ruling the USSR in the 80s and 90s used Katyn as a pretext for destroying the USSR and throwing the Soviet people into the brutal exploitation of capitalist and Mafiosi gangsters. Millions more died. Today, the modern

revisionist “historians” would like to exonerate the Nazis of any responsibility. Today they use Katyn as yet another pretext to show how the Soviets “fabricated” the Holocaust and how they “fabricated” Auschwitz and all the other unimaginable crimes of the Nazis. Katyn has always been used as a weapon of the fascists and imperialists for justifying their murderous campaigns. The truth on Katyn however is far from what these Nazi sympathizers and scoundrels would like us to believe. Katyn was the work of the Nazis. It is they who killed the Polish officers after capturing them from Soviet camps. The conclusion one should draw simply from the heaps of lies, propaganda and forgeries the imperialists and Nazi-sympathizers, is that Katyn is their responsibility. Otherwise, there would have been no reason for the Nazis to conduct their “international” investigation as they did and for the Gorbachevite revisionists to create fake documents. But beyond their lies and forgeries, one should look at the truth on Katyn. The truth stands that the Polish officers were sentenced to terms of prison for their various war crimes. To tell the truth, no one should feel sorry for these Polish officers. They were traitors and cowards in the face of their country and people. However, they did not deserve a German bullet in the back of their head. Only a Polish bullet would have sufficed for their crimes against the Polish people.
Mukhin, Y.I., Katyn Detective,1995

STALIN SEVERS TIES WITH POLISH GOVT BECAUSE IT SUPPORTS WITH HITLER ON KATYN

[Personal and secret message from Josef Stalin to Winston Churchill on April 21, 1943]
The behavior of the Polish government towards the USSR of late is, in the view of the Soviet Government, completely abnormal and contrary to all the rules and standards governing relations between two allied states.
The anti-Soviet slander campaign launched by the German fascists in connection with the Polish officers whom they themselves murdered in the Smolensk area, in German-occupied territory, was immediately seized upon by the Sikorski Government and is being fanned in every way by the Polish official press. Far from countering the infamous fascist slander against the USSR, the Sikorski Government has not found it necessary even to address questions to the Soviet Government or to request information on the matter.
The Hitler authorities, having perpetrated a monstrous crime against the Polish officers, are now staging a farcical investigation, using for the purpose certain pro-fascist Polish elements picked by themselves in occupied Poland, where everything is under Hitler’s heel and where no honest Pole can open his mouth.
Both the Sikorski and Hitler governments have enlisted for the “investigation” the head of the International Red Cross, which, under a terror regime of gallows and wholesale extermination of the civil population, is forced to take part in the investigation farce directed by Hitler. It is obvious that this “investigation,” which, moreover, is being carried out behind the Soviet Government’s back, cannot enjoy the confidence of anyone with a semblance of honesty.
The fact that the anti-Soviet campaign has been started simultaneously in the German and Polish press and follows identical lines is indubitable evidence of contact and collusion between Hitler,the Allies’ enemy,and the Sikorski Government in this hostile campaign.
At a time when the peoples of the Soviet Union are shedding their blood in a grim struggle against Hitler Germany and bending their energies to defeat the common foe of the

freedom-loving democratic countries, the Sikorski Government is striking a treacherous blow at the Soviet Union to help Hitler tyranny.
These circumstances compel the Soviet Government to consider that the present Polish government, having descended to collusion with the Hitler Government, has, in practice, severed its relations of alliance with the USSR and adopted a hostile attitude to the Soviet Union.
For these reasons, the Soviet Government has decided to interrupt relations with that Government.
I think it necessary to inform you of the foregoing, and I trust that the British Government will appreciate the motives that necessitated this forced step on the part of the Soviet Government.
Richardson, S, Ed. The Secret History of World War II. NY: Richardson & Steirman, 1986, p. 91-93

49 SIGNS OF FALSIFICATION OF “CLOSED PACKAGE NO 1”

Part I. The storing place, the circumstances around the discovery and the release of these documents

1. It is unknown where the ”Closed package no. 1” was stored before December 1991. The circumstances around the “miraculous discovery” of these documents, which was made by the employees at the Soviet Presidential Archive, are also shrouded in mystery.

M. S. Gorbachev claimed that he, until December 1991 had not seen these documents, while in the two “Closed packages” of the Politburo regarding Katyn, were stored all other documents, which were dealing with the guilt of the German side in the Katyn massacre. Only a few days before Gorbachev’s resignation from office as the president of the Soviet Union, the archive employees delivered on December 24, 1991 (as implied at their own initiative) through Gorbachev’s chief of staff Grigory Revenko the package with the found documents (“Zhizn’ i reformy” (“The Life and the Reforms”), book 2, Moscow 1995, pp. 348-349).

A. N. Yakovlev claimed both in his book ”Sumerki” (”The Dawn”) and in several articles and appearances, that he up to December 24, 1991 had never seen these documents. In addition Yakovlev revealed an important detail, namely that in the package with the Katyn documents that was delivered to Gorbachev on that day also was a certain “Serov’s letter”. But in the archive list for the “Closed package no. 1” that was delivered from Gorbachev to Yeltsin that letter is missing.

A. Yu. Yablokov claims in his book ”Katynskij sindrom …” (“The Katyn syndrome”) on p. 386: ”In July 1992 the then head of the President’s Administration Yu. V. Petrov, the President adviser D. A. Volkogonov, the head of the Main Archives R. G. Pichoya and the manager of the Archive A. V. Korotkov went through the most secret materials in the Russian President Archive. On September 24, 1992 they opened the “Closed package no. 1”.

This means that somebody is lying – either Gorbachev and Yakovlev, who claim that these documents were stored by Gorbachev and that they in early winter of 1991 were delivered to

Yeltsin in Yakovlev's presence, or the archive employees who claim that they found this package themselves first in the fall of 1992. In this case, however, it is clear that both the former and the latter are lying. Those documents have not been found in any archives or packages. They have been forged but they have not been able to fabricate a coherent story and force everyone who is featured in this case to learn it by heart, especially not the senior managers, why each one has been forced to lie based on what he managed to remember.

2. The documents in question were made public for the first time in fall of 1992 during the meeting of the Constitution Court as evidence of the guilt of the Soviet Communist Party for the Katyn massacre, but already a cursory examination by the judges revealed their falseness, which resulted in the fact that the Constitution Court in its final verdict did not even mention these accusations.

3. That these are forgeries is attested by the fact that these indeed sensational ”documents” were not presented to the Russian public immediately after they have been discovered, despite the fact that the press had been filled with quotes from them. After the fiasco in the Constitution Court the text from some of these documents was published only after two years and then not in any known historical magazines but in so called “periodical edition”, the magazine “Voyennye arkhivy Rossii” (“Russia's Military Archive”). After the release of no. 1 of the magazine, in which some of these forgeries were published along with other genuine documents from Russian archives, the magazine and its Editorial disappeared without a trace.

4. In this the first publishing of these ”documents” the publishers did not indicate the peculiarities of these documents from a case management point of view, which directly testified about their falseness, i.e. the publishers themselves realized that they were publishing forgeries.

5. In the magazine ”Voprosy istorii” (”Historical questions”) no. 1/1993, where these “documents” were described for the first time in Russia, they only described three of the five documents, but even despite such a shortening this issue was not sent to the subscribers and the libraries until 1995.

6. In Russia they have up to this day not yet officially published the most prominent (when it comes to the degree of falseness) documents from the “Closed package no. 1” – the so-called “print-out for Shelepin” (not to be confused with “Shelepin's letter”!). This confirms once again that the publishers themselves were well aware of, and still are, the fact that these by them published documents are forged.

Part II. Information that does not go with real historical facts

7. In the documents from the ”Closed package no. 1” it talks about the formation of a certain “special NKVD troika”, which, as it says, had sentenced the Poles to execution. But in the large amount of real genuine archive documents from that period there is not the slightest hint of either the formation of any “troika” (as claimed in these documents) or that any Poles whatsoever had been executed in the Soviet Union in 1940 by any extrajudicial process. To use the words of the specialist in archive system, A. P. Kozlov, “these documents stand out

because they run counter to other real indisputable facts from this time which are known from genuine sources".

8. The real court troikas were provided during these years to sentence the accused, dependant on their guilt, and to acquit the innocent. In "Beria's letter" the troika is not assigned any judicial rights, but provides to execute all Poles, i.e. the "troika" is not assigned any defined judicial work. Such a "troika" is directly embarrassing for the individual who made it up. The real Beria would never have suggested to the Politburo that they should pull up three senior NKVD employees (including him) from their usual work, in order to sit down and sign 22 000 pieces of paper, which no one other than themselves would read.

9. In the creation of the "troika" the key principle for the establishment of the court troikas which would consist of the top people from the NKVD (the Ministry of Interior) and the AUCP(b) (the Communist Party) and with the mandatory participation of a prosecutor.

10. In this "troika" they violated the principle of the members' equal responsibility – to the two top NKVD officials (the People's Commissar and his first deputy) they had added a third rank chief. In the real court troikas it was inconceivable with the participation of the subordinates to any of the members of the troika.

11. Beria could not suggest that they should create a "troika", since all court troikas recently had been abolished by a joint decision of the Soviet government (Sovnarkom) and the Central Committee of the Communist Party (CC AUCP(b)), i.e. no "troika" was now possible seen from the legal law. After the joint decision had been made no decision executable could neither execute nor even arrest anyone at the orders from such an illegal "troika", which had been officially forbidden in the Soviet Union by the government and the party.

12. If you assume that these documents from the "Closed package no. 1" are genuine, then it means that the Politburo at the Communist Party's Central Committee had exceeded its powers – the Politburo took a decision to establish a "troika" despite the fact that the party's leading agency – the Central Committee (CC) – had abolished them. Such is simply inconceivable. In a decision of November 17, 1938 from the Council of the People's Commissars of the USSR (Sovnarkom, i.e. the government of the Soviet Union) and the CC AUCP (b) – the party's leading agency, which is superior to the Politburo, ordered the following: "Liquidate the court troikas which have been created in accordance with orders from the NKVD of the USSR and the troikas at the militia's oblast-, krai- and republic boards. From now on all cases shall in accordance with the prevailing legislation be forwarded for investigation to the courts or to the Special Council of the NKVD of the USSR."

13. In the documents from the "Closed package no. 1" they have in no way included those 395 captured officers, policemen, and border guards, who – while the other POWs were sent to the correction- and labor camps at GUZhDS – were sent to the POW camps in Yukhnov and then to Gryazovets.

14. The "Politburo decision", which was put into these "documents", was impracticable for Beria: in pure self-preservation his surroundings would have found a way how to avoid to carry out such a criminal order from the People's Commissar. It was a similar performance of their chief's criminal orders that during 1937-38 had led to the execution of the closest

collaborators to one of Beria's predecessors Yagoda (who held the post as People's Commissar of the NKVD until September 1936). And not long before these events, on February 4, 1940, they had for the same reason executed deputy assistants to Yezhov (who was succeeded by Beria as People's Commissar and who was also executed on February 4, 1940). The whole world knew that the Poles were in captivity in the Soviet Union and no one in the top management of the NKVD would dare to take any risks by carrying out an illegal order of their execution issued by Beria, who had been working in the NKVD for only a year and a half and of which he had held the post as People's Commissar only a little bit more than fifteen months.

Part III. Internal contradictions

15. "Beria's letter" contains a suggestion to execute 25 700 citizens from former Poland, while "Shelepin's letter" says that only 21 857 were actually executed. No explanations are given to on what ground another 3 843 Poles, who obviously were sentenced to execution, avoided being shot.

16. In "Beria's letter" 14 736 officers and 18 632 inmates are declared as being "inveterate enemies of the Soviet power", but it is suggested that they execute 14 700 of the former and 11 000 of the latter; this without any explanation about what to do with the remaining "inveterate" enemies and how they should separate the former from the latter. By such a decision the powers of the "troika" were delegated to the direct decision enforcers at spot and they were forced to decide themselves who should be sentenced to execution, which is inconceivable and something that could never exist in a real decision by Beria.

17. According to the notes at the back of the "print-out copy for Beria" they have during the period of March 5, 1940 to November 15, 1956 printed two extra copies of the "print-out copy for Beria" and that they had destroyed two copies on November 15, 1956. Given the strict confidentiality that surrounded the documents in the "Closed package no. 1" such manipulations with the print-out copies, which is unknown whom they were meant for, cannot be explained in a rational way.

Part IV. "Beria's letter" no. 794/B (N. 794/Б)

18. Seen purely from a formal and legal point of view, "Beria's letter" no. 794/B is a forgery because of the elementary fact that its key attributes – the date and the number – do not correspond to each other. Because according to the official registration the letter 794/b, which was sent to Stalin from the NKVD, was dated February 29, but in the archives they have found an entirely different letter with the same number – 794/B from the same March 1940 – but without a date indication. In order to understand the absurdity in the situation, imagine a person whose passport is full of errors and as date for its issuing is stated March but that later after a control of the Ministry of Interior it is found that this passport has been issued in February!

19. In "Beria's letter" the resolution and the signatures of the Politburo members are written in a way that the lines of the "letter" during the signing must have been in a vertical position. No real right-handed leader signs that way. However, a specialist in forged signatures could write just like that – if he wanted to leave a hidden hint in the document that it was forged.

20. “Beria’s letter” has a number but no date. In a genuine document that is impossible since they are the one and the same note in the registration record, and then the date is more important than the number.

21. In “Beria’s letter” generals have been written on the same line as the lieutenant colonels, which was impossible for a genuine NKVD document. In all genuine NKVD documents the generals were written on a separate line and were never mixed even with the colonels.

22. According to a certificate from the Archive Board of the FSS, letter no. 794/b had been registered at the NKVD secretariat on February 29, 1940. In a genuine Beria letter from February 29 there could be no records from Soprunenko’s information from March 3, which appear in “Beria’s letter” from the “Closed package no. 1”. Consequently “Beria’s letter” no. 794/B with this information is a forgery.

23. The first three pages in “Beria’s letter” are not written on the same typewriter as page four (there is even an expert opinion available that proves that). A court would understand that such a thing was impossible for a genuine NKVD letter, because if you change the beginning of a document after the People’s Commissar has signed it, then it is the same thing as committing a crime.

24. Page four is written on a typewriter that has been used to type other recognized genuine Beria letters, while the three first pages are written on a typewriter whose font they still have not been able to trace in any of the fifteen Beria letters covering the period December 1939 to September 1940 that have been found in the archives and which they have up to date investigated.

This reveals the most probable way around the forgery of the letter.

The forgers probably took from the archive Beria’s genuine letter no. 794/b dated February 29, 1940 which contained a suggestion that the Poles would be sentenced by the Special Council of the NKVD (SC) to various fixed-penalties in prisons or labor camps. The forgers destroyed the first pages and instead printed three new ones which were converted in a way that it would like Beria was suggesting that the POWs should be shot. After that they added to these three forged pages a fourth one (the genuine) in which Beria suggested a quantitative (“troika”) and a personal (Beria, Merkulov, Bashtakov) composition for the Special Council. According to the “Regulation for the Special Council” its qualitative and personal composition would differ depending on the kind of matters that would be investigated. If the event occurred inside the borders of a union republic, then one of the members would be that republic’s People’s Commissar of the NKVD, if the matter was strictly criminal law then also the head of the militia’s (i.e. the police) board would be in it. In this particular case Beria suggested a special council with reduced staffing – consisting of three people – a troika. He suggested himself as chairman (he was the chairman of the SC according to the Regulation), his first deputy (also a member of the SC according to the Regulation) and the head of the department who prepared all cases regarding the POWs for the investigation in the Special Council – for the convenience of the organization and the implementation of meetings. Beria’s suggestion was logical, but still relinquished from what was provided in the “Regulation for the Special Council” – the head of the First Special

Department, as a member of the SC, was not named which was the reason why Beria coordinated his suggestion with the Politburo.

But the Politburo did not share Beria's view. They felt that they could not allow the People's Commissar himself in this case to waste his time on a routine screening of up to 20 000 criminal law cases. That is why Stalin deleted Beria from the list and instead of him kept the Premier Deputy People's Commissar of the NKVD Merkulov, as chairman of the Special Council and supplemented with Kobulov who was the head of the NKVD:s Main Department for Economy and by his employment dealt with investigation matters concerning the POWs and their use for labor. Worth noting is that Stalin did not write Kobulov's last name above Beria's deleted name (which would have meant that Kobulov had been appointed chairman) but wrote his name after Merkulov and before Bashtakov. That is, if you assume that the first three pages in "Beria's letter" are forgeries and that the genuine letter was about the Special Council, then such a letter is completely consistent with all known historical facts.

Part V. The "print-out copy from the Politburo protocol" no. 1 (addressed to Beria)

25. The printed form begins with a warning: "Must be returned within 24 hours to the 2nd Department at the Special Sector of the Central Committee", and to the left there is another warning vertically written in the form: "The comrade who has received these documents do not have the right to forward them, nor to show them to anyone else, unless it is particularly admitted by the CC. Duplication of the said documents and production of prints from them is categorically forbidden. The note and the date for the superscription are to be made on each document personally by the comrade to whom it is addressed and shall contain his personal signature. Based on: the decision at the plenary meeting of the CC AUCP(b) on August 18, 1924."

The "print-out copy for Beria" is the first copy (the original) unlike the "print-out copy for Shelepin" which is a re-print. It was precisely the original that in accordance with the delivery would be sent to Beria for superscription. This is witnessed, among other things, by the notes on the back, among them a hand-written note about another mailing to Beria which is supposed to have been done on December 4, 1941. But in the "print-out copy for Beria" there are no notes or signatures whatsoever from L. P. Beria that would confirm that he would have noted the print-out copy in 1940 and 1941.

26. In the "print-out copy for Beria" the for the genuine print-out copies mandatory facsimile signature from the Secretary of the Central Committee J. Stalin and the stamp with a relief of the CC AUCP(b) are missing.

27. The "print-out copy for Beria" is printed on a form that was not the standard form used by the Politburo in its case management. To date there are only two known copies of such a form – both are from the "Closed package no. 1" regarding Katyn.

28. On the form for the "print-out copy for Beria" the absolutely mandatory element for all official documents from the CC AUCP(b) is missing, namely the slogan: "Workers of the world, unite!" All the forms meant for documents that were sent to other agencies, always began with the Communist's most important slogan: "Workers of the world, unite!"

Part VI. The “print-out copy from the Politburo protocol” no. 2 (addressed to Shelepin)

29. The document on this AUCP(b)-form is attested with a CPSU stamp. This constitutes such a climax of the forgers’ senile dementia that this one thing only was enough for the Constitution Court to realize that it was dealing with forged documents and not associate the Communist Party of the Soviet Union with the murder of the Polish officers.

30. In the “print-out copy for Shelepin” Stalin’s signature, the mailing date and the last name of the addressee have been typed with another typewriter.

31. The print-out copy is dated February 27, 1959 which would mean that the Poles continued to be in camps up to that date and that not before 1959 it was decided to shoot them.

32. The Politburo addressed the directive of the troika’s foundation and the execution to Shelepin but of the ”troika’s” original members, only Bashtakov was still alive.

33. In order to attest the signature Stalin in 1959 returned from the grave and arrived at the meeting of the Politburo.

34. Outwardly the ”print-out copy for Shelepin” is designed as an attested copy but is in reality not attested by any official at all at the CC CPSU. The forgers were not aware of the elementary, namely that the round stamp at any institution was stamped on top a signature. The purpose with the signature is to certify the genuineness of the signature.

35. On the front of the print-out copy there is a signature made with ink “Return. 27/II-59” which is a gross violation of the elementary rules for storing of documents under which it is strictly forbidden for the archive employees to make any notes whatsoever in the documents with the exception of cases when they are allowed to write a new page number with an ordinary pencil in the upper right corner when a case is being hardcovered again.

36. In the print-out copy they have erased the previous addressee’s name “Com. Beria” and the date “March 5, 1940”. Instead of them they have written a new surname “Com. Shelepin” and a new date “February 27, 1959”. Such changes in the text were also categorically forbidden according to the rules for archiving of documents.

37. In the same way as the ”print-out copy for Beria” the ”print-out copy for Shelepin” is printed on a form that was not used in the Politburo’s normal work and misses the mandatory slogan ”Workers of the world, unite!”.

Part VII. “Shelepin’s letter” N-632-sh (Н-632-ш)

38. “Shelepin’s letter” was sent to the CC CPSU through the KGB office since it has a mailing number (N-632-sh; Russian Н-632-ш) and the mailing date March 3, 1959 and from that follows that the absence of an inward registration at the CP CPSU in March 1959 is a sign of a forgery.

39. In the “letter” there are no notes or directives whatsoever from a single secretary at the CC CPSU – the forgers were unable to think of any, but then it seems that none of the secretaries at the Central Committee had ever seen Shelepin’s letter which is impossible when it comes to a letter from the chairman of the KGB.

40. When describing the “decision of the Politburo” which should have been in front of the person who issued “Shelepin’s letter”, that person wrote “decision of the CC” which could not occur – Shelepin did definitely know the difference between the Central Committee (CC) and the Politburo (PB).

41. When describing the ”decision of the Politburo at AUCP(b)”, someone wrote ”CC CPSU”. But neither Shelepin nor the person who issued the authentic letter that was addressed to the supreme leader of the country could have confused the name of the party in such an important document.

42. Already in the second sentence of “Shelepin’s letter” it says: “Altogether 21 857 people were executed after a decision from a special troika at the NKVD USSR, of them: in the Katyn forest (Smolensk oblast) 4 421 people, in the Starobelsk camp near Kharkov 3 820 people, in the Ostashkov camp (Kalinin oblast) 6 311 people and 7 305 people were executed in other camps and prisons in Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia.”

But with the help of thousands of documents they have identified, and also made it an integrated part of the version which condemns Russia, the fact that in April-May 1940 they had transported the Polish POWs from the camps in Starobelsk and Ostashkov and that they at that time were still alive! How could the real Shelepin, at the same time has he was looking at genuine documents, write that the Poles were shot in the Starobelsk and Ostashkov camps?

43. The real Shelepin could not have written that the Starobelsk camp is located “near Kharkov” at the same time he looked at genuine documents. Because in the genuine documents the real address to the Starobelsk was stated; it was certainly not located in the Kharkov oblast, but in the Voroshilovgrad oblast – almost 250 kilometers from Kharkov!

These are far from all signs that prove that the documents in the “Closed package no. 1” were forged.

The forged documents in the “Closed package no. 1” are all tightly linked to each other by their contents. This means that all signs of forgery in one of them constitute evidence that also the others are forged. This was the reason why the Constitution Court not only chose not to rely on this evidence but also chose not to publish these for Russia embarrassing documents in the final compilation.

The forgery specialist Kozlov claims that 7 signs of forgery are more than enough to reveal a false document. In this case we are dealing with three interrelated historical texts which contain at least 43 signs of forgery!

One can expand this list and add more signs of forgery, namely as follows:

44. The forgeries were introduced for the first time during one of the meetings of the Constitution Court in the “CPSU case” (an investigation of the past activities of the Soviet Communist Party) and in the first versions “Beria’s letter” not only contained the number 794/B but also the date “March 5”. During the meeting on October 16, 1992, Yu. M. Slobodkin (from the CPSU defense) was discussing this date with the chairman of the Constitution Court Zorkin and called the court’s attention to the fact that Beria’s letter was dated March 5 and that the Politburo meeting had also taken place on March 5. It had never happened before that a letter was treated on the same day as it was written. The discussion around that date remains in the protocols of the Constitution Court and the fact that the date has disappeared in later versions of the forgeries is another sign that indicates that these are false.

45. No official would have stamped “Shelepin’s letter” that was sent in 1959 with an ingoing registration number from 1965. Because from that follows that the office employee at the Public Sector of the Central Committee had withheld a top secret letter from the Secretary General of the Central Committee for 6 years and 6 days! And that office employee who had stamped it in that way would have been held responsible for illegally storing a secret letter in an unknown place. Who could guarantee that he had not delivered the letter to the American embassy in order to be photographed? For example, Voznesensky, chairman of the Gosplan and one of the highest deputies in the Soviet government, had been executed in 1950, accused of having both wasted documents and to have delivered them to other hostile states. Did really the office employee at the Central Committee have to induce such a charge against himself?

46. Even more amusing seems the fact that the letter contains another stamp with the date March 20, 1965. This means that the letter from the former and since long resigned KGB head Shelepin, really had been forwarded to the now retired Krushchev, who then would have read the letter and sent it to another department at the Central Committee, where the letter was received and registered.

Those who forged these documents, believed that the stamps in the letters were nothing more than decorations, but the forgers did not realize that these are notes from people that they have received the letters for storage from a person, from whom they are obligated to receive them, and that they bear the highest responsibility for these letters not being read by any outsiders.

47. The letter is handwritten, but not by Shelepin, and is registered in the KGB office and thus sent by ordinary mail. If one believes that the letter is genuine, then it means that in 1959 there was only one typewriter throughout the whole of KGB and also that one had broken before then.

48. In “Shelepin’s letter” it is said that the “case files for the POWs” from the Starobelsk camp still remain in 1959 and that they are stored in the archive, but these case files had been burned already on October 25, 1940 about which Inspector Pismennyj and the sergeant for state security, Gaydidey, had compiled a document which still today is stored in archives.

49. “Shelepin’s letter” is written with a thick Polish accent. Only foreigners could look at it in a way that if there was a state named the Soviet Union then there should also have been the “Soviet power agencies”. Inside the Soviet Union nobody would have said it in that way, since the word “Soviet” absolutely clearly and firmly belonged to the legislative branch of power inside the Soviet Union – Supreme Soviet (Verkhovnyj sovet), the Oblast council (oblastnoy sovet), the District council (rayonnyj sovet). But then it was not called the “Soviet power agencies” but the “agencies for the Soviet power”, and only that since “Soviet” in the latter case meant that it is not about the belonging to a state but is a proper name for a specific power agency. (By the way these “agencies for the Soviet power” had nothing at all to do with the Katyn case). And the names of these agencies were never confused even by the average citizens, even less by the KGB employees! Therefore it really sounds bad when it says in “Shelepin’s letter”: “For the Soviet agencies … at the initiative from the Soviet power agencies”. The words seem to have their origins from abroad much the same way as “mine, yours, not understand” (a Russian jocularity when describing someone who is not very knowjavascript:void(0)ledgeable in the Russian language).

Kozlov said that one of the signs of forgery in one of the documents that he had looked at was the full name “Central Committee of the Communist Party” instead of “CC CPSU”. Indeed, who inside the CC CPSU would have misunderstood what the CC CPSU meant? So also in this case: the real Shelepin or the KGB employee would never had written “Soviet power agencies”, in a similar case they would rather have used a more exact term like “party-state agencies” (partiyno-gosudarstvennyje organy).

Abbreviations:

AUCP(b) (All Union Communist Party (bolsheviks), Russian VKP(b) Vsesoyuznaya kommunisticheskaya partiya (bol’shevikov)) – the name of the Soviet Communist Party, the name AUCP(b) was used 1925-1952

CC (Central Committee, Russian: Tsentral’nyj komitet) – The Central Committee (i.e. the leading agency of the Communist Party)

CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Russian: KPSS, Kommunisticheskaya partiya Sovetskogo Soyuza) – The Soviet Communist Party (the name CPSU were used 1952-1991)

FSS (Federal Security Service, Russian: Federal’naya sluzhba bezopasnosti) – The Russian security service today

Gosplan (or Gosplan USSR, Russian: Gosudarstvennyj planovyj komitet soveta ministrov) – The State Plan Committee of the Soviet Ministerial Council (a central Soviet plan agency which among other things developed the so-called Five Year Plans)

GUZhDS (or GUZhDS NKVD USSR, Russian: Glavnoye upravleniye zheleznodorozhnogo stroitel’stva NKVD SSSR) – The main directory for the rail road building at the NKVD (formed in 1940, renamed GULZhDS NKVD USSR in February 1941)

KGB (Komitet gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti) – The Committee for State Security (KGB, earlier NKVD, nowadays FSS)

NKVD (Narodnyj komissariat vnutrennikh del) – The People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (then the name of the Soviet Ministry of Interior)

Sovnarkom (Sovet narodnykh komissarov) – The Council of the People's Commissars (the government of the Soviet Union)

Troika (Russian: Troika, also Osobaya troika NKVD) – NKDV troika (an extrajudicial body which imposed sentences 1935-1938, usually on oblast level. The troikas consisted of the senior NKVD chief of the oblast in question, a secretary of the oblast committee and a prosecutor.)

USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Russian: Soyuz Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik) – the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics, i.e. the Soviet Union.

http://katynmassakern.blogspot.com/2010/07/katyn-49-signs-of-falsification-of.html

KATYN: LAZAR KAGANOVICH'S LAST TESTIMONY

The well known Russian military historian, doctor in history of science, A. N. Kolesnik has to the editorial staff of "The truth about Katyn" forwarded extracts of stenograph from his personal conversations with the former member of the Politburo of the Communist Party, L. M. Kaganovich.

Altogether A.N. Kolesnik conducted six conversations with L. M. Kaganovich between 1985 and 1991 around different historical subjects. Out of censorship reasons it is not possible to release the stenographs from these conversations without considerable cuts and edits, not even in small parts, since the direct speech from Kaganovich is full of ugly words and swearing which characterizes his attitude to the leadership of Hitlerite Germany, to the leading circles of bourgeois Poland and to the leaders of the "Gorbachovite" perestroika, and in particular in person to A. N. Yakovlev.

The dates for A. N. Kolesniks conversations with L. M. Kaganovich and their duration are documented by the employees of the KGB who guarded the stairwell where L. M. Kaganovich were living. If necessary the dates and the duration of the conversations can be established more thoroughly with the help of archival information, since the guards were obligated to register all the visitors in a special logbook. Apart from that all the visitors were photographed with a special camera which automatically fixed the date and the time for the film shooting.

The conversation about the Katyn issue, during which L. M. Kaganovich for the first time announced the information of the exact amount of citizens from former Poland that had really been executed on Soviet territory between November 1939 and July 1941, took place on November 6, 1985 in Moscow in L. M. Kaganovich's apartment which was located at Frunzenskaya naberezhnaya, house 50 and lasted for 2 hours and 40 minutes, from 6.40

pm to 9.20 pm. Present at this conversation was also Lazar Moiseyevich's daughter Maya Lazarevna, who stenographed everything that was said.

Later it turned out that the conversation also had been recorded with the help of special technical equipment by the employees of the KGB who in silence conducted reconnaissance of L. M. Kaganovich. That became obvious, when A. N. Kolesnik was called by the operative KGB employee Captain Ryazanov, who in a categorical form demanded that the content of the completed conversation could not be made public.

During the conversation on November 6, 1985, L. M. Kaganovich said that during the spring of 1940 the Soviet leadership was forced to make a very difficult decision to execute 3 196 criminals among those who were citizens of former Poland, but L. M. Kaganovich said that it was absolutely necessary in the then prevailing political situation. According to Kaganovich's testimony, they had essentially sentenced to execution Polish criminals who had been involved in the mass extermination of captured Russian Red Guards 1920-1921, and employees of Polish punishment bodies who had compromised themselves with crimes committed against the USSR and the Polish working class during the 1920s and 1930s. Apart from them they had also executed criminals among the Polish POWs who had committed serious general crimes on Soviet territory after their internment in September-October 1939 – gang rapes, criminal assaults, murders and so on (L. M. Kaganovich said literally: " …the fuckers, the bandits and the murderers …").

Apart from Kaganovich, the former chairman of the Peoples Council of Commissars V. M. Molotov in a telephone conversation in 1986 estimated that the amount of executed citizens of former Poland 1939-1941 amounted to "about 3 000 people".

The exact figure "3 196" Polish citizens who had been executed in the USSR in 1939-1941 was also decidedly confirmed by the former Soviet People's Commissar for the Construction Industry, S. Z. Ginzburg, in a private conversation with A. N. Kolesnik.

S. Z. Ginzburg told A. N. Kolesnik little-known details of the Soviet excavation works in the Katyn forest. According to him the excavations of the graves with the Polish citizens were conducted in 1944 not only in Kozi Gory but also in at least two other places west of Smolensk. The excavations and the exhumations were conducted with the help of special construction- and assembly units, so-called OSMCh (in Russian osobye stroitelno-montazhnye chasti), which were under S. Z. Ginzburg's operational management. Because of the period of time that had elapsed S. Z. Ginzburg could not remember the exact number of this OSMCh unit, but said that the unit in question had been formed shortly after the beginning of the war on the basis of one of the civilian building boards and that their staff in 1944 amounted to about 200 people. After the exhumation works they distributed to all the conscripts of the unit – at S. Z. Ginzburg's request – one kilogram of chocolate as some kind of bonus.

A. N. Yakovlev, member of the Politburo of the Central Committee, started to earnestly interest himself in the contents of the conversations between A. N. Kolesnik and L. M. Kaganovich, and also showed great concern regarding a possible publication of Kaganovich's testimony about the Katyn issue. At the end of 1989, right before his appearance in front of the 2nd Congress of People's Deputies, A. N. Yakovlev turned,

through A. N. Kolesnik, over a list of tendentiously selected questions about the Katyn issue with the suggestion of recording his answers at a tape recorder. The idea was to prepare Kaganovich's answers in a proper way and confirm the version of the Soviet guilt in the Katyn massacre by his authoritative testimony. (Kaganovich said literally: "Tell this son of a bitch that I have had them spinning around my dick! I am from the family of a common meat pundit, but have been a member of the Central Committee and a minister, while they want us to fall back to 1914. The thing they have invented about Katyn – that will bounce back at them with bloody tears. They want us again to end up in a conflict with Europe. Because during the last war we indeed not only fought Hitler but with most other European countries!"

The perspective of a publication of the exact amount of Polish citizens that were executed in 1939-41 (3 196 people) and the true reasons for the executions, induced an extreme nervousness of Yakovlev and his surroundings. In exchange that A. N. Kolesnik should keep quiet about the information around the Katyn issue that he had received from L. M. Kaganovich, A. N. Yakovlev suggested that he could choose between six different senior posts.

When A. N. Kolesnik declined that offer, they arranged on directives from A. N. Yakovlev and D. A. Volkogonov a meeting between him and a representative for "competent bodies" who conducted a "preventive talk" with him in V. M. Falin's (the head of the news agency APN) office. During the conversation threats were made to "bring him in on a long time", if A. N. Kolesnik would go public on the facts about the Katyn issue that L. M. Kaganovich had told him.

When it became apparent that this measure had no effect, they brought prosecution on A. N. Kolesnik which ended with him being dismissed from the Military History Institute in 1993.

http://katynmassakern.blogspot.com/2010/07/katyn-lazar-kaganovichs-testimony.html

KATYN: "BERIA'S LETTER" WAS WRITTEN ON TWO DIFFERENT TYPEWRITERS

On March 31, 2009, Sergey Strygin (Russia's leading Katyn-expert) turned to a licensed forensic expert, Eduard Petrovich Molokov with a request to analyse "Beria's letter nr. 794/B" of "March __, 1940" in order to determine whether it was written on one or several typewriters.

Molokov has an expert diploma (issued in 1973 by the MVD, i.e. the Ministry of Interior of the USSR) and is entitled to conduct such investigations. He used a "MBS-10" microscope, which allows up to 32 times magnification, when analyzing the document. During the analysis of the "Beria letter" (which consists of four pages) he magnified the text 3 times and carefully compared the images.

Molokov found that pages 1, 2 and 3 are written on a different typewriter than page 4. He has, among other things, examined the letters' distance from each other, their altitudinal and the clarity of the printing ink. His conclusion is that the pages 1, 2 and 3 are consistently equal. But page 4 (the one with Beria's signature on) differs from the first three pages.

It should be added that the typewriter which was used to print page 4 has a font that is known to have been on one of the typewriters in Beria's office, while the font from the typewriter that wrote pages 1-3 is unknown (it has not been found in any of the documents sent by Beria).

There is one other important detail. Molokov had only access to high definition digital colour copies that Strygin was allowed to do in the Russian archives some years ago. This means that Molokov did not have access to the physical letter, which in its turn means that such things as the age of the paper have not been possible to examine.

http://katynmassakern.blogspot.com/2010/07/katyn-berias-letter-was-written-on-two.html

Anticommunist fairy-tales about Stalin

RUMOR, GOSSIP, AND HEARSAY DOMINATE ANTI-STALIN PROPAGANDA WRITINGS

History cannot be written unless the historian can achieve some kind of contact with the mind of those about whom he is writing. [TOO BAD MANY IGNORED THIS ADVICE]
Viola, Lynne. The Best Sons of the Fatherland. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1987, p. 5

Estimates of those who perished under Stalin's rule–based principally on speculations by writers who never reveal how they arrive at such figures–vary widely.
Parenti, Michael. Blackshirts and Reds, San Francisco: City Light Books, 1997, p. 77

My collaboration with the people I have mentioned was based exclusively on personal initiative and trust. I did not make use of or have access to any closed archives, "special collections," or any other limited-access depositories and I am not familiar with any.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. xviii

In the nature of things there could not be a published source for much of the information in this book; it was passed on by the victims of repression or their friends or relatives.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. xx

In some western newspapers after Stalin's death as well as in the Russian emigre press of the '20s there were various speculations on the subject of Stalin and women. One author, hiding under the pseudonym Essad-Bey, claimed that Stalin, like an Oriental sheik, kept his beautiful wife locked up at his Kremlin apartment or at his dacha and forbade her to show herself to other men, so that even his Kremlin colleagues never saw her face. Others asserted that Stalin married secretly after Alliluyeva's death or that he held orgies at his dachas or in his Kremlin apartment. All this is the product of unfounded rumor or deliberate fabrication.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 55

To this very day allegations occasionally appear in the foreign press that Lenin did not die a natural death but was killed by Stalin. For example, in 1976 the journal Veremya i my ran such an article by Lydia Shatunovskaya entitled “The Secret of One Arrest,” in which she repeats a story supposedly told to her by Ivan Gronsky, a former editor of Izvestia and Novy mir, to the effect that Stalin murdered Lenin. As the story goes, Stalin was visiting at Gronsky’s apartment, drank so much that he lost all self-control, and had to stay overnight; during this drinking bout Stalin told his host about the murder. This is all pure fantasy, though probably Gronsky’s rather than Shatunovskaya’s. It is true that Gronsky was a well-known figure in the literary world in the early 30s. He was the editor in chief of Novy mir and took part in preparations for the First Congress of Soviet Writers, but he was not elected even as a delegate. Stalin knew Gronsky, but to say that he was “Stalin’s most trusted man on literary questions” or that he “can go and see Stalin any time without a report to give”–these assertions were made up by Gronsky. In 1937 Gronsky was arrested and 16 years later returned from prison with a highly tarnished reputation. In order to win people’s confidence again, or at least to attract their attention, he was capable of making up the most unlikely stories about his life before and after his arrest.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 77

To this day, in works published outside the Soviet Union, one can still occasionally encounter the allegation that Lenin did not die a natural death but was actually killed by Stalin. For example, in 1976 Time and We published an article by Lydia Shatunovskaya, entitled “The Secret of One Arrest.” Claiming that Stalin murdered Lenin, she repeats a story said to have been told by Ivan Gronsky, the former editor of Izvestia and Novy Mir. According to this story, Stalin once visited Gronsky in his apartment in the mid-1930s, got drunk beyond all self-control, and talked about the murder to his host. All this is pure fantasy, invented either by Shatunovskaya or by Gronsky himself.
Medvedev, Roy. On Stalin and Stalinism. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 32

Trotsky, too, spread similar stories in the last years of his life. His version was so unbelievable that Life magazine, which had contracted with Trotsky for an article on Lenin, refused to print it. Several other American magazines rejected the article, and it did not appear until August 10, 1940, in the Hearst publication Liberty. Trotsky’s arguments in support of his version were highly unconvincing. He recalled that at the end of February 1923 Lenin asked for some strong poison he could take if he felt another stroke coming on. Trotsky remembers that the Politburo refused to give Lenin any poison, but in Trotsky’s opinion Stalin might have done so.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 78

On Dec. 22, he [Lenin] requested Fotieva to provide him with cyanide in the event he lost the capacity to speak. He had made a similar request of Stalin as early as May, a fact in which Maria Ulianova saw proof of Lenin’s special confidence in Stalin.

[Footnote]: In 1939, shortly before he was murdered, Trotsky recalled an incident at the Politburo meeting in February 1923, at which Stalin, with a sinister leer, reported that Lenin had asked him for poison to end his hopeless condition. Trotsky to the end of his life believed it likely that Lenin died from toxin supplied by the General Secretary: There was something disingenuous about Trotsky’s claim, because he was in possession of a cable from Dzerzhinsky, dated February 1, 1924, that advise him that the autopsy had revealed no

traces of poison in Lenin's blood: according to Fotieva, Stalin never supplied Lenin with poison.
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 469

Volkogonov promised to support my rehabilitation in exchange for my cooperation. When we met on November 4th, 1989, I suggested that Volkogonov correct his account of the Stamenov episode, which had just appeared in a literary journal. He claimed in the article that Stalin had personally met Stamenov, which I knew was untrue. I myself had handled the probe to plant disinformation among Nazi diplomats, feeling out the Germans' desire for a peace settlement in 1941. When Volkogonov's book appeared, the episode was not corrected. He sticks to the version that Stalin and Molotov planned a separate Brest-Litovsk type peace treaty with Hitler,…
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 429

For no other period [the Great Purges of the 1930s] or topic have historians been so eager to write and accept history-by-anecdote. Grand analytical generalizations have come from secondhand bits of overheard corridor gossip. Prison camp stories ("My friend met Bukharin's wife in a camp and she said…") have become primary sources on central political decision making. The need to generalize from isolated and unverified particulars has transformed rumors into sources and has equated repetition of stories with confirmation. Indeed, the leading expert on the Great Purges [Conquest] has written that "truth can thus only percolate in the form of hearsay" and that "basically the best, though not infallible, source is rumor." [The Great Terror, 754]

[Footnote: Such statements would be astonishing in any other field of history. Of course, historians do not accept hearsay and rumor as evidence. Conquest goes on to say that the best way to check rumors is to compare them with one another. This procedure would be sound only if rumors were not repeated and if memoirists did not read each other's works.]

As long as the unexplored classes of sources include archival and press material, it is neither safe nor necessary to rely on rumor and anecdote.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 5

1 [Footnote on page 265: The basic works on the Great Purges are uniformly based on memoir sources. Conquest, Terror, Medvedev, History: and Solzhenitsyn, the Gulag Archipelago, all rely almost exclusively on personal accounts.]

Soviet history has no tradition of responsible source criticism. Scholars have taken few pains to evaluate bias, authenticity, or authorship. Specialists have accepted "sources" that, for understandable reasons, are anonymously attributed ("Unpublished memoir of"), and treat them as primary.2

2 [Footnote on Page 265: Much of the documentation in Medvedev's and Solzhenitsyn's works is of this form, as is much of the samizdat material. Such documentation is methodically unacceptable in other fields of history. One would be dubious about a footnote to the "unpublished memoir of the Duc de" in a work on the French revolutionary terror.]
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 211

Each of the emigre and defector sources represents a variant on the vast pool of such rumors and stories [regarding the Kirov assassination], but clearly none of them was in a position to know anything about their veracity. The authors seemed to pick the stories that fit together into particular schemes, and subsequent historians followed suit.

Indeed, in the rush to support a particular scenario, scholars have been strangely selective in their use of emigre memoirs. They have accepted and used those that supported their preconceptions and ignored those that did not. Students have embraced the rumors and flawed stories of Orlov, Barmine, and Nicolaevsky while ignoring accounts that call Kirov a "conservative," describe underground oppositionist plots in the '30s, and argue for the existence of a planned military coup against Stalin. The point is not that these unused memoirs are any more credible than the familiar ones, but that all memoir accounts should be subjected to intense critical attention that takes contradictions into account. All claims or hypotheses based solely on secondhand gossip or rumor should be rejected according to the elementary rules of evidence.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 216

One such work, however, was never published in the Soviet Union–Medvedev's Let History Judge…. It is a completely and uniformly bitter condemnation of Stalin by a former communist.

Nearly all Medvedev's work is based on the post-1956 recollections of surviving party members. Many such reminiscences appeared in the press in 1956-64, usually in connection with obituaries or anniversaries, and Medvedev apparently collected such statements and interviews as the basis of his work. He made virtually no use of central or local press sources, published material, or contemporary documentation. However, his introduction shows that he was familiar with the vast corpus of Western scholarship about Stalin, and in some places where Old Bolshevik circumstantial testimony is lacking (Stalin's hand in Kirov's death, for example), he seems to rely on Western versions.

Medvedev's is probably the most useful account of the fates of various people…. Like the previously cited works, however, its problem is the distance between his sources and central events. Like all the above sources, none of Medvedev's often anonymous informants was close enough to the center of power to tell why things were happening or indeed exactly what was happening. Medvedev is able to catalog events better than other writers, but he is not able to chronicle or analyze Moscow's decisions or attitudes with first-hand evidence. All his informants were on the "outside," and their first-hand experience extended only to themselves and their associates. Their speculations about why this happened or about Stalin's position are little better than ours.

A work that deserves passing mention because of its current popularity is the Gulag Archipelago by Solzhenitsyn…. The work is of limited value to the serious student of the 1930s for it provides no important new information or original analytical framework.

Many of the linchpins of the Western interpretation are based almost solely on an uncritical acceptance of rumors from persons not in a position to know. This is not to say that these

works are worthless lies bearing no relation to the truth. They are quite valuable descriptions of personal experiments and should be taken as such. But they are not primary sources that cast light on central decision making, or even on events of a national scale. Because many of these writers were victims or opponents, they may have known less about high policy than we do.

One need only scan the footnotes of any standard account of the Great Purges to see how much of the basic material of this view comes from the speculations of these contradictory and self-serving sources, who were in no position to report anything but gossip. Most Western accounts were written during the post-World War II period, and their authors relied on emigre and defector accounts for the vital underpinnings of their view. The inaccessibility of Soviet archives on these events compounded this tendency. Yet if one applies strict rules of evidence and of source criticism to these works, accepting only that which the informant can report firsthand, several aspects of the Western interpretation collapse.

[Footnote: In Conquest's, Terror, half the notes in the chapters "Stalin Prepares" and "The Kirov Murder" are to emigre and defector raconteurs who were not close to the events they describe. Two-thirds of the references in the chapter "Architect of Terror" are to such secondhand accounts, which can in no way be tested for an account of the "architect."]

Although the main weakness of the sources is their removal from the events they so freely judge, the question of political bias is also worth considering, as it is in other areas of historical inquiry. Orlov, Trotsky, the Mensheviks, and Khrushchev were all self-interested political actors and had little incentive to produce an objective view….

…a generation of Cold War attitudes have contributed to what would be considered sloppy and methodically bankrupt scholarship in any other area of inquiry. Historians of modern Europe would not try to study the politics of World War I by relying on the memoirs of soldiers from the trenches without exhausting the available press, documentary, and archival materials.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 218-219

Joel Carmichael writes:

"One of the principal oddities throughout this strange interval of hesitation [the period from the end of August through the end of October 1917] was that since Lenin was in hiding his place as the most authoritative Bolshevik was occupied by Trotsky, at least as far as the public was concerned. In effect this turned a man who had been an implacable opponent of the Bolsheviks for 15 years into their most authoritative spokesman…."

Such assertions are mistaken; they fly in the face of generally known facts. Trotsky's name certainly did appear side-by-side with Lenin's during the October days, but side-by-side does not mean equal. Even the broad public understood the different political weight of the two men. This was no secret to the enemies of the Bolshevik Party either. As for the "consciousness of the party," there the names of Lenin and Trotsky were not at all equal. The party had only one leader, Lenin, and he alone was the inspirer and organizer of the October

Revolution. It was not accidental that, while praising Trotsky, Lenin noted that the Mezhraiontsy had “hardly been tested in proletarian work in the spirit of our party.”

Carmichael ‘s assertions are absolutely wrong.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 101

The question of Frunze’s death was not discussed at the party congress after all, but in 1926 the fifth issue of the literary monthly Novy Mir appeared with a story–Pilnyak’s “Tale of the Unextinguished Moon”–that clearly implicated Stalin in Frunze’s death, although the preface gave the following disclaimer:

“The plot of this story may suggest to the reader that Frunze’s death inspired it an provided the material for it. Personally I hardly knew Frunze, I was barely acquainted with him, maybe met him twice…. I find it necessary to inform the reader of this, so that the reader will not look in this story for real persons or events.”

Pilnyak displayed detailed knowledge of many circumstances surrounding the operation [for Frunze’s stomach ulcer] and Frunze’s death and stated bluntly that the “order” for the operation came from “Number One, the unbending man,” who “headed the triumvirate”…. It is not surprising that the entire printing of the magazine was quickly confiscated…. In the next issue of Novy Mir the editors admitted that publication of Pilnyak’s story had been an “obvious and flagrant mistake.”

Antonov-Ovseyenko has no doubt that Frunze’s death was a political act of elimination organized by Stalin. Adam Ulam, the American historian and Sovietologist, in his book on Stalin emphatically rejects this version. He feels that the whole problem had to do with the poor organization of medical service in the Soviet Union in 1925. As early as Lenin’s time the practice of party intervention in medical affairs had been introduced; obligatory rest or treatment was prescribed for many party leaders. Thus the Politburo’s decision about Frunze’s operation was not a rare exception. Ulam considers Pilnyak’s story unquestionable slander and comments:

“It is probably that Pilnyak was put up to it by somebody who wanted to strike at Stalin. The remarkable thing is that nothing happened at the time to Pilnyak or to the editor…. Whether out of contempt for the slander or a calculated restraint, or both, Stalin chose not to react to a libel which even in a [bourgeois] democratic society would have provided ample grounds for criminal proceedings against its author and publisher.”
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 158

Frunze died in October 1925 at the height of the Stalin versus Zinoviev-Kamenev contest. He himself had taken no position in the struggle. His successor as War Commissar was Voroshilov. And so rumors began to circulate that his death had been more than simply another case of medical malpractice. The story exploded in the May 1926 issue of Novy Mir (New World), then as now the leading Soviet literary journal, in an all too transparent fiction about an “army commander” whom “Number One, the unbending man,” forces to submit to an unnecessary operation, during which he is medically murdered. The story, “The Tale of the Unextinguished Moon,” was by the noted Soviet writer Boris Pilnyak. The issue was, of

course, immediately confiscated, and the substitute number of Novy Mir carried the editorial board's frightened apology for printing anti-party slander….

This was slander, and it is probable that Pilnyak was put up to it by somebody who wanted to strike at Stalin. The remarkable thing is that nothing happened at the time to Pilnyak or to the editor. In 1937 [11 years later] they were both arrested, but on other charges,…

Whether out of contempt for the slander or a calculated restraint, or both, Stalin chose not to react to a libel which even in a democratic society would have provided ample grounds for criminal proceedings against its author and publisher.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 260-261

The opposition leaders were able to speak out as late as the autumn of 1927 through 'discussion sheets' which Pravda carried in preparation for the 15th Party Congress in December, and Trotsky was able to publish a statement in Pravda as late as August 1927. The boldest attempt of the opposition to use the open press was the publication in the literary journal The New World of 'The Tale of the Unextinguished Moon' by Boris Pilniak in May 1926. This was a barely disguised version of the death on 31 October 1926 of Trotsky's successor in the post of narkom of defense, Frunze. He had been operated on for a gastric ailment, began to recover, then died. Frunze and Stalin were supposed to have been on good terms and the General Secretary made much of his attempt to visit the patient in the hospital shortly after the operation. The deceased, an old Bolshevik turned military man, received the fullest possible honors, including an eulogy from Stalin and burial near the Lenin mausoleum. But there was a rumor that it was a case of medical murder. Frunze supposedly had been Zinoviev's candidate for narkom, while Stalin backed Voroshilov, who in fact succeeded Frunze in the post. Allegedly, the General Secretary had arranged a Politburo order to the unwilling Frunze to have the operation, during which he received an overdose of an anesthetic known to be bad for his heart, although he apparently survived the actual operation for several days.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 102

It is impossible in the nature of the case to exculpate Stalin. One might even speculate that he did not feel able to oust Zinoviev from Leningrad, while Frunze headed the armed forces. On the other hand, the evidence against Stalin is not strong, and it seems unlikely that he would have risked murder of such an important personage at this stage in his career. But the rumors that Stalin had murdered Frunze obviously served the opposition…. It was in any case, a demonstration that the absence of a reign of terror in the Soviet Union in 1926 that a writer, even a brash eccentric like Pilniak, would dream of publishing a novel that virtually accused of murder, the man whom the writer called 'Number One' and 'the unbending man'. Or that a literary journal would accept it. In fact, one journal rejected it, and Pilniak cheekily dedicated the story to the rejecting editor when it was published, adding a preposterous denial that the plot was based on Frunze's death. This was going too far. The offending issue of the journal was withdrawn, and apologies for such 'error' and 'slander', which could 'play into the hands of the small-minded counter-revolutionary', were forthcoming from both editors who were involved and the author. But the whole scandal served as much to advertise Pilniak's tale as to suppress it, and the matter was common knowledge.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 102

(J. Arch Getty)

Frustrating to historians and journalists, this strange situation has inevitably spawned a heterogeneous collection of purportedly serious writings on Stalin. In the absence of reliable first-hand testimony or revealing written evidence, and in their desperation to understand the man, writers on Stalin and his period have offered the specialized and general public a diverse but sometimes troubling bill of fare.

Although there have been some outright forgeries, the more common tradition has been to infer the details of his personal life and actions. Novelists (and novelists pretending to be historians) have presented fictitious dialogs and purported soliloquies by the dictator. Others have made dubious claims of having known him closely and many memorists have reported scenes with Stalin that they did not witness. We also now have published collections of myths about Stalin.

Consider for example the famous “Letter of an Old Bolshevik.” First published in a Menshevik journal in 1936, the text reports to be the record of a conversation between Bukharin and Nicolaevsky in Paris and is the original source for several key points about Stalin. Internal inconsistencies and other problems cast grave doubt on its accuracy and even its authenticity. Nevertheless, scholars continue to cite it as evidence. Similarly, Orlov’s Secret History of Stalin’s Crimes has provided the bedrock evidence for another set of historical assertions. We learn here the “insiders” account of Stalin’s relations with the NKVD chief Yezhov and other nefarious personalities. Yet, it turns out that Orlov was abroad during the 1930s and picked up his tantalizing tidbits as second and third hand corridor gossip.

It may well be that some of what Nicolaevsky & Orlov report is true. But the dubious origins of the works must cast doubt on their claims. How does one know what is true and what is not? Does one accept what one likes and believes and reject the rest? In most other fields of historical research, such flimsy tales would be rejected as sources out of hand. Were we to do this here, we would discover that we no longer have evidence of Kirov’s moderation or Stalin’s conspiracy to kill him….

In addition to suspicious memoirs and pretended letters, there is a large corpus of historical fiction and fictional history. The problems with such literary sources have been analyzed in print. They tend toward fictionalization, are tailored to produce emotional responses, and try to make moral points. Despite apparent similarities between historical and literary works as texts, they are different genres. Historians conduct research and handle data differently than do creative writers. Hypotheses are tested, discrete interpretations are discussed and documented, and evidence is carefully weighed. For example, Rybakov’s Children of the Arbat, which has played a key role in anti-Stalin shock work and is even hailed as a historical source, contains numerous factual errors and flights of literary fancy. Even Volkogonov’s more scholarly Triumph and Tragedy contains invented dialogue between Stalin and his clique.

Unlike historians, literateurs are generally unconcerned about verifying their sources. Consider two recent examples. First, Shatrov in his play Dal’she, Dal’she, Dal’she tells the story of Zinoviev and Kamenev being brought from prison to the Kremlin in order to be persuaded to confess. His account of this alleged event in fact closely paraphrases the first

account of this tale in the spurious Secret History of Stalin's Crimes, published in the West decades after the event. It is also noteworthy that no evidence to support this tale was found in the Party Central Committee's recent exhaustive archival examination and documentary publication on the interrogation and trial of Zinoviev and Kamenev.

Second, there is the currently popular story that Lenin's Testament was never discussed at a party congress and that, if it had been, Stalinism could have been prevented. In fact, the document was considered by the Party Central Committee shortly after Lenin's death and again in a closed session at the congress in 1927. At that time, Pravda published a Stalin speech which included excerpts from it, including the part in which Lenin criticized Stalin's rudeness and called for his removal from the post of General Secretary. It was (like Khrushchev's "Secret Speech" to the 20th party congress in 1956) not published until recently. But the congress delegates who heard the Testament consisted of virtually all key party leaders and even a scattering of common folk from across the country….

The results of historical investigations into the Stalin period have in many cases been colored by two factors inherent in the subject itself. First, as we have seen, the paucity of reliable and creditable sources on the man (and even on the basic functioning of the system) has given rise to a most diverse and free-wheeling literature that often bears weak allegiance to basic rules of historical investigation. Secondly, nearly all studies have reflected the moral and political agendas of the authors. We have sometimes seen the eclipse of detailed scholarship by didactic preaching and political advocacy.
Nove, Alec, Ed. The Stalin Phenomenon. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993, p. 101-103

The tale wags the dog: the critical use of sources, validity of scientific deduction, and strength of argument–the traditional measures of scholarly worth–take second place to the perceived values of the author. Reviewers worry more about the intentions of the author than about the sources or methodology involved and scholarship is transformed into a rite of exorcism. As we shall see below, this attitude is as prevalent in the former Soviet Union as it is in the West.

Politically, writing about Stalinism has meant taking a stance. Alec Nove has clearly shown how attitudes toward Stalin flow from the political agendas of the authors. The overarching importance of the Soviet Union and socialism to twentieth century political history, the strong communist, anti-Communist, and patriotic passions they have inspired, and the tendency of revolutions to create camps of winners and losers have guaranteed a partisan field of study from the beginning.
Nove, Alec, Ed. The Stalin Phenomenon. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993, p. 105

But without the participation of professional historians, the process of glasnost will remain dangerously inchoate. Unevaluated and undocumented rumors, contradictory claims, and false information will continue to cloud the historical and literary air in the former USSR as they have in the West for decades.
Nove, Alec, Ed. The Stalin Phenomenon. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993, p. 110

Although the "shock work" of publicist is important, it does not generally represent serious historical research. Professional historians in the former Soviet Union privately express dismay at the ability of journalists and publicists to monopolize the discourse, and many of

them are appalled at statements emphasizing the primacy of political utility over objective research. Such unfortunately utilitarian approaches to scholarship sometimes even come from leading scholars.
Nove, Alec, Ed. The Stalin Phenomenon. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993, p. 111

Finally, I wish I could be as "crystal clear" about what happened in the 1930s as Sergo Mikoyan is, but we still have few sources and a lot of work to do.
Nove, Alec, Ed. The Stalin Phenomenon. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993, p. 140

Stories about Stalin have circulated at least since the 1920s and include aspects of his genealogy (he was said to be descended from Georgian or Ossetian princes), personal life (secret wives, amorous ballerinas, and illegitimate children in the Kremlin), and the circumstances of his youth and death. Even at this writing, characterizations of Bolshevism as a Jewish conspiracy are routinely heard even in educated circles in Moscow.

Given Russian cultural traditions, there is nothing particularly unusual about such folklore. What should be surprising is that so much of the oral tradition has found its way into the corpus of scholarly literature. Secondhand personal memoirs, gossip, novels, and lurid accounts by defecting spies eager to earn a living in the West are soberly reviewed in scholarly journals, cited in footnotes, and recommended to graduate students. Fictionalized "letters of old Bolsheviks," political histories with invented Stalin soliloquies, and even dramatic plays are routinely incorporated into academic treatments in ways that would be laughable in other national historical studies.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 40

In other words, Rittersporn is saying: "Look, I can prove that most of the current ideas about Stalin are absolutely false.' But to say this requires a giant hurdle. If you state, even timidly, certain undeniable truths about the Soviet Union in the thirties, you are immediately labeled `Stalinist'. Bourgeois propaganda has spread a false but very powerful image of Stalin, an image that is almost impossible to correct, since emotions run so high as soon as the subject is broached. The books about the purges written by great Western specialists, such as Conquest, Deutscher, Schapiro and Fainsod, are worthless, superficial, and written with the utmost contempt for the most elementary rules learnt by a first-year history student. In fact, these works are written to give an academic and scientific cover for the anti-Communist policies of the Western leaders. They present under a scientific cover the defence of capitalist interests and values and the ideological preconceptions of the big bourgeoisie.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 127 [p. 110 on the NET]

Most of the new material seems presented to make two points long accepted in the West: the terror was widespread and that Stalin had a personal role in it. Virtually all of the latest historical revelations are aimed at illustrating these points and the documents presented seem chosen for this in mind.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 42

(Arch Getty)

It is easier to reject contradictory evidence with the deus ex machina [any unconvincing character or event brought artificially into the plot of a story to settle an involved situation] of Stalin's supposed cleverness: All twists and turns, hesitations and contradictions are thus the result of his incredible deviousness, sadism, or calculating shrewdness. There is really no counter to such ahistorical assertions, except that they are based on faith: the a priori presumption of a plan and the belief that anomalies were intentionally part of it. Such elaborate constructs are unnecessary to explain events; the simplest explanation with the fewest assumptions and consistent with the evidence is usually the best.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 62

(Stephen Wheatcroft)

Although there is a role for literary and propagandist works to force a process of rethinking upon closed minds, there is also a need for serious historical work to produce an unemotional and accurate portrayal of reality. So far we have seen relatively few serious historical works on this subject. Such work will require more than literary creativity; you'll need a professional, objective evaluation of evidence which until recently has not been available for examination.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 275

I heard, when I was still in the USSR, all kinds of stories about how my father had "killed people in moments of temporary insanity." Repeatedly people tried to make me confirm one highly improbable story about Stalin walking at his dacha–this was in winter–and seeing footprints in the snow. Calling a guard, he asked whose footprints they were. The guard did not know–he was seeing them for the first time. Stalin then drew out his revolver and shot the guard on the spot, remarking that the man "wasn't guarding him properly." No matter how many times I tried to prove that the story was out of keeping with my father's character, people did not believe me and tried to convince me that the story was true.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 364

We have been considering Stalin's psychological attitudes.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 319

[Footnote:] Trotsky suggests that Stalin may have poisoned Lenin. But this is no more than a vague surmise, as Trotsky himself states; and it sounds unreal in view of the fact that Trotsky never leveled that charge, or even hinted at it, during the many years of his struggle against Stalin up to 1939-40, when he raised it for the first time. Apparently, Trotsky projected the experience of the great purges of the late 30s back to 1924. Yet such a projection contradicts Trotsky's own characterization of Stalin. "If Stalin could have foreseen", says Trotsky, "at the very beginning where his fight against Trotskyism would lead, he undoubtedly would have stopped short, in spite of the prospect of victory over all his opponents. But he did not foresee anything". Thus even after he had charged Stalin with poisoning Lenin, Trotsky still treated the Stalin of 1924 as an essentially honest but short-sighted man, a characterization that can hardly be squared with the accusation. There is also the fact that Stalin did not dispose of Trotsky himself in a similar manner, while the

latter was in Russia, an act of which he would certainly have been capable if he had been capable of assassinating Lenin.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 253

Trotsky, relating the foregoing [accusing Stalin of giving him the wrong date for Lenin's funeral], added, "Stalin… might have feared that I would connect Lenin's death with last year's conversation about poison…and demand a special autopsy. It was, therefore, safer to keep me away until after the body had been embalmed, the viscera cremated and a post mortem inspired by such suspicions no longer feasible." But if Trotsky thought that at the time, he could have called for a post mortem from Sukhumi. Once more he mysteriously failed to act on his suspicions. Perhaps he only firmed up his suspicions in retrospect, when later he wanted to revenge himself on Stalin, for no other competent source thought Stalin might have poisoned Lenin.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 255

In the intrigues following Lenin's death, he [Trotsky] was by no means straightforward, but at once "devious and faint-hearted," and his own account is "pathetic in its half-truths and attempts to gloss over the facts." [from The Bolsheviks by Adam Ulam, NY, 1965, pp. 573-575]… But Trotsky had never failed in his duty to suppress or misrepresent facts in the interests of politics. And his general reliability on the period in question could have been considered in the light of his accusation that Stalin poisoned Lenin. There is no evidence whatever that this is true, and Trotsky himself only brought it up many years later–in 1939….
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 413

…a few Western Sovietologists began to assert that the Terror had claimed far fewer victims, and that ordinary life was not affected. The writer of a Western Sovietological textbook concerned to reduce the estimates to, as he put it, a few hundred thousand or even a few tens of thousands, wrote, "Surely we don't want to hypothesize 3 million executions or prison deaths in 1937-1938 or anything like this figure, or we are assuming most improbable percentages of men dying." The key word here is "improbable." The Stalin epoch is replete with what appear as improbabilities to minds unfitted to deal with the phenomena. Similarly the argument that Stalin could not have killed millions of peasants, since that would have been "economically counterproductive." Following such leads, a new group of Westerners came forward, with singularly bad timing, in the mid-1980s and told us (in the words of one of them) that the terror had only killed "thousands" and imprisoned "many thousands." Such views could only be formed by ignoring or actively rejecting, the earlier evidence [WHAT EARLIER EVIDENCE]. This was accomplished by saying that those who produced it were opposed to Stalin and Stalinism, and therefore prejudiced, and that some of the material was secondhand. Thus it was not merely a matter of mistaken assessment of the evidence. It was, contrary to the duties of a historian, a refusal to face it.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 486

With any of these authors [Western Sovietologists and Russian dissidents], it is not difficult to find many factual errors, in exact formulations, juggling of facts, and outright distortions. This can be explained on the whole by two reasons. The first is the limited nature of the historical sources which these authors had at their disposal. Thus, the basic research for Conquest's The Great Terror consists of an analysis of Soviet newspapers and other official

publications, to which are added references to the memoir accounts of several people who managed to escape from the USSR. The second reason is that the majority of Sovietologists and dissidents served a definite social and political purpose–they used this enormous historical tragedy to show that its fatal premise was the “utopian” communist idea and revolutionary practice of Bolshevism. This prompted the researchers concerned to ignore those historical sources which contradict their conceptual schemes and paradigms.

… Solzhenitsyn’s book, Gulag Archipelago, contains no references whatsoever to Trotsky’s works. Solzhenitsyn’s work, much like the more objective works of Medvedev, belongs to the genre which the West calls “oral history,” i.e., research which is based almost exclusively on eyewitness [actually secondhand–me] accounts of participants in the events being described. Moreover, using the circumstance that the memoirs from prisoners in Stalin’s camps which had been given to him to read had never been published, Solzhenitsyn took plenty of license in outlining their contents and interpreting them.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. xx

However, very soon it became clear that the themes of the Great Terror and Stalinism were being used by many authors and organs of the press in order to compromise or discredit the idea of socialism. This anti-communist and anti-Bolshevik approach had largely been prepared by the activity of Western Sovietologists and Soviet dissidents from the 1960s through the 1980s, who had put into circulation a whole number of historical myths.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. xxv

Bourgeois historiography, despite its superficial objectivity and respectability, is politicized and tendentious…. This becomes abundantly clear upon reading the most substantive work devoted to the history of the great purge, Robert Conquest’s book The Great Terror. Without touching on the numerous other mistakes and juggling of facts which we have found in this work, let us stop to examine the contents of the three pages (and no more) which the author felt were sufficient to illustrate Trotsky’s views and activities. On these pages, Conquest managed to present no less than ten theses which remain unsupported by citations or by any other evidence, and which do not withstand criticism if they are juxtaposed with actual historical facts. Let us name several of these theses, after arranging them, so to speak, according to the chronological framework of the falsifications.

FROM HERE ON I AGREE WITH CONQUEST AND DISAGREE WITH THE TROT ROGOVIN

1. Trotsky “firmly crushed the democratic opposition within the party.”

2. Trotsky was a “leading figure among the ‘Leftist’ Old Bolsheviks, that is, those doctrinaires who could not agree with Lenin’s concessions to the peasantry. These people, and Trotsky in particular, preferred a more rigorous regime even before Stalin began to carry out such a line.”

3. Trotsky “never expressed a word of sympathy for the deaths of millions during collectivization.”

4. “Even in exile during the 1930s, Trotsky was not by any means a forthright revolutionary out to destroy a tyranny.”

5. Trotsky did not oppose Stalin ideologically, nor did he expose him as the gravedigger of the revolution, but “simply quarreled with Stalin about which ‘phase’ of evolution toward socialism had been attained” in the Soviet Union.

6. Trotsky “stood, in fact, not for the destruction of the Stalinist system, but for its takeover and patching up by an alternative group of leaders.”

7. Trotsky’s political judgment was “unbelievably inept.”

8. Trotsky’s influence in the USSR during the ’30s “was practically nil.”

9. All these points are logically crowned with “an alternative prognosis” or “a prognosis aided by hindsight”: if Trotsky had come to power, then he would have ruled only “less ruthlessly or, to be more precise, less crudely, than Stalin.”…

In turn, Conquest did not think up the argument cited above, which bear the stamp of lightweight journalistic escapades. Rather he copied them from the works of anti-communist ideologues of the 1930s.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 310

But in 1950 a book appeared by the French journalist Delbar, The Real Stalin. I didn’t know Delbar, but I recalled that he’d collaborated with Bessedovsky. I was interested and read the book. It was full of lies and inventions. I realized at once that it was Bessedovsky’s work. Things I’d told him earlier about Stalin and other Party leaders figured in the book, but completely distorted, full of lies, and in effect an insult to the reader. In addition there was frequent mention that such and such a detail (usually false or invented) had been given to the author by a former member of Stalin’s secretariat. This cast a shadow on me, since there were no other former members of Stalin’s secretariat in exile. Reading the book, a specialist in Soviet affairs could be led to believe I was the source of Bessedovsky’s documents.

I requested an explanation. He didn’t deny having written it all and having mocked his readers. When I threatened to denounce his fabrications in the press, he replied that the book was signed by Delbar, and Bessedovsky was not officially involved: if I attacked him, I could be charged with defamation.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 207

[At the 28th Party Congress in the summer of 1990] I was a candidate for the program commission of that Congress, but I was voted out by the orthodox Bolsheviks.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Autopsy for an Empire. New York: Free Press, c1998, p. 474

I first met Yeltsin in 1989, and had many private conversations with him. After I was sacked from the Main Political Administration and, in June 1991, from the Institute of Military History, I became one of his advisers….
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Autopsy for an Empire. New York: Free Press, c1998, p. 503

Not everything written in the Soviet Union about Stalin and Stalinism under glasnost exuded great wisdom. Some was plainly wrong, and some writers repeated ideas and arguments that had been voiced decades earlier in the West; even the Nazi literature on the Soviet Union found some latter-day emulators.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 4

According to the new mythology that made its appearance under glasnost, much of the blame for the terror, the show trials, and the purges has to go to Trotsky because he called for the physical elimination of Stalin. Thus, Volkogonov: Trotsky's book The Revolution Betrayed, which was handed to Stalin in early 1937, was one of the last straws that broke the camel's back. An earlier version of this farfetched theory can be found in Roy Medvedev's Let History Judge, published in the Soviet Union in 1988….

What should one make of assertions of this kind? To begin with, the chronology does not fit. The first copies of The Revolution Betrayed appeared in May 1937, and even if the NKVD had worked day and night translating the book, they could not possibly have handed it to Stalin in 1936 at the time of the first trials. Indeed, in an earlier publication, Volkogonov had written that Stalin had received the translated manuscript only in late 1937.

We do not know what made him change the chronology; but whatever the reason, Trotsky's book could not possibly had driven Stalin to his "desperate decision."
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 50

Biographers of Stalin, Trotsky, and other political leaders are frequently tempted to engage in descriptions and explanations beyond what the evidence will bear out. Doing so is sometimes inevitable in view of the lack of evidence, and a good case can be made for informed guesses, as long as they are not presented as fact and certitude.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 52

Stalin might have said in a small circle that it had been a mistake to let Trotsky go in 1929 in the first place, even though there is no evidence to this effect.

But even now, after all the revelations, we cannot possibly know what Stalin thought when he read Trotsky's books or articles or when he received reports about Trotsky's activities in exile, for there is no evidence.

… If Stalin really believed that Trotsky was a deadly threat, there would have been a change in his behavior once Trotsky had been killed. But that did not transpire; Stalin's behavior in 1950 was essentially the same as it had been in the 1930s.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 53

We owe the revelations under glasnost about the arrests, interrogations, and the executions to a small number of indefatigable investigators…. Like Solzhenitsyn, they [Medvedev and Antonov-Ovseenko] relied almost entirely on oral history, that is, the recollections of prominent and not so prominent survivors.

The greatest single quantitative contribution to our knowledge was made, however, by a student in his 20s, Dmitri Yurasov…. At the age of 16 (in 1981), he installed himself in the state archives as a “palaeographer, second rank.”
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 127

A retired Kharkov prosecutor named Ivan Shekhovtsov tried 17 times to bring court actions to restore the honor and good name of Joseph Stalin. The 18th time, he almost succeeded inasmuch the Sverdlovsk regional court in the city of Moscow agreed to deal with Shekhovtsov’s action against the well-known White Russian writer Adamovich, who (he claimed in an article in Sovetskaia Kultura) had been guilty of criminal libel. The line taken by Shekhovtsov during the trial was that because there were no documents proving that Stalin had ever committed a crime, he must not be vilified. On the other hand, the victims of the Stalinist period from Bukharin to the academician Vavilov, had all admitted their guilt. According to Shekhovtsov, anti-Stalin hysteria was engulfing the country, and with the help of foreign radio stations, the anti-Stalinists were systematically undermining the prestige of the Soviet system….

Shekhovtsov was a member of the legal profession, and as far as he was concerned, only documents counted; all the rest was hearsay.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 270

Is it possible that this Volkogonov did not know or hear about this speech [complementing Stalin] by Churchill? It would really be strange. But his main task was to heap abuse and calumny on Stalin and thus on the USSR, on socialism and on communism. That was his main task and the task of his backers who paid for his book to be published. I can say that Volkogonov spent his time without any truth in his diatribe. His main argument was the “Cult of Personality” and even Stalin’s enemies gave him his due. We would have expected a little more objectivity from our historian.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 42

Those who now accuse Stalin of this and that, absolutely did not know him, did not see him personally–only saw him in photographs or in films, or they read about him from writers who also never saw him or met him, and wrote as they liked, made of him a person who was nowhere recognizable by people like me.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 53

But today, numerous books are written about this–all historical facts are turned topsy turvy, inside out and upside down. They describe him [Bukharin] as the theoretician of the party. Khrushchev, Gorbachev, and Yeltsin all rehabilitated these enemies.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 75

In the last 30 years in the press, there were hundreds of articles and many versions of attempts on Stalin’s life. These so-called “truths” are nothing but fairy tales. I and my comrades who were the bodyguards of Stalin know what happened and this will be history.

Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 93

After the liquidation of the assassins 'corps,' Trotsky then did not constitute any danger to Stalin or the Soviet Government. But today's press is full of all versions as to the assassination plots against Stalin. For example, "Pravda" (whose current owner is a Greek millionaire), writes that Kavtaradze tried to place a bomb in the Bolshoi Theatre where Stalin was sitting in the theater box. I was then the commandant of Bolshoi Theatre security and there was absolutely no such attempt. Not Rakov, or Tukov, or Krutashev [Stalin's bodyguards] ever heard of such an attempt.

The newspaper "Niedelia-Sunday," in an article about Beria, wrote that in the Ritsa Lake, there was an attempt on the life of Stalin, that Stalin remained alive only because Beria covered him with his own body. Tukov, who was there, said: "Beria would place anyone else in front of a bullet, but never himself. There was no attempt on the life of Stalin there. This is just yellow journalism by the newspapers. What really happened there was that Beria pushed me into the water when I caught a fish. Stalin was very upset with Beria and scolded him as he would a child for this act of stupidity."
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 96

The novel by Rybakov, "Children of the Arbat," stated that Stalin was afraid of people. That is why Rybakov states when Stalin was walking on the Arbat, the security closed all the entrances to the street. This is stupid and impossible to accomplish! It is physically impossible to close all the entrances since these are thoroughfares. Stalin's car never exceeded 30 kilometers an hour and often, went as slow as 10 kilometers an hour. Stalin was never afraid of people or of the dark, as I have already written.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 97

The following point is more serious. The modern "democratic journalists" have a field day with the personal life of Stalin, thinking up all sorts of stories, innuendos, and absolute falsifications.

The "Komsomolskaya Pravda" newspaper… basing itself on the dossier of J. Edgar Hoover, chief of the FBI in the USA, printed the item that on Oct. 17, 1938, in Lvov, there took place a meeting of Stalin and Hitler. At that time, I was head of the group that traveled with Stalin in Moscow and other cities or districts in the country. At that time, my assistants were always assigned to guard Stalin–Kykov, Starostin, Orlov, Krutshev, and Kirilin. We all state that this is a vile lie that Hitler and Stalin met in Lvov! In a detailed research of archival documents by the newspaper "Glasnost," it was learned that Stalin was in Moscow all that time and was welcoming workers of the country at an official reception.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 98

The magazine "Ogonyok" printed fragments from the book of Alexander Orlov "Secret History of Stalin's Crimes." Who is this Alexander Orlov? This is Lev Feldbin, twice in Lubyanka jail. He came from the Caucasus, where he commanded some border guards.

During the 1930s, this Feldbin ran away across the border of the USSR and there, he wrote this fable.

He was never close to Stalin. He only met some of the heads of the OGPU such as Commissar Pauker. He is simply a complete liar. Is it at all possible for him to see Stalin meeting Hitler, while we, his personal bodyguards, were sleeping? Stalin never carried any pistols. He always wore his army clothes, plain and simple with no braids or medals or other decorations.

Feldbin states that a bodyguard of Stalin, Evdokimov, was a Trotskyite. This is an outright fabrication! From 1930, the personal guards of Stalin were Vlasik, Rumyantsev, and Bogdanov. Regarding Evdokimov, he was only a secretary in the North Caucasus Party demanding of Stalin that he give him permission to arrest Sholokhov. Stalin put him in his place.

This same Feldman writes that Stalin asked Pauker to gather for him pornographic photographs. We, his personal guards, living with him 24 hours a day, never ever saw any such trash. In his study, the only photographs that were seen were of Bedny, Sholokov, Gorky, and Mayakovsky. The other walls were practically bare. He lived very modestly.

This Feldbin states that on the road to his Dacha, Stalin had commanded that all house-cottages on the route be demolished. Anyone who knows the reconstruction of Moscow and the outskirts will laugh at such stupidity since these districts had large apartment houses, industries built along this highway!

“Stalin was guarded at his Dacha by over 1200 guards”! This is so ridiculous that anyone with a single brain cell would know that it’s a lie.

I cannot continue to list the lies by this enemy, Feldbin.

Now, to touch upon the “new sensation” that Stalin always had a “double.” The newspapers “Evening Donetsk” and “Crimean Pravda” went wild with the sensation that Stalin had a double–Evsei Liubitsky. After that, “Pravda” continued to spread this lie. Why was it necessary for these newspapers to spread such terrible lies? I do not understand. The Chief Editor of these newspapers, before printing such trash, should have looked into the archives of the Central Committee ACP[B], interview former members of the Central Committee CPSU.. But that was not in the interest of the newspaper “Pravda” as we mentioned before, now owned by a foreign millionaire.

My colleagues and I, being with Stalin practically 24 hours a day, years on end, surely, we would have noticed something if there really was a “double Stalin”!

For a “Stalin’s double” to be in existence, you would need to have another auto, the exact kind Stalin rode in, the same chauffeur, the same bodyguards, the same timetable, the same conference materials, the same answers, and the same mannerisms! This is absolute rubbish!

Or how could you fool the top actors of the Bolshoi Theatre, like Reizen, Lisitsian, Golovanov, Samosud, or Barsov who would have immediately noticed a double, since they were in constant contacts and meetings with Stalin?

Here are the statements of bodyguards such as Starostin who stated: “Stalin never had a double. Never did I, through 1937-1953, ever see any ‘double’ or anyone that I did not recognize. I was with Stalin every day going to and from the Kremlin, his Dacha, Government’s Dacha in the Crimea… and in all these years, if there was a double, surely we would have seen him at least once or twice”!

The same was stated by another bodyguard, Orlov.

Stalin looked after himself, never asked anyone to shave him and dressed himself and did all the other necessary things that a person does when performing his day to day work. After the death of Kirov, he was himself always in the steam bath. Maybe the newspaper “Pravda” thought that Mrs. Butuzova, the housekeeper who washed and pressed the clothes and did the cooking, maybe that was the “double of Stalin”? He was very courteous to her and even gave an autographed portrait of himself. No one else ever received such an honor.

During the Great Patriotic War, Marshal Zhukov was his constant adviser, whom he respected very highly for his bravery, honesty, and forthright nature. He had members of the Politburo to consult with, he did not have to have any “special consultants” since Stalin was a genius in tactics and had a phenomenal memory…. He was always rational, did not use words that had no meaning or reason to be said. He could be very funny, but never liked “yes men” and people with no thoughts of their own.

When discussing things with me, Stalin would think a moment and say: “Maybe you are correct. I’ll think about it.”

The nurse living in the nearest dacha, Valentina Istomina, former Commandant of the guards, Semenov, Captain of the first echelon of bodyguards, Krutashev–they all state that there was absolutely no truth to these lies that enemies of the Soviet Union and Stalin are peddling now about any “double” for Stalin!

If the late Goebbels would now hear all these tales and lies, he would turn over in his grave from envy! He, throughout the war, was not able to come up with such a fantastic tale. But history will surely sweep all the dirt off the grave of Stalin.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 99-102

As is known, Khrushchev, at the 20th Congress, from the tribunal, stated that Stalin was always sitting, scared, in his iron cage. Since that time, the doors of lies have been blown open along with all sorts of fantasies that have been heaped up and said about Stalin. There is even a version that the Dacha where he worked, had iron bars on the windows, bullet-proof glass–a virtual castle.

There is also a version now that Stalin secluded himself in his fortress, that members of the Politburo decided by themselves that they would have to use flame throwers in order to get Stalin out of there! That they finally got inside this fortress and found Stalin dead!

I again repeat, there were no iron doors, double doors, all doors were made of wood, his doors were never closed, since he wanted fresh air and needed this circulation of air to help him breathe better. When they had to be locked, the keys were always in the hands of the Commandant of security of the Dacha. There were no other keys, no secret doors, no iron doors or other hiding places, as the present falsifiers try to invent today.

I again and again strongly state this, since Khrushchev tells the world things that he absolutely has no idea about, no way of proving these accusations and outright falsehoods. Khrushchev said: “I was an eyewitness when Stalin went into the toilet where there were no doors and after that, he came out in order to berate his bodyguard about how he was guarding him, his place was to be near him all the time, etc., etc.!

This is absolutely absurd that we, his bodyguards, would be requested by Stalin to go right into the toilet to be with him while he was sitting on the toilet! That Stalin would be afraid to go into the toilet himself–these are thoughts of the very sick mind!

This is absolutely the thought of a sick mind–yes, of Khrushchev’s very sick mind!
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 102, 104

Let us be truthful, at last!

This was the task that I placed before myself when I started to write this book. I did not embellish anything, did not try to color anything–I tried to tell the absolute truth about Stalin, with whom I was for more than 25 years.

You can judge for yourself the humility of Stalin and the opportunism, lies, sensationalism, and traitorous acts of the present “democrats” and former “Bolsheviks” who now write and write and still cannot dislodge the genius of Stalin, even after 43 years of trying.

This is why we, people who spent the best years of our lives working together with Stalin, write and struggle against the so-called “learned” who are trying to settle old scores or, if that is not possible, of trying to rewrite history irrespective of the time that was, or write according to the present weather that is blowing an ill wind. That is why we, together, are demonstrating and fighting against those who believe the thought-up sensationalism.

Dear readers, please, be vigilant!
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 108-109

In further discussion of the way that the plans for 1942 came to be formulated, Blumentritt [Chief of the German General Staff on the Western Front and Rundstedt’s assistant] made some general observations that are worth inclusion as a sidelight. “My experience on the higher staffs showed me that the vital issues of war tended to be decided by political rather

than by a strategical factors, and by mental tussles in the rear rather than by the fighting on the battlefield. Moreover, those tussles are not reflected in the operation orders. Documents are no safe guide for history–the men who sign orders often think quite differently from what they put on paper. It would be foolish to take documents that historians find in the archives as a reliable indication of what particular officers really thought.
Hart, Liddell. The German Generals Talk. New York: W. Morrow, 1948, p. 197

While the average person might understandably despair at this confusing tangle of documenting evidence, one justifiably expects historians to verify and authenticate source material.
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 30

American historian Arch Getty has observed that for no other period or subject, except the study of the Soviet Union in the 1930s, have "historians been so eager to write and accept history-by-anecdote." He states:

"Grand analytical generalizations have come from second-hand bits of overheard corridor gossip. Prison camp stories ("My friend met Bukharin's wife in a camp and she said…") have become primary sources on (Soviet) central political decision-making…the need to generalize from isolated and unverified particulars has transformed rumors into sources and has equated repetition of stories with confirmation."
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 89

It is a revealing characteristic of Conquest's methodology pertaining to the Soviet Union, writes Getty, that he elevates rumor and hearsay to the level of historical fact. In fact, Conquest himself has stated: "Truth can thus only percolate in the form of hearsay" and, "on political matters basically the best, though not infallible source is rumor." Getty comments: "Such statements would be astonishing in any other field of history. Of course historians do not accept hearsay and rumor as evidence."

Having baptized hearsay and rumor into the realm of historical evidence in The Great Terror (the subject of Getty's criticism), Conquest proceeds to bestow upon them the rights of confirmation in Harvest of Sorrow.
Tottle, Douglas. Fraud, Famine, and Fascism. Toronto: Progress Books,1987, p. 89

A vast lot of nonsense has been written about the GPU.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 548

Written stories, biographies of people who were close to Stalin in his last days, do not agree with each other.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 18

Ligachev, a conservative figure in the Politburo until his forced retirement in 1990, told me ruefully that when history was taken out of the hands of the Communist Party, when scholars, journalists, and witnesses began publishing and broadcasting their own version of the past, "it created a gloomy atmosphere in the country. It affected the emotions of the people, their mood, their work efficiency. From morning to night, everything negative from the

past is being dumped on them. Patriotic topics have been squeezed out, shunted aside. People are longing for something positive, something shining, and yet our own cultural figures have published more lies and anti-Soviet things than our Western enemies ever did in the last 70 years combined."
Remnick, David. Lenin's Tomb. New York: Random House, c1993, p. 7

Afanasyev was determined to use his new post to help open up the study of the Soviet past. Exploiting his new access to at least some Party archives, he reviewed the letters of Olga Shatunovskaya, a woman who had been a member of the Communist Party Control Committee under Khrushchev. In those letters Shatunovskaya wrote that she had collected 64 folders of documents saying that according to KGB and Party data, between January 1935 and 1941 19,800,000 people have been arrested; and of these, 7 million were executed in prisons. Her statement was supported by specific data describing how many were shot and where and when. But the files Shatunovskaya described were declared "missing."
Remnick, David. Lenin's Tomb. New York: Random House, c1993, p. 115

He [Frunze] suffered from a chronic stomach complaint that doctors insisted required surgery, despite his protests. Stalin visited him in the hospital, where he pressured the surgeon to operate. Frunze died shortly afterward. Foul play has never been proved.
Overy, R. J. Russia's War: Blood Upon the Snow. New York: TV Books, c1997, p. 27

Extravagant invention of all kinds can be found in the essay "Flight Out Of the Night" by the 76-year-old Boris Bazhanov…. At present Bazhanov is working on a new book, and from the extracts that have already been published fact seems to be combined with fiction in and extremely whimsical manner.
Medvedev, Roy. On Stalin and Stalinism. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 33

Towards the end of his [Volkogonov] life, seriously ill but possessing full access to the archives, Volkogonov was hastening to complete biographies of all seven Soviet leaders from Lenin to Gorbachev. However, his outlook had shifted considerably, and he was now mainly concentrating on the exposure of negative material, without aspiring to objectivity or analysis.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 74

A more detailed, although one-sided, negative biography of Stalin has been attempted by the well-known Soviet playwright Edward Radzinsky…. In short, the book does not contain any fundamentally new material.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 74

But some former prisoners began to write memoirs or works of fiction about the camps and the repressions. The first were Solzhenitsyn in Ryazan, Shalamov in Moscow and Yevgeny Ginsburg in Lvov.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 118

According to the historian Antonov-Ovseenko, author of, Stalin and his Time, Stalin was coarse and cynical about his mother and gave orders for her to be constantly watched, assigning that task to two trusted female communists. Although he refers to the testimony of several Georgian Bolsheviks and their relatives, this is nevertheless a perfect example of pure invention.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 310

The vast majority of books on Russia written during the last years of Stalin are “Cold War” books, in which angry anti-Russian and anti-Soviet propaganda holds an infinitely larger place than any search for historical facts. Thus, the “historical” value of a classic of the Cold War literature of the time, Victor Kravchenko’s I Chose Freedom, though for several years a tremendously potent weapon of propaganda against Russia, with its clear implication that dropping an atom bomb on Moscow was the only possible solution to “the Russian problem,” is precisely nil. Dozens of other books of the same kind were published in the West between 1945 and 1953, and practically all of them are worthless to the present-day historian as sources of solid information, though they are, of course, significant as manifestations of the war hysteria that existed among many (fortunately not all) people in the West in the immediate post-war years.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co.,1971, p. x

… he [Stalin] continually revised the basic elements of the “plot” until he found the right combination of elements to suit his political needs. [Look who’s talking]
Naumov and Brent. Stalin’s Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 133

Vaksberg has written that the trial of the doctors was planned for March 1953….. Like Sheinis, Vaksberg has produced no evidence to support the date of the trial, the reported barracks in Birobizhan, or the alleged reallocation of railroad facilities around Moscow. Any sort of change or movement gave rise instantly to such ideas. Rumor substantiated rumor and beliefs were taken as facts…. Vaksberg’s description of the “reserve tracks around Moscow…filled with freight cars [prepared to deport Jews],” however, is undoubtedly another unnecessary embellishment.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin’s Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 297

No one knows exactly how Stalin died….

In this vacuum of information and consistency rumors and myths have abounded for the last 50 years.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin’s Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 313

Americans have been subjected to widespread propaganda, both red and white. On no subject in the world has this been so prolific as about communism and the Soviet Union.
Davis, Jerome. The New Russia. New York: The John Day company, c1933, p. 3

It is difficult to escape the impression that close reading and in some cases the taking account of easily available sources do not necessarily characterize the researches of authors who present the “traditional” version….

This is the “secret report” presented by Khrushchev at the 20th Congress of the CPSU, which has been widely drawn on in the literature. And yet the possibility has never been taken seriously into account that its contents might have more to do with the political issues at the time it was compiled and the tactical objectives of its authors, rather than the realities of Soviet history….

All the indications are that it was based on rumors which were current in the USSR, or even on the memoirs of emigres published abroad, and that it was produced for the very purpose of confirming and “canonizing” the best-known version of events and phenomena that had been highly compromising for the regime….

It would certainly be na•ve to imagine that even the most attentive reading of original source material could bring to light everything that happened during that troubled period of Soviet history, when the most important events took place far from the public eye. But it would be equally alien to the professional ethic of historians to refrain from examining the available documents and to rely only on those witnesses that are the most accessible, and the most likely to confirm one preconception or another. For instance we shall see how much precious information can be gleaned from the documentation of the February-March 1937 Plenary Session of the Central Committee and from analyzing how and when it was published. That being the case, nothing can justify the author of the lengthiest work on the “Great Purge”, which is based mainly on sources like the “secret report” and emigres’ memoirs, for only quoting the testimony of a Soviet refugee. All the more so when the refugee was not present at the crucial session and the tale he relates is one he heard in a concentration camp in 1940 from another detainee who was not there either but had been told about it at the time….

True, it would be unfair to claim that earlier writers have completely failed to analyze original sources. But it must be noted that when they have done so they have become engrossed in the intentions of the leaders of the Party-State and their supposed prime mover, uncertain and at times downright unfathomable though these may be. So much so that their tendency to seek irrefutable proof for these intentions has brought them close to arbitrariness and tendentiousness in their choice and interpretation of the documents. Thus for example one of the favorite sources for historians: a decree in March 1935 forbidding the possession of knives and other edged weapons, which is frequently presented as a harbinger of the intensification of the terror. The authors seem unaware that other measures were being taken at about the same period to combat brigandage, armed attacks, brawls and “hooliganism,” phenomena which were all apparently on the increase at the time. Nor do they ever point out that the decree in question gave exemption from the ban to ethnic groups whose traditional livelihood or national costume entailed the carrying of knives. Furthermore one should add that another decree, only a few months afterwards, made it easier for private citizens to acquire small caliber weapons which could be bought without special license until February 1938….

The need to take into account the historical and documentary context of the sources quotes does not seem to be a strong point with some writers….

Although very keen to track down documents with which to demonstrate the escalation of terror and Stalin’s murderous schemes, the authors of the “traditional” version are far less

ready to take account of sources which do not tend to support their theses. However, when they do do so, the conclusions they draw reveal very clearly the preconceptions that govern their approach….

In fact it is this burying of heads in the sand which is largely responsible for the tendentious quotation of source material and the ease with which authors have brought practically everything back to one single cause: Stalin. After all there's nothing easier than to attribute to him the design of virtually everything that happened over 20 years in a country covering a sixth of the earth's land-mass and home to 100 different ethnic groups. All one has to do is to set aside any possibility of a thorough examination of the social, political, and institutional context within which the regime operated and concentrate solely on the putative prime mover, refusing to touch the quite abundant material which would enable one to see the inner workings of the system.

This style of approach, instead of casting light on the origins, nature, and consequences of historical phenomena in all their complex variety, tends rather to put forward one-dimensional interpretations and over-simplified explanations which even at best have no more than a superficial documentary basis. At the same time it raises hypotheses which are really unverified, and at times frankly unverifiable, to the status of articles of faith. Thus, for example, the victims in high office who were dismissed and cruelly punished during this period: authors never tire of listing them at length and concluding from the mere fact of their fall that Stalin's murderous machinations were at work, without showing the slightest interest in what the people in question were doing, how the organizations they controlled were being run, or what disagreements they might have had with their superiors, colleagues, or subordinates….

This same very simplistic logic is in many ways what perpetuates the idea that almost all the old guard of Bolsheviks were exterminated during the "Great Purge," an allegation which is hardly borne out by the statistical facts. Certainly, since a large number of the victims of these turbulent years were officials of the Party and the state, they inevitably included a good many of the old elite who formed the backbone of the apparatus. But we should be aware that of the 24,000 party members in 1917 and the 430,000 or so militants at the beginning of 1920, there only remained 8000 and 135,000 respectively by 1927; this is but a small minority of the total membership which was estimated at over 1,200,000 by 1927 and at over 2,700,000 in 1934…. Out of more than 700,000 Party activists at the end of the Civil War there remained about 180,000 by 1934 and 125,000 at the beginning of 1939.

It therefore becomes somewhat difficult to state that the old guard of the Party had been reduced to naught, or that they were even the principal victims of the tumultuous events of 1934-1938,… As for the number of expulsions from the Party, it has been known for more than 20 years that this stood at nearly 279,000 in 1937-38 at the height of the "Great Purge." In 1933, however, more than 854,000 activists had been expelled, over 342,000 in 1934 and nearly 282,000 in 1935; these figures are all higher than in the years of the "Great Terror."

…Essentially he [Conquest] bases this on the memoirs of ex-prisoners who assert that between 4 and 5.5% of the Soviet population were incarcerated or deported during those years.

It seems improbable that men who are inside penal institutions would be able to form any exact idea either of the proportion of the population which is still at liberty or the numbers recently arrived in all the other camps and prisons, which they are not personally familiar with even though they had come to know a few by being moved around.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 7-12

In fact there is scarcely one of the writers of memoirs who can report from first-hand knowledge of affairs in the higher ranks of the Party-State, and yet it is these accounts that historians of the USSR quote most readily. It does not seem therefore entirely inappropriate to ask whether we are not dealing here with a series of rumors that were widespread as early as the 1930s, which then developed into an oral tradition and put down deep roots into the collective consciousness. These authors are cadres of the middle and lower levels of the hierarchy, persecuted intellectuals, Party activists with at best minimal responsibility, junior government officials or secret agents who defected after having passed the best part of their time abroad. They scarcely had access to the political bodies where the important decisions were made and where some of the crucial confrontations took place.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 16

In fact even the most cursory reading of the “classic” [anti-Stalin] works makes it hard to avoid the impression that in many respects these are often inspired more by the state of mind prevailing in some circles in the West, than by the reality of Soviet life under Stalin.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 23

(Solzhenitsyn’s lies)

We may gain some idea of Solzhenitsyn’s approach by checking how he uses some of the documents he refers to. He quotes for instance a decree from the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People’s Commissars on 7 April 1935 which, he says, “made children criminally responsible for any crime from the age of 12.” It is interesting to note that he is not alone in giving an erroneous interpretation of this law, and that others too have been led to believe that it allowed children to be found guilty of political crimes; this was the general view of writers on the subject even before The Gulag Archipelago was published. A mere glance at the text in question, however, reveals that the power ofinvoking “all penal sanctions” related only to children guilty of “theft, violence, bodily harm, mutilation, murder, and attempted murder.”

Solzhenitsyn is scarcely any more rigorous when he writes that the amnesty on 7 July 1945 freed “all those who had burgled apartments, stolen the clothes of passers-by, raped girls, corrupted minors, given consumers short weight, played the hoodlum, disfigured the defenseless, plundered forests and waters, committed bigamy, practiced extortion and blackmail, taken bribes, swindled, slandered, filed false enunciations…pimped or forced women into prostitution, whose carelessness or ignorance resulted in the loss of human life.”… Apart from the fact that the amnesty decree expressly ruled out anyone who had been “convicted on more than one occasion of embezzlement, theft, robbery and

hooliganism" and all those guilty of "counter-revolutionary" crimes, appropriation of public property, organized crime, premeditated murder and armed robbery, in most of the cases listed by the author the clauses cited laid down penalties of more than three years imprisonment,… Similarly the terms of the amnesty of 27 March 1953, which according to Solzhenitsyn "submerged the whole country in a wave of murderers, bandits and thieves," actually did not permit the immediate release of the majority of thieves, and forbade that of almost all gangsters and murderers….

Solzhenitsyn is notorious for not liking thieves. It is no doubt this dislike which leads to his indignation at the pardon granted to those who plundered forests–mostly peasants who in certain circumstances could be sentenced to 10 years or more. This attitude also leads him to say that the penalty for stealing private property was not severe enough, when the minimum sentence from 1947 onwards was five years hard labor. He habitually contrasts political prisoners with common criminals to the point where he is prepared to state that, whereas the aggravating circumstance of having formed a "counter-revolutionary organization" was often used against "politicals," there were no special penalties for offenses committed by groups of common criminals. This view does not bear comparison with the penal code.

One might dwell at length on the inaccuracies discernible in Solzhenitsyn's work, many of which concern the fate of the leading actors in his Gulag. Thus for instance, the writer is unjust in accusing generals Egorov and Turovskii of being among the judges of the leaders of the Red Army at the famous secret trial in June 1937; their names do not appear on the list of tribunal members published at the time. But he is even more unjust when he makes people disappear in captivity and we find that, arrested though they may have been and sent to a prison camp, they sometimes did not stay there long. Thus he cites the arrest of Kuskova, Prokopovich and Kishkin, members of a famine relief committee in 1921. However, he omits to say that Kuskova and Prokopovich were expelled from the country in 1922 and Kishkin, who had already been tried on charges of conspiracy in 1919 and subsequently pardoned, benefited from a further amnesty and worked from 1923 until his death in the Commissariat of Health of the Russian Federation….

Our author [Solzhenitsyn] is equally mistaken in asserting that the biologist Lorkh was "dispatched" to Kazakhstan in the "stream" of agronomists in 1931 whose crime was to oppose the "directives" of Lysenko. We know that Lorkh was not a devoted follower of Lysenko's theories. But we also know that, before receiving the Stalin prize, he had worked from 1931 to 1941 in a research institute near Moscow. And in any case, in 1931 Lysenko was in no position to issue directives that could result in a "stream" of agronomists being sent to the camps. He was already a rising star, but his career did not really take off until 1933.

Elsewhere Solzhenitsyn talks of five historians arrested in 1929. Now the biographies of four of them are known, and we find that three of them had been exiled to work in far-away provincial institutions and the two others were free during most of the 1930s. One of the latter, Gote, was elected to the Academy of Sciences in 1939. Another, Tarle, was awarded the Stalin Prize three times in the 1940s. In the same way, we can retrace the lives of eight people whom Solzhenitsyn lists among prisoners "preserved in the memory of the survivors,"

to find that although they had been imprisoned, with the exception of one who was forced into exile they were all pursuing scientific careers in the 1930s and 1940s.

…But we should not forget that all the while attaching little importance to faithfulness to source documents where Solzhenitsyn asserts he has consulted them–or else where he could have done so–the heart of his narrative is based on the evidence, often oral, of 227 people. Now it is by no means certain that he was more meticulous in checking them than he was in reading easily available material….

Obviously it is difficult to check the accuracy of the eye-witness accounts from which Solzhenitsyn draws so many details and conclusions.

It would be clearly unfair to jump to the conclusion that the whole Gulag Archipelago is merely a collection of legends arising from the bitter reality of a national tragedy, and from the collective struggle to resist ruthless efforts to suppress its memory by the very instigators of this catastrophe. But it would be difficult to avoid the impression that Solzhenitsyn's work is by no means an historical source unarguably exact in its every detail, but rather a mixture–and often an inextricable one–of indisputable facts and of their trace, sometimes very imprecise or distorted, preserved by a collective memory that has been more concerned about elevating a memorial to the martyrdom of its guardians than with the authenticity of its traditions. It is striking how many of Solzhenitsyn's errors support this hypothesis. Indeed every inaccuracy that we have traced shows how far he is inclined to give priority to vague reminiscences and hearsay, even when he might have checked his sources, and how far his narrative obeys the rules inherent in all oral tradition, the impulse that collective memory inevitably has towards selective bias.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 231-235

Thus even though one might say that the number of detainees committed for political reasons was considerable, Solzhenitsyn's assertion that half of the population of the camps and prisons was made up of people convicted under laws against "counter-revolutionary" crimes does not seem consistent with what we can discover from the development of penal policy and popular reactions.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 288

…the Gulag, while overestimating the number of those arrested as "counter-revolutionaries," retains very little trace of the actual reasons for their arrests or convictions but concentrates on the circumstances of their detention, on police brutality, or on the hardships of life inside the camps.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 293

Nicolas Werth, a well-regarded French specialist on the Soviet Union whose sections in the Black Book on the Soviet communists are sober and damning, told Le Monde, "Death camps did not exist in the Soviet Union."

The Future Did Not Work by J. Arch Getty, Book Review of The Passing of an Illusion by Franois Furet [March 2000 Atlantic Monthly]

…it is understandable that those who safeguarded the memory of repression concentrated their efforts on compiling a full inventory of affronts and cruelties, down to the finest detail. But we should not lose sight of the fact that they collected evidence that is often extremely hard to verify….

It is worth noting that as the witnesses of the camps in the 1930s gradually became fewer, stories began to circulate which are uncorroborated by the known accounts of their experiences, let alone what can be gleaned from consulting other sources.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 294

The equation “concentration camps = Gulag = Soviet regime” cannot be accepted therefore as an explanatory model for the highly complex realities of the Soviet Union’s past. The collective memory and the literary work which form its basis cannot be taken as entirely reliable sources for our knowledge of the world of the camps or penal policy, nor apparently can that policy alone provide a sufficient explanation for the historical processes at work within the Soviet Union.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 300

What our experiences show is above all the extremely precarious state of almost all our knowledge of the social-political history of these years, as soon as we set it against a systematic and critical study of the original sources which until recent years have been greatly neglected by research.
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 319

(ROBERT SERVICE’S MANY UNPROVEN ACCUSATIONS)

He [Stalin] ordered the systematic killing of people on a massive scale
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 3

In applying physical and mental torment to his victims, he degraded them in the most humiliating fashion. He derived a deep satisfaction from this.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 5

Stalin had a gross personality disorder.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 10

In fact he was very far from being ‘normal.’ He had a vast desire to dominate, punish, and butcher.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 12

He had killed innumerable innocents in the Civil War.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 12

But his sense of traditional honor was non-existent.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 27

The Party General Secretary ordered the arrested individuals [engineers and industrial specialists] to be beaten into confessing to imaginary crimes.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 259

A succession of such trials occurred in 1929-30 Outside the RSFSR. there were trials of nationalists Torture, outlandish charges and learned-by-rote confessions became the norm. Hundreds of defendants were either shot or sentenced to lengthy terms of imprisonment.

[This is one of those statements which has a source but how do you know the source has any validity]
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 268

He demanded complete obedience and often interfered in their private lives.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 277

His [Vyshinsky] basic proposition that confession (which could be obtained by torture) was the queen of the modalities of judicial proof was music to Stalin's ears.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 281

His memory was extraordinary, and he had his future victims marked down in a very long list.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 285

Yet his maladjusted personality was not the only factor at work.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 285

Quite possibly Stalin continued to have the odd fling with young communists; and, even if he was faithful to Nadya, she did not always believe him and was driven mad with jealousy.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 289

Stalin's cultural program was an unstable mixture. He could kill artists at will and yet his policies were incapable of producing great art

Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 305

At a time when peasants in several regions were so desperate that some turn to cannibalism,
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 311

They eat berries, fungi, rats and mice; and, when these had been consumed, peasants ate grass and bark.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 312

The verdict was execution by shooting. Zinoviev and Kamenev had been told that, if they confessed to involvement in the Kirov “conspiracy’ in 1934, their sentences would be commuted. But Stalin had tricked them.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 320

He never got over them: the beatings in his childhood,
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 344

Solitary again, Stalin had no peace of mind. He was a human explosion waiting to happen.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 345

His was a mind that found terror on a grand scale deeply congenial.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 345

Meanwhile Ordjonikidze’s brother had been shot on Stalin’s instructions.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 349

Tukhachevsky was shot on 11 June; he had signed a confession with a bloodstained hand after a horrific beating.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 349

Nearly all the accused [at the Bukharin trial] had been savagely beaten.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 355

Two days later [after the Bukharin trial] Stalin approved a further operation to purge “anti-Soviet elements.’ This time he wanted 57,200 people to be arrested across the USSR. Of these, he and Yezhov had agreed, fully 48,000 were to be rapidly tried by troiki and executed.

Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 355

He [Stalin] had killed Kaganovich's brother Moisei
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 374

Stalin the Leader was multifaceted. He was a mass killer with psychological obsessions.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 379

Stalin had Maria Svanidze arrested in 1939 and sent to a labor camp. Her husband Alexander Svanidze also fell victim to the NKVD: he had been arrested in 1937 and was shot in 1941. Alexander behaved with extraordinary courage under torture and refused to confess or beg for mercy.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 434

Tortures previously reserved for non-communists were applied to Rajk, Pauker, and Slansky. The beatings were horrific.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 520

An administrative behemoth ran the USSR whose master was the pockmarked little psychopath.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 538

Mikhoels was killed in a car crash on Stalin's orders in 1948.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 577

As is not unusual in such a situation, proof is lacking; but circumstantial evidence filled the gap for the gossip-mongers.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 17

There is hardly any possibility of verifying that story, which comes, we must not forget, from Stalin's bitterest opponents.
Trotsky, Leon , Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 29

[Footnote]: In general, the testimony of this police defector [Orlov] should be treated with reserve. He was out of the Soviet Union during most of the period he wrote about and must have relied mainly on gossip that was making the rounds in the police. Some of this probably was based on fact, but Orlov does not appear to have been able, or perhaps willing, to make a serious effort to discriminate between the more reliable stories and the less probable. Although he claimed that he took with him from Russia 'secret data' on Stalin, none of this has ever appeared. Rarely can his assertions be verified from other sources, but it is

reasonably safe to describe as imaginary his assertion that Stalin once explained to foreign ‘writers’ why there was no documentary evidence in the purge trials. In fact, Stalin’s few press interviews are well established, and none deal with any such thing.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 360

DURANTY IS A FAIR SOVIET CRITIC

I had long talks with Duranty, an Englishman, but the representative in Moscow of the New York Times, and easily the ablest journalist in Eastern Europe. Duranty, while openly critical of many aspects of Soviet life and of Communist practice, is a fair-minded and, on the whole, sympathetic critic. Russians, while they do not like many things he says about them, believe in his honesty.
Cummings, Arthur. The Moscow Trial (Metro-Vickers). London: Victor Gollancz, 1933, p. 175

DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE SHOULD BE A MAIN SOURCE FOR FACTS

In all these matters, we must constantly question our sources. The evidence presented is based on sensitive documents long suppressed. It might be objected that documents and archives should not be our main sources for the repression. Indeed, we must consider the possibility that they have been altered or falsified. Fearful, culpable, and powerful officials over the years since 1937 certainly would have reason to take an interest in the paper trail of these crimes, and such people were capable of far more than adjusting the documentary record. Certainly, the record is incomplete and we must maintain a healthy suspicion of all official sources from the 1930s. But simply on the basis of suspicion and without any evidence, it would be rash to decide a priori that the archival record is false. Until and unless independent historians and documentary experts are able to examine all the sensitive documents in their physical form and contexts, the scholarly community is not in a position finally to establish their veracity–or lack of credibility for that matter.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 61

CONQUEST ADMITS HIS FIGURES LACK PRECISION

In fact all our chains of evidence (treated, in general, somewhat conservatively) lead, though without any real precision, to some such figure.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : The Macmillan Co., 1973, p. 702

We are not able to give exact figures in this field [numbers in the camps] any more than in the others.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : The Macmillan Co., 1973, p. 706

Nevertheless, there is an invaluable accumulation of useful information on a wide variety of themes. The accounts are indeed scrappy and incomplete, and in some cases uncritically assembled on a basis more journalistic than scholarly.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : The Macmillan Co., 1973, p. 750

It is clear that documents are in many cases inaccessible, and reliance must often be placed on the memories of surviving relatives and others.
The unsatisfactory nature of the documentation is strikingly shown in the divergence of Soviet sources over the dates of death, even of such prominent figures as Chubar, full member of the Politburo, or Marshal Yegorov, Chief of Staff. There are so many instances of two (and very occasionally instances of more than two) different dates for such deaths competing in the literature, that I am inclined to interpret it as follows: the earlier date may represent the imposition of the death sentence, which would be the last date to appear on the legal file on the accused, and would normally be carried out within days. If the sentence was thereupon commuted by administrative decision, the fact might not emerge on the documents available to a given researcher, but come out only in a different set of documents, or from the personal reports of surviving N.K.V.D. officers. BUT THIS IS NO MORE THAN LOGICAL SPECULATION. AND IN SOME CASES SHEER MUDDLE SEEMS JUST AS LIKELY.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : The Macmillan Co., 1973, p. 750-751

THE TRUTH CAN THUS ONLY PERCOLATE IN THE FORM OF HEARSAY.

…But of course not all hearsay and not all rumour is true [which implies most is]. On political matters basically the best, though not infallible, source is rumour at a high political or police level.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : The Macmillan Co., 1973, p. 754

MEMORIAL SHOULD BE BUILT FOR THOSE FIGHTING FOR SOCIALISM NOT AGAINST IT

His life was very complex and very hard. These modern “democrats” are trying to build a Memorial to the victims of Stalinism. I would suggest that they build a Memorial to the victims of these enemies of the people. Remember that just in Lithuania and Latvia during the last war, the nationalists killed more than one million people–teachers, party people, and young Komsomols. Two hundred thousand of our patriots were killed in the Crimea by the Tartar nationalists.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 108

ANTI-STALIN WRITERS ADMIT THEIR BIAS AND PREJUDICE

[Volkogonov said to Remnick] “I was a Stalinist. I contributed to the strengthening of the system that I am now trying to dismantle.
Remnick, David. Lenin’s Tomb. New York : Random House, c1993, p. 408

SUMMARY OF CONQUESTS DECEPTIONS IN THE GREAT TERROR

1. Making comments with no proof.

2. When he does cite, it’s a rogue’s gallery of anti-Stalinist fanatics. Relies very heavily on the most rabid Rightists

3. He ticks off shootings, jailings, and exilings as if the persons were automatically innocent.

4. Almost never goes into the details or facts of any cases.

5. Never allows the prosecution's evidence to be presented.

6. Particularly absurd accounts come from Orlov and Kravchenko.

7. Overwhelming use of secondary sources.

8. Uses all the rumors and scuttlebutt he can find.

9. Never shows one example of where Stalin caused a killing of an innocent person whom he knew was innocent.

10. Many times he gives a very superficial, biased presentation of an incident and quickly moves on.

11. Gives a trivial incident and then says the person involved was later arrested, implying he was arrested for the trivial incident.
For example: At a meeting of the Kiev Academy of Sciences, for example, someone denounced professor Kopershinsky. Another Communist scientist, Kaminsky remarked, "Where class instinct speaks, proof is unnecessary." He, too, was later arrested.
Moreover, readers simply must accept the assertion that someone was arrested.

12. Uses the word "purged" incorrectly and doesn't know what a purge is.

13. A lot of reports from anti-Stalin (glasnost) papers but not quoted from the original source.

14. Almost never do two sources report the same act.

15. Statements are not from opening archives but opening up archives to Rightists to spread their poison.

16. The trials really bother Conquest.

17. Always an assumption that anyone in jail is there for political reasons.

18. He often ignores testimony in the major Moscow trials as if it didn't exist.

19. Jumps from topic to topic topic with quick insinuations and no proof's

20. Uses material in novels as if it were actual history

21. Conquest's writings reek with words like: seems, probable, probability, appears, presumption, perhaps, probably, no doubt (when there is doubt), presume, might have, implausible, we can envisage, possible, reported, reportedly, stories, unofficial reports,

believed to have been, is said to have been, rumors have emerged, seem to have been, presumed, if, it has recently been speculated, and are said to have.

CONQUEST MAKES ANTI-STALINIST ACCUSATIONS FOR WHICH NO PROOF IS PROVIDED

When he [Kaganovich] himself was removed in 1957 [from the Politburo] he telephoned the victor [Khrushchev] and begged not to be shot.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 13

If Bukharin in the Politburo had spoken up against the Shakhty trial, if Trotsky in exile had denounced the Menshevik trial–if they had even objected not to the injustice as such,…
A.) What injustice? Where is the proof that there was an injustice?

It is true that those who did not confess and were shot secretly, demonstrated not merely a higher courage but a better sense of values.
a) To whom is he referring? What evidence does he have for these alleged secret shootings?
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 28

This killing [of Kirov] has every right to be called the crime of the century. Over the next four years, hundreds of Soviet citizens, including the most prominent political leaders of the Revolution, were shot for direct responsibility for the assassination….
a) What hundreds of citizens?
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 37

Stalin's plan succeeded, and his colleague [Kirov] lay dead in the Smolny corridors.
a. What plan and where is the evidence for same.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 41

Nine other men who had been present, including… Rumyantezev, were arrested. They were under arrest, or some of them were by Dec. 6 [following Kirov 's murder]. "Severe" interrogation methods were employed.
A] What is his evidence for this?
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 46

There were rumors, to put it no higher, that fellow prisoners had seen Kotolynov at the time of his interrogation, badly scarred and beaten.
a) Rumors are evidence?
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 48

No doubt, in a general way, Stalin favored silencing those who knew his secrets.
a. Proof?
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 50

His [Stalin] opponents, on the whole, only realized his implacability too late. But it is unnecessary today to labor the point of Stalin's unscrupulousness or yet the extreme vindictiveness of his nature.
a) No evidence is provided for his alleged implacability, unscrupulousness, or vindictiveness. The statement is just made and the author moves on.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 56

She [Stalin's wife] seems to have obtained most of her information from students at a course she had not been allowed to take, and they were arrested as soon as Stalin found out.
a. Is any information or proof provided
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 58

With the exception of Zinoviev, Stalin was the only non-"intellectual" in Lenin's leadership.
a) Would Conquest like to match his knowledge of history and literature with Stalin?
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 61

He [Stalin] won his position by devious maneuver.
a) He provides no evidence for this whatever.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 62

There can be no doubt that Stalin pursued his grudges implacability, even after many years.
a) Conquest doesn't provide evidence that grudges existed to start with let alone implacability.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 66

It is true that anyone Stalin had a personal grudge against was almost automatically included on the death list,…
a) Conquest provides no evidence that there was a personal grudge against anyone nor does a provide any evidence of a death list. He just utters these slanders and moves on.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 67

We do not need to posit a conscious long-term plan to say that in a general way the drive for power was Stalin's strongest and most obvious motivation.
a) What is his evidence for this slander? Certainly none is provided.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 69

It is said that she [Lenin's wife, Krupskaya] was in fear for her life in her last few years.
a) Said by whom? And what is the evidence that there is any validity?
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 73

…the Kirov murder conspired various groups to talk of, and even to plan, in an amateurish passion which was no match for the police of the new regime, the killing of Stalin. Either way, such circles were now invariably arrested and shot.
a) To whom is he referring? Who was shot?
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 78

He [Stalin] had developed direct control of the Secret Police and had set up other mechanisms of power responsible to himself alone and capable, given careful tactics, of overcoming the official hierarchy of Party and State.
a) Does he provide any evidence for this? Of course not.

His [Stalin] operatives were accustomed to the use of torture, blackmail, and falsification–if as yet mainly on non-Party figures.
a) Is any evidence provided for this? Again, of course not.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 79

He [Reingold] was interrogated for three weeks, often for periods of 48 hours at a time without sleep or food, by Chertok.
a) Is any evidence provided for this? No.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 83

Stalin went on to write that the Revolution was quite prepared to throwaway “great names,” including Gorky ‘s, if necessary.
a) Does Conquest provide any evidence of this threat to Gorky ‘s life made by Stalin? No. Because there is none.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 86

Stalin was not adverse to having people murdered and his respect for literature was not such as to prevent his disposing of many other Russian writers of repute. We shall consider this suspicion later.
a) He not only accuses Stalin of murder but even admits it’s a conjecture based on mere suspicion.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 87

Again, the selective assassination of NKVD of defectors and of other political enemies in the West was soon to become routine. And Stalin himself–had organized the killing of Kirov .
A] What evidence is provided for these slanders? None of course. What evidence is there that Stalin organized the killing of Kirov ? None.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 106

There is no doubt that threats to the family–the use, that is, of hostages for good behavior–was one of the most powerful of all Stalin safeguards.
a) There most certainly is doubt and Conquest most assuredly provides no proof of this accusation.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 127

The absolutely certain way for a defendant to get himself shot was to refuse to plead guilty.
a) Not a shred the proof is presented to justify this slander.

The only chance of avoiding death was to admit to everything, and to put the worst possible construction on all one’s activities.
a) Another unsubstantiated slander.

At the August 1936 Trial moreover, the defendants that actually been promised their lives and had reasonable expectation that the promise would be fulfilled.
a) Where is the evidence for this?

The same promise was evidently made to Pyatakov and others in the second trial.
a) “Evidently” is pure guesswork.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 128

The principle had become established that a confession was the best result obtainable. Those who could obtain it were to be considered successful operatives, and a poor NKVD operative had a short life expectancy.
a) Where he is his proof for this comment?
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 131

The new trial did not have the immediate and obvious aims of the first. The motives remaining are plain enough. First, revenge….
a) And what is his proof for this?
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 147

Although the Zinoviev trial was full of evident falsehoods,….
a) Such as what? Conquest is hard-pressed to provide one.

Sabotage, by Pyatakov and his subordinates, was most implausible.
a) Why?

As we have said, a plot designed to break the Government by terrorist acts could scarcely divert its energies, and risk exposure, by a vast network of people blowing up mines and causing railway accidents, simply to weaken the economy and sow distrust of the Government
a) Why not?
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 149

He [Ordjonikidze] had been double-crossed. Personally involved in the negotiations before the Pyatakov Case, he had had Stalin’s assurance that Pyatakov would not be executed…. When Pyatakov was arrested, Stalin told Ordjonikidze, “Pyatakov will not be executed.”
a) No evidence is provided for this.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 167

It is now no longer disputed that Stalin did in fact procure Ordjonikidze’s death.
a) Not a shred of evidence is produced to prove this.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 170

All the accused eventually confessed under torture.
a) Not a shred of proof is provided for that slander.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 202

Confessions in the longer-drawn-out affairs were in part obtained by promises not to kill the surviving dependents.

a) Again not a shred of evidence is provided. Just slanderous accusations.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 274

[A commander of Stalin's bodyguard mumbled that she [his wife] had said she would get rid of a picture of Stalin that hung in their new flat. For this, she got eight years.
a) Where is the evidence for this nonsense?
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 274

Recaptured prisoners were always brutally manhandled, and almost invariably shot.
a) Again no evidence is provided.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 323

On the night of March 2, "special measures" were taken. The interrogators dislocated his [Krestinsky] left shoulder, so that outwardly there was nothing to be seen.
a) No evidence provided whatever.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 352

We can presume that they [Kamkov and Karelin] were in fact executed for their alleged part in the plan to assassinate Lenin, and similarly with Ossinsky,…
a) No proof whatever. "Presume" dominates his propaganda.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 374

…Stalin procured the death of both the others (Kirov and Ordjonikidze) by devious, though differing, means….
a) Again no evidence whatever.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 388

Bessonov's liquidation is reported to have occurred in Orel prison,…
a) "Is reported" is not proof.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 395

Bela Kun was taken to the Lefortovo, where he was tortured.
a) No evidence
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 403

But Stalin had for some time been shooting prominent Central Committee members without such formality,…
a) What members and where is the proof?
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 422

During the winner, various arrests were carried out, Corps Commander Rokossovsky had been beaten senseless and dragged off to prison,…
a) No proof
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 429

Of four of the fallen leaders, it has now been specifically said that they were tortured (Rudzutak, Eikhe, Kossior, and Chubar).
a) Said by whom and what is the evidence.

Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 439

In fact, if we are to believe Conquest at key junctures, he must offer more, or in some cases, any, evidence. Among his unsupported assertions in his response is that life in a totalitarian country is roughly comparable to being at a warfront. To support this notion in The Great Terror, he quoted only the memoirs of Robert Graves on English soldiers in World War I. We need more than that, but the memoirs I cited show something very different. (I find the totalitarian model in general, increasingly rickety, but I will spare us that issue here.) Another assertion: "the Soviet Union in a goodish year like 1935 is comparable to one of the most repressive dictatorships of today." This must be shown, but I have found indications to the contrary. Another: peasants were "major victims" in 1936-1938. Perhaps, but we need more proof….
Thurston, Robert W. "On Desk-Bound Parochialism, Commonsense Perspectives, and Lousy Evidence: A Reply to Robert Conquest." Slavic Review 45 (1986), 241.

CONQUEST MAKES ALLEGATIONS RESTING ON GUESSES, ASSUMPTIONS, & SPECULATIONS.

On Sept. 23, 1932, Ryutin was again expelled from the Party and arrested. Stalin seems to have hoped that the OGPU might shoot Ryutin without involving the political authorities.
a) "seems" is reliable historical terminology?
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 24

[Regarding Kirov 's murder] Yagoda could only have acted on secret orders from Stalin.
a) Plenty of people acted without Stalin's orders.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 43

Sokolnikov seems to have had an interview with Stalin and to have been promised his life. It is not clear why Sokolnikov believed this promise. It was, in all probability, made before the execution of Zinoviev and his followers.
a) Where is the proof? "seems to have had" and "in all probability" are not the words of an established case.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 140

But no one had any doubt that he [Ordjonikidze] died by violence, and that his end was not "natural."
a) No proof, just slanderous implication.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 170

No clear account of the atrocities practiced in the Lefortovo is available.
a) He assumes there were atrocities and then admits he has no evidence to support his allegation.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 269

Instead, Conquest…finds the memoir evidence sound where it supports his views and worthless when it does not.

This statement leads me to his use of evidence in general. First, I am puzzled by his understanding of the word [estimate] in one case. Weissberg made an estimate, as he plainly said, of the total arrested. This estimate is no more “solid empirical evidence” than anyone else’s calculation is.
Thurston, Robert W. “On Desk-Bound Parochialism, Commonsense Perspectives, and Lousy Evidence: A Reply to Robert Conquest.” Slavic Review 45 (1986), 240.

I will examine one last assumption in the response: I cited seven, not one, cases of people who spent much more than three to four months in prison; yet Conquest clings to his original statement on prison turnover, another key part of his estimate of total arrests. My evidence is substantial, given the nature of the sources. It is much more than Conquest has offered, and now he must counter with some detailed material. He has attacked my use of memoirs–again, ironic criticism coming from him–all the more reason he should move beyond the general, often unreliable, statements in survivors’ accounts to an examination of the specific evidence they present. His massive generalizations require support: the “outside public” felt such and such by 1937, the whole country was “broken” in 1939. I prefer to call my own language on such points cautious rather than slippery; but I would call his wording unjustifiable. How can anyone say that 170 million people felt any one thing or another?
Thurston, Robert W. “On Desk-Bound Parochialism, Commonsense Perspectives, and Lousy Evidence: A Reply to Robert Conquest.” Slavic Review 45 (1986), 242.

MANY COMMENTS BY CONQUEST ARE PURE SLANDERS

As Kamenev was made to remark at his trial in 1936, “Our banking on the insuperability of the difficulties which the country was experiencing,…
a) No evidence is provided to show Kamenev was made to say anything.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 30

His [Stalin] aim remained, as is now clear, unchallenged power. So far, he had brutalized the Party, but he had not enslaved it.
a) How does Conquest know what his aim is, assuming he had one? Is he a personal psychologist? Had he ever met Stalin in his entire life? And where is his evidence that the party had been brutalized by Stalin?
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 31

This was the first testing ground of the more recent technique of founding a case on false confessions extracted by terror.
a) Where is the evidence of terror in the Moscow trials and what is his evidence that the confessions were false?
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 35

It must have been about this time that Stalin took the most extraordinary decision of his career. It was that the best way of insuring his political supremacy in dealing with his old Comrade [Kirov] was murder.
a) No proof whatever is provided that Stalin engineered the murder of Kirov his best friend. Apparently Conquest thinks that repetition of a lie will make it true..
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 36

Like many ambition-driven men he [Stalin] was very short, only about 5 ft. 3 in.
a) How does he know he was ambition driven? Stalin certainly had no assurance he was going to get ahead while in those labor camps and prisons as opposed to working his way up through the normal political channels. Could it be he was doing it for humanity?
b) And his stereotyping of short men is disgusting.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 54

Everywhere and in everything he [Stalin] saw “enemies,” “double-dealers,” and “spies.”
a) He did not see them but he was understandably on the lookout considering the fact that Bukharin, Zinoviev, Rykov, Kamenev, and other former allies sought to eliminate him. He would’ve been foolish not to have been very watchful and cautious.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 56

And he [Stalin] was stubborn, refusing to consider facts which did not correspond to his wishes.”
a) Again no evidence is provided but the slander is simply asserted. Conquest is more appropriately describing himself.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 57

A story circulating in NKVD circles has it that Stalin was asked for Radek’s life to be spared by Leon Feuchtwanger, as the price for his agreeing to write his book (Moscow 1937) justifying the trials, which Stalin was anxious to have written….
a) No evidence is presented to support this and Conquest even admits it’s a “story”.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 165

A close friend of Ordjonikidze’s widow relates that she thought he had been killed by others, and had seen men running across the lawn away from the house at the time of his death.
a) This is history? A close friend of Ordjonikidze’s widow is supposedly quoting her.
(1) This is pure hearsay. The widow is not speaking; the friend is
(2) The widow allegedly said she “thought” he had been killed, which is guesswork;
(3) Men could have been running across the lawn for several reasons, assuming anyone was doing so.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 171

In this sense, even accepting a forced suicide, we can in any case certainly speak of the murder of Ordjonikidze.
a) No we can’t.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 172

Not that we can so simply exhaust Stalin’s motives. Former grudges and present nuisance value certainly played a part.
a) What is his evidence that Stalin was operating on grudges and nuisance valuse?
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 186

Now, for the first time, Stalin was to begin a massive offensive against his own supporters everywhere.
a) How ridiculous! An offensive against his own supporters!

Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 192

Fear by night, and a feverish effort by day to pretend enthusiasm for a system of lies, was the permanent condition of the Soviet citizen.
a) That is pure nonsense. He is applying to all that which is only applicable to a small minority. In truth the exact opposite applies to the vast bulk of the population.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 252

Since Stalinist historiography is so extravagantly unreliable,…
a) Imagine a comment like that coming from an "historian" like Conquest who said "THE TRUTH CAN THUS ONLY PERCOLATE IN THE FORM OF HEARSAY. …But of course not all hearsay and not all rumour is true [which implies most is]. On political matters basically the best, though not infallible, source is rumour at a high political or police level."
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 413

MANY STATEMENTS BY CONQUEST ARE PATENTLY FALSE

But it is now hardly necessary here to say more. It is nowhere believed any longer that the Germans were responsible [for the Katyn Massacre].
a) This is ridiculous.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 449

The Great Trials were, and it should have been plain at the time, nothing but large-scale frame-ups.
a) Utterly ridiculous comment totally ignoring an avalanche of testimony to the contrary.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 479

Everyone agrees that the Stalinist command economy was, and remains, a disaster. a) Totally divorced from reality. It was the exact opposite and propelled the SU into becoming a world powerhouse.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York : Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 488

MEDVEDEV MAKES UNQUALIFIED PSYCH JUDGMENTS OF STALIN WHOM HE HAS NEVER MET

Quite early in life he [Stalin] became a crude, unsentimental, and distrustful person, tormented by an inferiority complex and very ambitious.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 25

It is true that Stalin was not a tribune of the revolution and did not have a quick mind,…
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 31

Their [Stalin and his wife, Svanidze] son, Yakov, was left to the care of relatives. Stalin was not much concerned with the boy and gave little thought to his welfare.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 32

It can therefore be said with assurance that Stalin had no regrets at Kirov 's death.

a) More psychological concoctions by one eminently unqualified.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 345

Of course Stalin did not miss the chance to settle scores with his personal enemy, Mdivani, who in the ’30s served as deputy chairman of the Council of People’s Commissars of the Georgian Republic .
a) More psychoanalyzing with no evidence.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 386

Some Komsomol leaders of the new generation were also arrested, but not as many as Stalin wished.
a) More psychoanalyzing. Some critics act as if Stalin had been on their couch every day when, in truth, the overwhelming majority were mere children or yet to be born when Stalin was active.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 418

Stalin was an extremely secretive person; he never told anyone his true intentions.
a) Yet Medvedev doesn’t hesitate to tell readers what he knew Stalin was thinking at any particular time and even admits he is wandering through the realm of guesswork by saying “this opens the door to all sorts of speculation about his motives.” And what government leader isn’t secretive?
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 537

According to Dmitri Shostakovich, for example, a friend of his family, the well-known surgeon Grekov, told them that a detailed diagnosis of Stalin’s mental condition was somehow done as early as 1927 by Bekhterev, one of the most prominent of Russian psychiatrists, who concluded that Stalin was mentally ill.
a.) Bekhterev had “somehow done” an analysis of Stalin that was reported to Grekov who told Shostakovich who told Medvedev. Talk about unreliable history! Maybe historical documentation and proof should be scrapped in favor of hearsay 2nd hand. No doubt critics of Stalin would relish such a proposal.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 542

Morbid suspiciousness, noticeable throughout his life and especially intense in his last years, intolerance of criticism, grudge-bearing, an overestimation of himself bordering on megalomania, cruelty approaching sadism [also unsociability, obstinacy, striving for dominance–on page 542]–all these traits, it would seem, demonstrate that Stalin was a typical paranoiac.
a.) How someone can make slanderous judgments of this nature with respect to an individual they never met once in their life, especially when thousands of decisions and events demonstrate precisely the contrary is anyone’s guess.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 543

Stalin was also not indifferent to the question of expanding Soviet territory. He was already beginning to think in terms of the former Russian empire, hoping to “regain” a large part of the territory that once had been part of it.
a) More psychological evaluating and judging by the unqualified. How on earth does he know what Stalin was thinking?

Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 733

Stalin, although chairman, did not like to attend government meetings and let Voznesensky fill-in for him. This offended the vanity of men like Voroshilov, Molotov, Beria, and Kaganovich.
a) Now he not only knows Stalin's psychological state but that of men around him. How does he know how these men were affected psychologically if it all.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 784

In reality Stalin was envious of Lenin's place in history and tried to appropriate it for himself.
a) There is no reality to this nor is there any evidence for it. More unqualified psychoanalysis.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 815

Yet Stalin never felt bound by any laws or restricted by any rules whatever.
a) That remark is far more applicable to current [turn-of-the-century] American foreign policy than Josef Stalin. How often did the Soviet Union vote in the League Nations against virtually the entire world as the United States currently does in the United Nations.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 824

Stalin distrusted and despised the people. He belonged to a workers' party but did not respect workers.
a) Another slanderous, unsubstantiated psychological judgment.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 840

Stalin was not in the least concerned with changing his opponents minds and drawing them into the common work. He sought to break their resistance and subject them to his will….
a) The inaccuracy of this is easily shown in the fact that Stalin debated and attempted to persuade his opponents endlessly.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 95

MEDVEDEV LIED FAR TOO OFTEN TO BE CONSIDERED A CREDIBLE SOURCE

Of course, we all welcome the rehabilitation of Bukharin, Rykov, and the others–even if it comes many years late.
a) Medvedev's poll taking is as flawed as his history since "we all" is far from accurate.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 17

In the '30s the Soviet press described all opposition leaders as traitors and spies for foreign governments who had been recruited to work for imperialist intelligence agencies in the first years of Soviet power.
a) Never were all oppositionists deemed traitors and spies.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 93

At the same time he was extremely vengeful, nursing his grudges.
a) The entire career of Stalin demonstrates his unceasing desire to let bygones be bygones. How many times were people expelled from the party and later readmitted, for example.

Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 95

In fact, neither Bukharin's nor Rykov's views and statements contradicted the basic postulates of scientific socialism or the views of Lenin.
a) Since Gorbachev's views mirrored those of Bukharin and Gorbachev's views led to the demise of socialism, it is safe to say this statement has no validity.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 148

Of course Stalin's perfidy and his capacity for secret murder to supplement his own reign of terror cannot be doubted.
a) Where is his evidence for this unmitigated slander?
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 301

The French Communist Party, however, rejected the Comintern request. That was one reason why fascism was unable to gain a victory in France .
a) What! Tell that to the French living under the Vichyites.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 313

But how did Stalin react to the growing cult of his personality? The facts show not only that he accepted it calmly and as his due, which was improper enough for a Marxist-Leninist, but also that he directed and encouraged this praise himself.
a) Not only is this patently false but Medvedev follows this by quoting comments Stalin made to Lion Feuchtwanger in which Stalin denounces such adulation.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 318

Footnote: A few years later Smirnov was shot on Stalin's orders,…
a) Quite false. He admitted his guilt in court and was sentenced by Judge Ulrich.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 329

Moreover, they [the defendants at the August 1936 Zinoviev trial] were deprived of the right to defense counsel.
a) That, of course, is a patent lie since all were offered counsel and most declined.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 356

… the illegal repression of former oppositionists in 1935-1936.
a) What was illegal about it? They were convicted in court.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 425

I have examined critically the various accounts of why Stalin unleashed the terror of 1936-1939. There is no need to overly complicate the explanation. His main motive was lust for power, boundless ambition.
a) That is absurd and even flies in the face of evidence presented by his opponents themselves.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 585

Footnote: In 1937 he [Beloborodov] was shot as a "Trotskyite,"…
a) No one was ever shot by a Politburo led by Stalin for being a Trotskyite. People were executed for what they did, not for what they believed.

Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 672

Stalin himself remained to the end of his life an uneducated man,…
a) That comment has virtually nothing to do with reality as Stalin was very well-informed especially with respect to the social sciences, literature, and the arts.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 719

Thus the threat to the Soviet Union's northern border was not great enough to justify, even in part, a preventive war against Finland .
a) Medvedev's military acumen is no better than his historical analyses. Finland was next-door to the Soviet Union 's second-largest city and strategically located to provide a fascist pathway for invading the SU.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 733

MEDVEDEV MAKES ONE STATEMENT AFTER ANOTHER WITHOUT A SHRED OF EVIDENCE

But Stalin brushed aside these well-founded objections.
a) Rarely did Stalin ever brush aside well founded objections regarding anything. What is his evidence for this?
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 253

The trial [of the Toiling Peasant Party] was almost completely rehearsed,…
a) No evidence is presented for this slander.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 262

After the death of Alliluyeva, Stalin remained a widower to the end of his life. He had a few brief affairs with women. Some children resulted from these liaisons, but they all bear their mothers' names.
a) Where is the evidence for this slander and his nephew says he married Rosa, the sister of Kaganovich?
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 303

Only a very few people, for example, were privy to the secret rigging of the 1930-1931 trials.
a) And where it is his proof for this? The answer is nowhere.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 328

After this conflict with Stalin, Tovstukha was reassigned to the Marx-Engels Institute. An early death saved him from a more painful end.
a) Now what is his evidence for this slander? Gratuitous slanders of this nature abound in the writings of people like Conquest and Medvedev.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 329

This indictment [of Nikolayev for the Kirov assassination], riddled with contradictions, was the only document published in the case.
a) No evidence of any contradictions is presented.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 343

They [the Moscow trials] were monstrous theatrical productions that had to be rehearsed many times before they could be shown to spectators.
a) He doesn't show evidence of even one rehearsal let alone many.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 376-377

Most of the testimony consisted of outright lies, deliberately fabricated in the torture chambers of the NKVD and put into the mouths of the accused by sadistic investigators.
a) That is an unmitigated slander for which no proof whatever is provided.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 377

Molotov made up the whole story [regarding the 1934 attempt on his life] for the sake of provocation.
a) And where is the evidence for this slander?
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 378

Some defendants were promised their lives and assignment to party or Soviet work in Siberia or the Far East .
a) No evidence is given for this.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 383

Then Stalin sent Ordjonikidze the false depositions extracted from the prisoners by torture.
a) No proof is usual.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 399

Indeed, many of the Komsomol leaders who perished were personal friends of Ostrovsky,….
Most of them died in the camps or were shot on Stalin's orders.
a) Same question. Where is the proof?
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 419

Stalin also authorized the execution of Pauker, the head of the NKVD's operations section, the commandant of the Kremlin and head of the Kremlin Guard….
a) No evidence.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 425

Willi Munzenberg, one of the best Comintern officials, was expelled from the party for refusing to leave Paris for Moscow and certain death. He was killed in France in 1940 under suspicious circumstances.
a) How does he know he faced death and how does he know the alleged facing of death was due to him refusing to leave? This is a typical case of attributing guilt by innuendo.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 435

In January 1938 his [Meyerhold] theater was closed, and soon after that this remarkable man was arrested and killed after especially severe and refined torture.
a) No source is cited for this, assuming it even occurred, nor is Stalin in any way implicated.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 448

But when, during the next big trial, he [Feuchtwanger] sat in the Moscow courtroom and heard the confessions of Radek and Pyatakov with his own ears, his doubts banished and he accepted the whole fantastic story.
a) Medvedev wasn't even there and was only a child at the time but he claims to know more about what happened at the Pyatakov trial than someone who was actually present in the courtroom.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 475

Physical torture was used by the NKVD not on its own initiative but with the approval and even at the insistence of Stalin's Politburo.
A No evidence is provided for this.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 486

Thus, when Stalin permitted and even forced the use of torture, he was committing an outrage to the memory of the Russian revolutionaries.
a) Again, as usual, no evidence is provided as is typical of so much in Medvedev's book.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 489

That is why torture was introduced in the NKVD on Stalin's insistence.
A.) And where is the evidence for this?
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 540

Only the same motives can explain the terrible conditions that were created on Stalin's orders in the camps.
a) More slander without evidence.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 543

Investigators tortured President Kalinin's wife until she signed statements compromising her husband.
a) And where is the evidence for this?
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 550

Footnote: Shalamov informed me of this.
a) Time after time Medvedev simply accepts what anyone says that is anti-Stalin without any corroboration or checking being required.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 550

Most of Stalin's wrong decisions were so extravagantly and senselessly costly that they cannot be condoned.
a) What wrong decisions? Medvedev talks as if their existence is a given when no evidence is provided.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 749

Guests were often invited to play chess with Stalin, but warned never to win.
a) This is not only an unsubstantiated allegation but a childish one to boot.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 863

All the signs pointed to another 1937. Only Stalin's death at the beginning of March 1953 prevented a renewal of mass repression.
a) Not content with accusing Stalin of injustices for which he is not responsible his critics go even further by speculating that had he lived another would have occurred. Of course no evidence that would withstand scrutiny is provided.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 865

[One of the overwhelmingly favorite deceptions employed by critics slandering Stalin is to provide lists of the names of military and civilian personnel preceded by such words as shot, executed, arrested, jailed, victims, perished, and didn't survive. Proof is rarely provided that these people actually met the fates attributed to them and there is always the underlying implicit assumption that they were innocent. Readers are simply asked to take the author's word for it.
But even more important is the manner in which the information is submitted. More often than not it's just a simple listing of names as is done between pages 396 and 449 in Let History Judge. What the person was accused of having done is not mentioned. The prosecution's evidence against him or her is not revealed. The number of times the person has been previously convicted is never mentioned. Proof showing those arrested or jailed were often released within hours is conveniently omitted. The number of times an individual's acts had already been excused is never discussed.
But above and beyond all this skullduggery are some truly revelatory considerations. Although almost never asserted, because there is no substantive proof that would endure in court, but always implied, is the contention that Stalin is responsible for any and all these deeds when, in fact, he was at the mercy of the judgments of others. For one man to cover nine time zones and 180 million people is a bit much to say the least.
With respect to those who were innocent during the 1930s specifically, this presents an unfortunate situation for Stalin and an expedient opening for his critics. In order to convict Stalin of criminal behavior his critics have to prove: a) the repressed person was innocent or no evidence was provided to prove his guilt; b) Stalin knew the repressed person was innocent; and c) Stalin personally ordered the person to be repressed while knowing he or she was innocent. With respect to all three, Stalin's critics have failed ignominiously. However, that has by no means caused them to cease their listings because they are fully aware of the fact that few readers will check the specifics involved or ask for documentation and corroboration. It is just always taken for granted that if Stalin is involved it must be bad, wrong, and negative when facts prove the opposite. Stalin was as concerned with rooting out anti-socialist people within the government who were repressing genuine Marxists as anyone. The problem was that there were many anti-socialist elements in serious and critical positions throughout such agencies as the NKVD and the military. It was not by accident that two heads of the NKVD, Yagoda and Yezhov, were punished severely.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 396-449

MEDVEDEV QUOTES NOVEL AND POETRY AS IF THEY WERE REAL HISTORY

Quotes memoirs replete with hearsay
Even more than Conquest he cites the contents of novels as history.
Actually recites poetry as if its contents were history.

Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 32

Rogovin uses material in novels as if it were history also.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park , Michigan : Labor Publications, 1998

MEDVEDEV'S SOURCES ARE UNRELIABLE

The list he gives of those who assisted him in writing his book and most of their comments give the impression of a group sitting around the kitchen table conversing while enveloped within a general philosophy of I-can-top-that.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. xvii

ADMITS HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS ARE HIGHLY DUBIOUS BUT QUOTES THEM ANYWAY

Footnote: I find highly implausible the story told by Bazhanov about a Czech engineer who installed a telephone for Stalin, so that he could eavesdrop on all phone conversations in the Kremlin. Bazhanov alleges that after the engineer had done his job he was shot on Stalin's orders.
a) Medvedev finds it highly implausible but, nevertheless, can't resist inserting it, demonstrating his conception of an "objective" historian.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 90

MEDVEDEV LEVELS OUTRIGHT LYING SLANDERS AGAINST STALIN

As early as the internal party disputes of 1918-1923 he [Stalin] distinguished himself by his harshness, rudeness, and disloyalty, as Lenin noted in his Testament.
a) Where does the Testament refer to Stalin's disloyalty?
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 95

Nasty, suspicious, cruel, and power-hungry, Stalin could not abide brilliant and independent people around him.
a) More unsubstantiated slanders.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 344

Until then [the murder of Trotsky] it had been Stalin's rule to eliminate anyone who knew too much.
a) Where is the evidence for this?
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 394

In all probability Stalin shot many more Soviet participants in the Spanish Civil War than the number killed by fascist bullets in Spain .
a) What a slander! Not a shred of evidence and he even admits he's saying it "in all probability" which is guessing.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 473

He undoubtedly knew that the thousands of party leaders arrested on his orders were neither spies nor traitors.
a) And what is his evidence for this slander. Certainly none is presented.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 538

Stalin often gave his agents and subordinates criminal orders–verbally, of course–and then had them arrested for carrying out those orders.
a) Another blatant slander without a shred of proof being offered.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 584

In the late ’40s he [Stalin] not only endorsed the proposal for a biography of himself but closely followed the writing of it, inserting many handwritten remarks in the manuscript, especially where he found insufficient praise for himself.
a) And where is the evidence for this slander?
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 818

MEDVEDEV’S WRITINGS REEK WITH HEARSAY, INNUENDO, AND RUMOR

Orlov insists that Ordjonikidze was murdered, but admits that he bases his belief on rumors and stories he heard from NKVD agents arriving in Spain .
a) Rumors and stories abound in anti-Stalin works.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 401

Footnote: Recounted by G. L. Mekhanik, who heard it from T. Firsova, who heard it from the Zinaida Ordjonikidze.
a) Talk about hearsay run amuck! And this is being passed off as history.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 579

At a dinner with literary people Stalin also called Tolstoy, Ehrenburg, and Pavlenko international spies.
Footnote: Alexander Fadeev, who was at the dinner, reported the comment to his friend N. K. Ilyukhov, who is Medvedev’s source.
a) So we are supposed to believe Stalin said it; Fadeev heard it; he told Ilyukhov who told Medvedev. Talk about hearsay! One can’t help but think of that game known as Gossip which is played by children. No doubt the accuracy is as valid in one as the other.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 863

Footnote: Orlov often uses rumors or chance conversations as sources.
a) No comment is needed; yet, Medvedev quotes Orlov.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 360

[Footnote]: There was really no attempt to conceal the fact [that Stalin’s wife committed suicide]. The press announcement spoke of her “sudden death” on the night of November 9, 1932 which in the case of a young woman has to be construed as a suicide. It is therefore not correct to say, as does Roy Medvedev (page 368), that the death was reported as due to appendicitis. That was the story her small children were told.

Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York : Viking Press, 1973, p. 354

MEDVEDEV PRESENTS SPECULATIVE HISTORY AS REAL HISTORY

Soon after that, anonymous pamphlets against Trotsky began to circulate unofficially, primarily reminding readers of his “non-Bolshevik” past. Robert Tucker suggests that these pamphlets were inspired by Stalin.
a) “suggests” is not reliable history. Does he present any evidence? No! Even if Stalin were the source, so what. They are true.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 111

To this day no one knows how many peasants died of starvation in 1932-1933.
a) But that doesn’t stop anti-Stalinists from tossing around incredible figures, engaging in speculations, and even claiming there was starvation.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 244

It should be said that a careful reading of the proceedings of the trials, indictments, and statements of the prosecutors and defendants leads me to the firm conviction that most of the charges were intentionally falsified.
a) That’s not history but his opinion on history. These considerations lead others to the opposite conclusion.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 266

MEDEVEDEV TRIES TO CRITICIZE SU BUT ENDS UP COMPLIMENTING ITS PRODUCTION FIGURES

The Supreme Council of the National Economy had planned that gross industrial output would increase 2.8 times from 1927-1928 to 1932-1933, with heavy industry increasing 3.3 times. In fact, over the five-year period gross industrial output approximately doubled and heavy industry increased by 2.7 times, considerably short of the planned targets.
a) This is a backhanded complement disguised as a criticism. What capitalist nations doubled their gross industrial output and increased their heavy industry by nearly three times during this period? They would have been ecstatic to have done so.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 250

MEDVEDEV CITES FROM ALLEGED SOURCES WHICH HE REFUSES TO REVEAL

The scale of the Stalinist terror was immeasurably greater. I know, from sources deserving the fullest confidence,…
a) Yet he never cites any of these alleged sources. We’re supposed to take his word for it.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 454

IN THE ENTIRE BOOK THE ONLY TORTURE PERSONALLY TESTFIED TO IS ANEMIC

The Old Bolshevik Sergei Pisarev relates the following:
In just two prisons, in the Inner Prison of Lubyanka and in Lefortovo, I was subjected to 43 sessions of monstrous insult, with spitting in the face and foul language….
a) In the entire book this is the worst torture that is personally testified to as opposed to mere hearsay and terrible slanders. Many an American prisoner would be more than happy if the worst treatment he received was having his face spit on and hearing foul language.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 492

MEDVEDEV'S BOOK DOES NOT EVEN HAVE A BIBLIOGRAPHY BUT HE SAYS IT DOES

My bibliography contains nearly 200 books under the heading "Prison Camp Literature."
a) Let History Judge by Columbia University Press (1989) has no bibliography.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York : Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 500

LAQUEUR OFTEN LIED AND/OR MADE ACCUSATIONS WITHOUT PROOF OR EVIDENCE SUCH AS:

He [Stalin] was no intellectual; Trotsky, Bukharin, and many others were superior to him in this respect.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York : Scribner's, c1990, p. 12

Tolerance vis-a-vis dissenting opinions had never been a characteristic feature of the Bolshevik party.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York : Scribner's, c1990, p. 41

He lived first in Turkey , later in France and Norway , and ultimately in Mexico , where he was assassinated on Aug. 20, 1940, at Stalin's behest.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York : Scribner's, c1990, p. 46

Stalin gave instructions to kill Trotsky,…
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York : Scribner's, c1990, p. 53

There were no conspiracies against the regime other than imaginary ones; there was not even a potential opposition against Stalin.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York : Scribner's, c1990, p. 61

Although limited in scope, these trials are of relevance because the charges against the accused were largely false and the techniques employed to extract confessions were also novel.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York : Scribner's, c1990, p. 62

At about the same time [prior to the Zinoviev trial], Stalin gave free rein to the application of physical and mental torture: When it produced no immediate results, he threatened the NKVD for their inefficiency. On July 29, 1936, Stalin gave another order to apply whatever methods deemed necessary to extract confessions from those accused of espionage, Trotskyism, or other charges.

Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York : Scribner's, c1990, p. 78

Stalin read a great deal, but he seldom, if ever, went to a concert or an exhibition.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York : Scribner's, c1990, p. 104

They were threatened with the murder of their relations; furthermore, they were told that if they did not confess, they would be shot without the benefit of a trial.

The key figures were mercilessly bullied, isolated, and subjected to all kinds of blackmail; many were tortured.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York : Scribner's, c1990, p. 140

It is one of the mysteries of the Stalin era that no serious attempt was ever made to kill the dictator… there is no known case of a conspiracy against Stalin.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York : Scribner's, c1990, p. 144

During the last year of Stalin's life, Poskrebyshev fell from grace; but for the death of the dictator, he might have been a victim of the next purge.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York : Scribner's, c1990, p. 176

[Pasternak and Akhmatova]… had been persuaded that if they referred to Stalin in some form or another, they might not be arrested or one of their close relations might be released from prison or a camp.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York : Scribner's, c1990, p. 184

During the whole war, only once had he [Stalin] been anywhere near the frontline, and only for a few hours, whereupon he quickly informed Churchill and Roosevelt and apologized for not being able to answer their messages earlier because his presence with his troops was so urgently needed.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 198

The notion that the murder of Kirov was carried out by members of theZinovievist opposition was put forward by Stalin in order to take reprisals against the former opposition figures, primarily the Zinovievists.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 304

Although in 1936 no information had been obtained concerning illegal terrorist or organizational activity by Bukharin and Rykov, the investigations began consistently to obtain just such evidence from all those who had been arrested. During such inquiries, all legality was flouted, and such prohibited methods as blackmail, intimidation, persuasion, and promises, as well as direct physical coercion, were widely used.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 322

LAQUEUR RELIES ON SPECULATION AND ADMITS HE IS RELYING ON A RUMOR

It is likely that some of the defendants in the early trials (1936) were promised a prison term rather than the death sentence if they confessed.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 136

…According to a rumor frequently heard, there were several dress rehearsals for each show trial, so that the defendants did not know in the end when the true "public" performance was taking place.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 136

LAQUEUR CITES PERVERSIONS OF JUSTICE BUT AVOIDS MENTIONING WHO CAUSED THEM

As a result of the perversions of legality that were permitted, thousands of innocent people were arrested and convicted on groundless charges.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 325

ROGOVIN REPEATEDLY MAKES ACCUSATIONS WITHOUT A SHRED OF PROOF

A month later, however, Olberg "confessed" that he had come from abroad on assignment from Trotsky, and that he had recruited into a terrorist organization many teachers and students at the Gorky Ped-Institute. All the people he named were brought to Moscow and shot on Oct. 3, 1936.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 3

Nevertheless, not only Kamenev's oldest son, but his middle son as well, the 16 year old Yuri, was shot in 1938-39.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 8

Stalin made a few additions to the defendants' testimony which they were supposed to give at the trial. He demanded that Reingold formulate the alleged terrorist instructions he received from Zinoviev in the following way….
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 12

Whereas Yezhov reduced the "main and principal task of the 'center'" to the assassination of Stalin, Stalin formulated it as the "assassination of comrades Stalin, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Kirov, Ordjonikidze, Zhdanov, Kossior, and Postyshev."
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 13

"Stalin's promises to spare the lives of the defendants…."
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 36

The Kemerovo Trial was the first "Trotskyist" frame-up at which the defendants were charged with sabotage.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 95
a) Where is the evidence it was a frameup

Of course, in order to convince the defendants to “voluntarily” confess, they were promised their lives in return.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 177

… the veracity of the self-slander generated in the torture chambers of the NKVD.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 250
a) Where is the proof that the NKVD had torture chambers?

In the spring of 1937, on orders from Moscow, the hunger strikers were told that their demands would be met. They were all sent to the “Brick Factory,” a former site for special punishment, where in the fall of 1937, mass shootings of the prisoners began.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 392

However it ignores the indisputable fact that many victims of Stalin’s terror signed the confessions beaten out of them at the pre-trial investigation,
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 448

For instance, Medvedev, whom we have mentioned earlier, which tortured by the same investigators who tortured the generals appearing before a military trial.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 449

ROGOVIN OFTEN USES CONJECTURAL WORDS SUCH AS ASSUME, EVIDENTLY & APPARENTLY

Uses words based on conjecture such as: assume (p. 26), undoubtedly (p. 27), may have been (p. 36), evidently (p. 64), apparently (p. 126).
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 26

We can assume that when Zinoviev and Kamenev met with Stalin and agreed to confess to the charge of terrorist activity, they asked in return to remove the charge of preparing to restore capitalist relations in the country after they had come to power.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 26
a) “Assume’ is evidence of nothing

The four defendants [in the Pyatakov trial] who were spared did not outlive their codefendants for long. Radek and Sokolnikov were murdered in 1939 by criminals who were prison cellmates, apparently on orders from the “organs.”
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 126
a) “Apparently’ is not proof

We must assume that Stalin saved the “Letter of an Old Bolshevik” in order to put psychological pressure on Bukharin during the prison investigation.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 237
a) “Assume’ is not evidence or proof

ROGOVIN GIVES ADVICE REGARDING GOOD SCHOLARSHIP WHICH HE HIMSELF IGNORES

The historian is duty-bound to leave unpainted spots in the picture he presents until he finds objective and irreproachable evidence and testimony.
A) If only anti-Stalin historians would follow this advice.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 463
a) This advice is exactly what he repeatedly pays no attention to.

REMNICK REPEATEDLY MAKES ACCUSATIONS WITHOUT PROVIDING A SHRED OF PROOF

Stalin had slaughtered millions during the collectivization of Ukraine.
Remnick, David. Lenin's Tomb. New York: Random House, c1993, p. 54

In 1926, Stalin's wife, Nadezhda, left him. He begged her to return, and at the same time had her followed by the secret police.
Remnick, David. Lenin's Tomb. New York: Random House, c1993, p. 127

Stalin had his other portrait painter's shot and their paintings burned.
Remnick, David. Lenin's Tomb. New York: Random House, c1993, p. 128

NEKRICH AND HELLER CONSTANTLY MAKE UNPROVEN, SLANDEROUS ALLEGATIONS

At the time of the Red Army's retreat in 1941, mass arrests were carried out among the western Ukrainian population. In the majority of prisons, NKVD troops shot all inmates who had been sentenced to more than three years. In some towns the NKVD burned prisons with all their inmates.
a. By the author's own admission this comes notoriously unreliable Ukrainian sources.
Nekrich, Aleksander & Mikhail Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, 1986, p. 453

According to information that is far from complete, rebellions took place in the following camps in the years after the war: 1946, Kolyma; 1947, Ust-Vym, Dzhezkazgan; 1950, Salekhard, Taishet; 1951, Dzhezkazgan; 1952, Vozhel (Komi), Molotov, Krasnoyarsk Region; 1953, Vorkuta, Norilsk, Karaganda, Kolyma; 1954, Revda (Sverdlovsk), Karabash (in the Urals), Taishet, Reshoty, Dzhezkazgan, Kengir, Sherbai Nura, Balkhash, Sakhalin; 1955, Vorkuta, Solikamsk, Potma. [Source: U.S. Senate Hearings, USSR labor camps, February 2, 1973)
a. The authors admit their information is far from complete.
Nekrich, Aleksander & Mikhail Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, 1986, p. 495

In 1949 he [Stalin] summoned Khrushchev from Kiev and named him Secretary of the Moscow Party Committee and a Secretary of the Central Committee, probably hoping in this way to balance the forces in the Politburo and to use Khrushchev to conduct the upcoming purge. [No source]

Nekrich, Aleksander & Mikhail Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, 1986, p. 499
a) No source is provided for this slander.
b. Where is the evidence for an upcoming purge?

The struggle against imaginary plotters became Stalin's main preoccupation.
Nekrich, Aleksander & Mikhail Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, 1986, p. 501
a. No source is provided and the authors are engaging in speculative psychological guesswork.

In 1948 the committee's members were arrested on Stalin's instructions. They were tortured and in 1952 were shot, including Lozovsky. Before their arrest, Mikhoels had been murdered–on January 13, 1948, on a street in Minsk by state security agents.
Nekrich, Aleksander & Mikhail Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, 1986, p. 502
a. KHRUSHCHEV is the source for this slander but provides no evidence.

Under atrocious tortures, the accused doctors confessed to having taken part in a plot to murder army, party, and government leaders through the conscious use of incorrect medical treatment….
The case was reported to Stalin, who ordered that it be prosecuted and that the arrested men be beaten until full confessions were extracted.
Nekrich, Aleksander & Mikhail Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, 1986, p. 503 a. No sources or evidence is submitted for these slanders.

Stalin was personally in charge of the "doctors' plot." His scenario consisted of several acts: Act One, sentencing after full confessions; Act Two, execution by hanging (it is said that this execution would have taken place in Red Square, in Moscow, as in days of yore); Act Three, pogroms throughout the country; Act Four, Jewish personalities from the world of culture would turn to Stalin, asking that he protect the Jews from pogroms and give them permission to leave the big cities and go back to the land; Act Five, mass deportation of Jews, "at their own request," to the country's eastern territories.
Nekrich, Aleksander & Mikhail Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, 1986, p. 503
a. Where on earth is any evidence for this libelous litany of anti-Stalin schlock? Not one source is provided for anything.

The country lived in anticipation of a new wave of terror such as it had never seen.
Nekrich, Aleksander & Mikhail Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, 1986, p. 504
a. Again no evidence or sources are provided. Just slanders.

… and on the other by creating an artificial collective memory using the Short Course on the History of the Soviet Communist Party, and numerous other falsifications produced by historians, writers, artists, actors, and poets. [No source]
Nekrich, Aleksander & Mikhail Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, 1986, p. 511

a. Where is any proof that the Short Course was a falsification?
b. What falsifications?

On May 17 and 18, 1944, 194,000 Crimean Tartars were deported from the Crimea. According to rough figures, close to 18 percent of these died within the first year and a half of deportation.
Nekrich, Aleksander & Mikhail Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, 1986, p. 535
a. Whose rough figures and what documentation is there

For the first time in the history of the Soviet Union [1957] the removal of leaders from top party posts was not followed by their arrest.
Nekrich, Aleksander & Mikhail Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, 1986, p. 555
a. That is a blatant lie. Trotsky, Zinoviev and Bukharin were removed from high posts and even the party, as were others, without being arrested.

A new, large-scale purge that Stalin had planned right before he died was intended to “pull up the last roots,” that is, to get rid of members of the generations of the 1920s and 1930s who had accidentally survived and still carried fragments of the banned historical memory and who were therefore potentially dangerous to the regime.
Nekrich, Aleksander & Mikhail Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, 1986, p. 578
a. Where on earth is evidence for this gratuitous slander which not only lacks corroboration but is nothing more than speculative guesswork as to Stalin’s psyche, mental state, and intentions.

THE IMAGE PEOPLE ARE GIVEN OF STALIN HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH REALITY

I have made these remarks at the opening of the present chapter because when I was in Moscow one of the first things that struck me forcibly was the attempt made by writers and even photographers to give a false impression of the Russian dictator, Stalin. The picture which one sees of him at every turn of the street and those that are sent for publication abroad are as unreal and untrue as the numerous stories that are published about him in books and newspapers and periodicals. In the new Russia there seems to be an overpowering craze for public hero-worship. Under this influence writers and artists strive to transfigure outstanding individuals of the Soviet regime into idealized types or symbols of some subjective emotion of the crowd. Hence we have a widespread falsification that in the first instance is detrimental to the individual who is the subject of this legend-monitoring. Stalin is a particular victim of this public craze….
From the portraits I had seen of him and from the stories I had heard and read, and from the sound of his name, which does not suit him at all, I had expected to meet a Grand Duke of the old regime, stern and abrupt and unfriendly. But instead of this type of person I found myself for the first time face-to-face with the dictator to whose care I would readily confide the education of my children. I had read that he does not show himself in public because his face has been much disfigured by smallpox. But as a matter of fact scarcely any traces of

the scars are to be seen. I had also read that he always had an escort of five motor cars when he makes his daily journey to and fro between the city and his country home at Gorky, the palatial residence where Lenin lived during his illness and where he died. It is said to be guarded day and night by heavily armed Cossacks. One is told everywhere in Moscow that Stalin enters the Kremlin each day by a different gate and that when he takes his meals the table is furnished with the gold plate that belonged to the Czar. Popular rumor even goes to the extent of declaring that he keeps his young wife locked up at home, as if he were a Turkish Sultan.

The truth is otherwise. He has never entered the palace at Gorky since Lenin's death. When I visited him in Moscow he was living with his wife and children in a modest little house outside the city. He goes to his office alone in his own car and enters by the same gate every day, without receiving any special salute from the sentry on guard. He lives and eats as the average small tradesman does. He is very orderly and very particular about the distribution of the working time at his disposal. His tastes are quite simple, and practically the only form of entertainment he indulges in is that of the ordinary workman who sits down once in a while to a glass of wine in the company of a few friends.

He has often been pictured as an aristocratic freebooter from the Caucasus. But I could see no traces of that character in him. Nor could I imagine him as the Georgian adventurer who is said to have taken Ivan the Terrible as his model. Even the historical insinuations are incorrect here,… When I visited Stalin I found just a lonely man who is not influenced by money or pleasure or even ambition. Though he holds enormous power he takes no pride in its possession, although it must give him a certain amount of satisfaction to feel that he has triumphed over his opponents. I should say that there are two traits that dominate Stalin's character. The first is the habit of patience, which he has cultivated to a supreme degree, and the second is his ability to depend entirely on himself and entrust nothing to his fellow men. These qualities are found generally in men who move slowly and carefully towards their ends. I need not mention here his extraordinary energy, because that is a quality in all constructive men.

Everything about this man is heavy– his gait, his look, even the movements of his will. He has a habit of laughing often as he talks…. He can carry through a policy or plan with plotting perseverance to its completion without suffering the slightest discouragement at the hitches and set-backs that occur during the effort.

…If my intuition be correct Stalin is naturally good-hearted. But his position has made him hard and unyielding. He is not without imagination, but he denies himself the luxury of indulging in its flights. He is not ambitious,…

Ludwig, Emil. Leaders of Europe. London: I. Nicholson and Watson Ltd., 1934, p. 350-352

MEDVEDEV SAYS SOLZHENITSYN'S GULAG BOOK IS VERY CONTRADICTORY

[Footnote]: Among works by Russian emigre authors, the first that comes to mind is of course Solzhenitsyn's three-volume The Gulag Archipelago, an immensely important yet extremely contradictory book.

Medvedev, Roy. On Stalin and Stalinism. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. ix

STUPID COMMENTS BY ROBERT SERVICE

Dzhughashvili was by no means an outstanding thinker.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 92

Stalin differed from Lenin inasmuch as he never,not even once–commented on the need to avoid anti-semitic impulses.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 156

Stalin remained uneasy about factional regrouping. His operational code was: once an oppositionist, always an oppositionist.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 279

This was his way. Once an enemy always an enemy!
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 285

Stalin aspired to his own personal cult.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 357

Expelled Bolsheviks were invariably sent to the gulag or shot.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 367

Few dared to contradict him even in private conversation. Only Molotov had sufficient confidence to disagree with him about policies,and even he had to exercise caution in his phrasing and demeanor.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 374

The Home Army, while planning to defeat the Germans in Warsaw by Polish efforts, pleaded desperately for Soviet support and received almost nothing.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 470

He [Stalin] had ordered the murder of thousands of captured Polish officers in April 1940 in Katyn forest in Russia.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 471

and he [Stalin] was long practiced in the art of solving public problems by means of the physical liquidation of those who embodied them.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 471

What was militarily inexcusable in Stalin's behavior, however, was his rejection of all Polish pleas for assistance once the Warsaw Uprising had begun on 1 Aug. 1944.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 471

He [Stalin] needed only a scintilla of doubt about individuals to flash in his mind before consigning them to the security police.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 491

"probably" only a minority in society keenly admired him.
["probably" is guessing]
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 601

Stalin treated debate from below as a danger to desirable unanimity, and he arrested and killed to secure dominion. Potential as well as overt enemies perished.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 602

LOTS OF LIES BEING WRITTEN ABOUT STALIN BY PEOPLE WHO NEVER MET OR KNEW HIM

Volodya says, "Transferring all the guilt on to one person is stupid, just as it would be stupid to ascribe all credit to him. Stalin came to power as the bearer of a concrete idea. He maintained this position although he offered to stand down five times and was five times reappointed. A lot of fiction is written about Stalin nowadays, by people who did not know him personally. The people who knew him closely have disappeared. I have not met people who knew Stalin closely who would express such negative opinions about him as are expressed today. The Stalin that really existed is in my grandfather's book and my mother's memoirs, not the Stalin that is being drawn today. That is a terrifying half-truth which cannot explain anything. They are inventions which are unnecessary and harmful, and do not do any good to the history of our country.
… this person occupied his post for a period of 29 years, because the policy he advocated was very close to the Party line and to the wishes of the people.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 278

A week later Stalin gave a major radio address to the country, delivering it in person at the Central Broadcasting Studio. (Stalin's biographer Robert Payne says that Stalin recorded this address in the Caucasus, more than 500 miles from Moscow, but chief radio announcer Yuri Levitan says that he watched Stalin delivering this address at Moscow's Central Broadcasting Studio.')
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 168

THE SKILLFUL TRICKS AND DECEPTIONS OF CAPITALIST PROPAGANDA

During the Cold War, the anti-communist ideological framework could transform any data about existing communist societies into hostile evidence. If the Soviets refused to negotiate a point, they were intransigent and belligerent; if they appeared willing to make concessions, this was but a skillful ploy to put us off our guard. By opposing arms limitations, they would have demonstrated their aggressive intent; but when in fact they supported most armament treaties, it was because they were mendacious and manipulative. If the churches in the USSR were empty, this demonstrated that religion was suppressed; but if the churches were full, this meant the people were rejecting the regime's atheistic ideology. If the workers went on strike (as happened on infrequent occasions), this was evidence of their alienation from the collectivist system; if they didn't go on strike, this was because they were intimidated and lacked freedom. A scarcity of consumer goods demonstrated the failure of the economic system; an improvement in consumer supplies meant only that the leaders were attempting to placate a restive population and so maintain a firmer hold over them.
Parenti, Michael. Blackshirts and Reds, San Francisco: City Light Books, 1997, p. 41

IT IS BETTER TO BE CURSED THAN PRAISED BY CAPITALISTS

CHUEV: Western broadcasters talk a lot about you, curse you and Stalin.
MOLOTOV: It would have been worse if they had praised us.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 12

HITLER WAS AN EXTREME ANTI-COMMUNIST NATIONALIST

MOLOTOV: Hitler was an extreme nationalist. A blinded and stupid anti-communist.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 14

MOLOTOV FEELS THERE ARE STILL HITLERS TODAY

CHUEV: Did Stalin meet him?
MOLOTOV: No, I was the only one to have such a pleasure. There are people of that kind now, too. That's why we must pursue a vigilant and firm policy.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 14

HITLER WAS SMART AND NARROW BUT NOT A MANIAC

MOLOTOV: Hitler… there was nothing remarkable in his appearance. But he was a very smug, and, if I may say so, vain person. He wasn't at all the same as he is portrayed in movies and books. They focus attention on his appearance, depict him as a madman, a maniac, but that's not true. He was very smart, though narrow-minded and obtuse at the same time because of his egotism….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 15

HITLER ADMIRED STALIN'S PERSONALITY

MOLOTOV: I sensed he [Hitler] was not only afraid of our power but that he also stood in awe of Stalin's personality.

Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 16

MOLOTOV SAYS HITLER WANTED TO DIVIDE THE WORLD

MOLOTOV: I said. What do you want? What are your proposals? “Let’s divide the whole world,” he [Hitler] said. “You need the South, to get to the warm waters.”
…We had agreed to observe the treaty–they were not doing so. We saw they didn’t want to observe it.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 18

LIES DOMINATE NOWADAYS

…Nowadays you don’t get the real facts handed to you on a silver platter. They are mixed up and corrupted in every way, so to speak, and obscured by all kinds of other facts.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 253

Since 1945 they [bourgeois historians] have been in possession of material proving that the conditions in the Soviet Union were just the opposite to the myths they had been creating.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

With few exceptions, the Smolensk archives have remained practically untouched thereafter. The archive material never got a first page position in Western mass media. The reason is that the political life in the Western region of Soviet Union as reported in the Smolensk archives had nothing in common with the concoction of monstrous lies and myths which were displayed (and still are) in mass media in the West. The archive material, which is a collection of documents with contributions from hundreds of thousands people with a wide range of opinions about all aspects of life could not be used in the propaganda war against the Soviet Union.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

The research of Getty has destroyed some myths and lies about the Soviet Union, but the most important is above all that it gives the individual a possibility of judging for him/herself. And this, to draw one’s own conclusions is in fact important.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

KHRUSHCHEV IGNORES STALIN’S ACCOMPLISHMENTS & GIVES THE BOURGEOIS DESCRIPTION

“I will probably not sin against the truth,” Khrushchev declared in his 1956 speech, “when I say that 99 percent of the persons present here heard and knew very little about Stalin before the year 1924, while Lenin was known to all.” This is probably true as a statement of an isolated fact but its import distorts the truth. For it omits Stalin’s early Party history, his courageous struggles under tsarist terrorism and his long support of Lenin, his leadership of the Party within Russia as head of the Russian Bureau, his founding of Pravda, his recognized leadership in the Central Committee where he gave the political report in Lenin’s absence in July 1917, his military service during the civil war, his leadership against the

Trotskyist opposition. Khrushchev's comment supports by implication the bourgeois caricature of Stalin as a maneuvering upstart.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 123

It is in the light of this growing anti-socialist influence that we have to view Khrushchev's "secret speech." The speech has nothing to do with Marxism. It does not examine the class or even the political forces behind events but is a superficial, essentially bourgeois narrative centered around a personal vilification of Stalin. Moreover it was a reactionary document, applauded by the world bourgeoisie and serving to split the world Communist community. This bourgeois-type outlook is clear in the policies associated with Khrushchev and his group both before and after their seizure of executive political power (which they were perhaps able to do because of the decimation of the working class in the war). They extended private plots and privately owned farm animals, dismantled much of the central economic planning system, gave factory directors more power, elevated profit as a major incentive to production, favored consumer goods over capital goods, and allowed a cultural "thaw," the essentially bourgeois nature of which is made clear in Ehrenburg's autobiographical writings and other works….
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 134

CONQUEST IS A PAID PROPAGANDA AGENT AND LIED ABOUT STALIN

In January 1978, David Leigh published an article in the London Guardian, in which he revealed that Robert Conquest had worked for the disinformation services, officially called the Information Research Department (IRD), of the British secret service. In British embassies, the IRD head is responsible for providing `doctored' information to journalists and public figures. The two most important targets were the Third World and the Soviet Union. Leigh claimed:
`Robert Conquest … frequently critical of the Soviet Union was one of those who worked for IRD. He was in the FO [Foreign Office] until 1956.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 108 [p. 92 on the NET]

The defeat of Trotsky, though not yet final, had been due to a virtually unanimous campaign by all the other leaders, his only support being the dying Lenin. Factional fighting in the Politburo was now, however, thrown open for all. Of the seven men elected as full members in June 1924, six would be killed by the lone survivor.
This membership now consisted of Zinoviev and Kamenev; Stalin; Trotsky; and Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky.
[WRONG: NO EVIDENCE STALIN KILLED TROTSKY; TOMSKY COMMITTED SUICIDE; THE OTHER 4 WERE FOUND GUILTY BY A TRIAL
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 133

…Feuchtwanger, whose book on Stalin and the USSR really deserves to be read, indeed reprinted, for the pathos of its idiocy. [Describes Conquest]
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 184

He [Pyatakov] had been, it was true, an oppositionist, and an important one. But he had abandoned opposition in 1928 and had worked with complete loyalty ever since….
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 140

After the pleas, the court recessed for 20 minutes. It has been suggested that this was to give time to put a little pressure on Krestinsky. Probably; but the recess was only five minutes longer than that at the previous trials.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 344

SOLZHENITSYN WORKED WITH REACTIONARIES AND SUPPORTED TRAITOROUS GENERALS

We would like to open a brief parenthesis for Solzhenitsyn. This man became the official voice for the five per cent of Tsarists, bourgeois, speculators, kulaks, pimps, maffiosi and Vlasovites, all justifiably repressed by the socialist state.

Solzhenitsyn the literary hack lived through a cruel dilemna during the Nazi occupation. Chauvinist, he hated the German invaders. But he hated socialism even more passionately. So he had a soft spot for General Vlasov, the most famous of the Nazi collaborators. Although Solzhenitsyn did not approve of Vlasov's flirt with Hitler, he was laudatory about his hatred of Bolshevism.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 178-179 [p. 156 on the NET]

Solzhenitsyn's politics are those of the extreme right in the West. He is opposed to detente, to wars of national liberation, to multiparty parliamentary forms. He advocates an active and aggressive Western offensive against the Soviet Union and the abandonment of detente.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 288

BEFORE HITLER BRITAIN LED THE ANTI-SOVIET CRUSADE

Until Hitler's coming to power, Great Britain had led the crusade against the Soviet Union. In 1918, Churchill was the main instigator of the military invervention that mobilized fourteen countries. In 1927, Great Britain broke diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and imposed an embargo on its exports.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 196 [p. 184 on the NET]

MEDVEDEV IS A BOGUS SCHOLAR WHO RELIES ON GOSSIP RATHER THAN DOCUMENTATION

On the question of socialism, as indeed on other questions, the attacks on Stalin and 'Stalinism' are almost always attacks on Lenin and Leninism. In order to show the correctness of this statement it would be useful to look at a book called Let History Judge written by a Soviet bourgeois intellectual by the name of Roy Medvedev. Medvedev attacks Stalin but 'praises' Lenin. Medvedev's attack on Stalin is not based on any facts or documentation, but on mere gossip and the fertile imagination of a bourgeois brain whose input in terms of fabrication is unlimited. Even the reactionary anti-communist columnist Edward Crankshaw, one of the reviewer's of this book in the Observer of March 26, 1972 had to admit that Medvedev was "denied access to all official archives". This however, does not prevent Crankshaw from agreeing with, and admiring, Medvedev's attack on Stalin, the reason for this being that "this book is high drama of a gifted intellectual wrestling for the truth, guided only by his inner light." This is how 'truth' is established by the bourgeois mind, i.e., by completely ignoring the facts and relying on one's "inner light."

Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 163

VOLKOGONOV SAYS HE IS NOT WRITING TO AVENGE HIS FAMILY

It may be said that this book is my way of avenging the wrongs done to my family. But I deny this.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 564

FOR GOOD REASON STALIN WAS AMONG THE MOST HATED OF BOURGEOIS ENEMIES

From an anti-Communist point of view, Stalin was certainly one of the great villains of history. While he lived, the Red forces consolidated their power in one country and then led what seemed to be an irresistible worldwide revolutionary upsurge. By the time he died, near hysteria reigned in the citadels of capitalism. In Washington, frenzied witch hunts tried to ferret out the Red menace that was supposedly about to seize control of the last great bastion of capitalism. All this changed, for the time being, after Stalin's death, when the counter-revolutionary forces were able to seize control even within the Soviet Union.
…the bourgeois world view, based on competition, ambition, and the quest for personal profit and power and and portraying "human nature" as corrupt, vicious, and selfish, that is, as the mirror image of bourgeois man.
Franklin, Bruce, Ed. The Essential Stalin; Major Theoretical Writings. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p. 37

PARES COMPLIMENTS THE SYSTEM BUT IT NOT AN ADMIRER OF IT

I [Pares] went, definitely not as an admirer of the existing regime,…
…It was always the peasantry that had formed the backbone of the Army;…
Pares, Bernard. Russia. Washington, New York: Infantry Journal, Penguin books, 1944, p. 195

ANTI-STALIN WRITERS HAD AN AX TO GRIND AND WERE BIASED

"Comrade Roy Medvedev, tell me, please," the KGB officer had said, "would you have written your books about Stalin if your father hadn't been sent away to the camps?"
…The KGB officer at Lefortovo had surely asked Roy the right question. "Why?" No one had ever posed it to him quite so directly or with such perverse intent. "I realized then just how closely my destiny was intertwined with my father's," Roy told me one day in his tiny study. I was sitting there in that prison room, and it all came back."
Remnick, David. Lenin's Tomb. New York: Random House, c1993, p. 110

Foreign Policy before WW2

SU AND GERMANY TREATED AS OUTLAWS

The first admission of the young state to any international conference was at the Genoa Conference of 1922, called by the victorious allies in the hope of dumping the burden of a bankrupt, postwar Europe on the backs of Soviet Russia and vanquished Germany. The prospective victims had to be present in order to accept the burden.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 144

SU WANTS TO SIGN PEACE PACTS

The Soviets were the first to sign the Kellogg Pact, proposed by United States; they were the first to sign any international peace pact or proposal, sometimes before they were invited.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 146

In an August 22, 1939, letter to Sumner Wells, Acting American Secretary of State, Ambassador Davies said in reference to the Soviet-German Nonaggression Pact, “During the Litvinov tenure in the Foreign Office, there was to be sure a very strong moral impulse of hostility toward Germany and the aggressor powers beginning with the accession of Hitler to power. During that period the Soviet regime, in my opinion, diligently and vigorously tried to maintain a vigorous common front against the aggressors and were sincere advocates of the “indivisibility of peace.”
Litvinov’s able battle for peace and democratic ideas at the League of Nations and the vigorous attitude of the Soviet government in being prepared to fight for Czechoslovakia were indications of real sincerity of purpose and a marked degree of high-mindedness. Beginning with Munich, and even before, however, there has been an accumulation of events which gradually broke down this attitude on the part of the Soviet government. During my tenure in Moscow I was much impressed with the fact that the Russians were undoubtedly severely irked by what appeared to be a policy of “pinpricking” and an attitude of superiority and “talking down” which diplomatic missions of the Western powers assumed toward the Soviet government. The Soviets are proud and resented this deeply.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 454

In his conduct of foreign policy, Stalin showed great caution, restraint, and realism. He needed time to build up Russia’s industries and military strength. He was constantly provoked in the east and west, and in ways that must have infuriated him, but he never lost sight of the overriding need to delay the outbreak of war as long as possible. It was for this reason that he placed the greatest emphasis on peace and disarmament in world affairs.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 296

Each of the future allies sold space for time and let down allies and friends, until no space was left to be sold and no time to be bought.
In the course of 1934 Stalin set out on his search for protective alliances. Gradually, but not imperceptibly, he switched over from opposition to the system of Versailles to its defense. In September Russia joined the League of Nations. Hitherto the Kremlin and the League had boycotted each other. To Lenin the League had been the ‘robbers’ den’, the organization designed to enforce the peace of Versailles, to perpetuate colonial domination and to suppress movements of emancipation all over the world.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 417

Yet, in spite of all this, one feels justified in asserting that in those years, 1935-37 and even later, Stalin was genuinely striving for an anti-Hitler coalition. This course of action was dictated to him by circumstances…. At the Nuremberg rally of September 1936 Hitler spoke about the Ukraine and Siberia as belonging to the German Lebensraum in terms so emphatic and fiery that they seemed to exclude even a transient understanding between himself and Stalin. Later in the year the leaders of the Axis came together to announce the conclusion of the anti-Comintern pact. Throughout all that period clashes, some of them serious, were occurring between Russian and Japanese frontier troops. The storm seemed to be gathering over Russia in Asia and Russia in Europe. If not anti-fascist virtue, then the demands of self-preservation drove Stalin to seek security in a solid system of alliances.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 420

(Sinclair's comments only)
Again and again Russia came into the conferences of Europe and proposed complete disarmament. Our reactionary newspaper columnists are quite sure that this was a bluff; but what a simple matter it is to call a bluff if you have the cards! Why didn't the warlords of the militarist nations accept Litvinov's propositions? Why didn't they pretend to accept them? The answer is because every one of them understood clearly that a collectivist economy can get along without colonies and foreign trade, whereas a profit economy must have these things and must increase them, and therefore is driven continually to fresh aggressions under penalty of revolution at home.
It is my belief that the disarmament proposals repeatedly made by the Soviet Union enable that country to stand before the world with clean hands, and place the blame for the wars which are coming upon the nations which refused the proposals and have gone on ever since to prepare for worse aggressions against the Soviet Union.
Sinclair and Lyons. Terror in Russia?: Two Views. New York: Rand School Press, 1938, p. 23

SU AND MEXICO ONLY ONES TO AID SPAIN

The Soviet Union shared with Mexico the honor of being the only governments that aided the Democratic government of Spain.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 147

As week succeeded week, it became obvious that the governments of Britain and France were prepared to give nothing to the Spanish people except advice. Once Stalin was convinced of this, he declared the intention of the Soviet state to give all the help it could to the Spanish loyalists.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 96

Three countries participated directly in the Spanish Civil War: Germany, Italy, and the Soviet Union.
Krivitsky, Walter. I was Stalin's Agent, London: H. Hamilton, 1939, p. 88

It was late in August 1936 and the Franco forces were firmly organized and marching successfully on Madrid, when three high officials of the Spanish Republic were finally received in Russia. They came to buy war supplies, and they offered in exchange huge sums of Spanish gold. Even now, however, they were not conveyed to Moscow but kept

incognito in a hotel in Odessa. And to conceal the operation, Stalin issued, on Friday, Aug. 28, 1936, through the Commissar of Foreign Trade, a decree forbidding “the export, re-export, or transit to Spain of all kinds of arms, munitions, war materials, airplanes, and warships. The decree was published and broadcast to the world on the following Monday. The fellow travelers of the Comintern, and the public, roused by them, already privately dismayed at Stalin’s failure to rush to the support of the Spanish Republic, now thought that he was joining Leon Blum’s policy of non-intervention. Stalin was in reality sneaking to the support of the Spanish Republic. While its high officials waited in Odessa, Stalin called an extraordinary session of the Politburo, and presented his plan for cautious intervention in the Spanish Civil War – all this under cover of his proclamation of neutrality.
Krivitsky, Walter G. I was Stalin’s Agent, London: H. Hamilton, 1939, p. 91

Two days later a special courier, who came by plane to Holland, brought me instructions from Moscow: Extend your operations immediately to cover Spanish Civil War. Mobilize all available agents and facilities for prompt creation of a system to purchase and transport arms to Spain. A special agent is being dispatched to Paris to aid you in this work. He will report to you there and work under your supervision.
Krivitsky, Walter G. I was Stalin’s Agent, London: H. Hamilton, 1939, p. 93

In plain terms, it was Captain Oulansky’s job to organize and operate a ring of arms smugglers, and to do this so cleverly that no trace could be discovered by the spies of foreign governments.
“If you succeed,” Yagoda told him, “come back with a hole in your lapel for the Order of the Red Banner.”
Krivitsky, Walter G. I was Stalin’s Agent, London: H. Hamilton, 1939, p. 96

We all met in Paris in perfect secrecy on September 21. Zimin brought explicit and emphatic instructions that we must not permit the slightest possibility of the Soviet government’s becoming in any way associated with our traffic in arms. All cargos were to be handled “privately” through business firms created for the purpose.
Krivitsky, Walter G. I was Stalin’s Agent, London: H. Hamilton, 1939, p. 97

We made large purchases from the Skoda works in Czechoslovakia, from several firms in France, from others in Poland and Holland. Such is the nature of the munitions trade that we even bought arms in Nazi Germany.
Krivitsky, Walter G. I was Stalin’s Agent, London: H. Hamilton, 1939, p. 98

By the middle of October, shiploads of arms began to reach republican Spain. The Soviet aid came in two streams. My organization used foreign vessels. Captain Oulansky’s “private syndicate” in Odessa began by using Spanish boats but found their number limited. Moscow, held by Stalin’s insistence on absolute secrecy lest he become involved in a war, would not permit the use of ships sailing under Soviet papers.
With these false papers, Soviet boats loaded with munitions would sail from Odessa under new names, flying foreign colors, and they would clear the Bosphorus, where German and Italian counter-espionage agents were keeping a sharp look-out. When they had entered loyalist ports and delivered their cargo, their names would be changed back to Russian ones and they would return to Odessa under their own colors.
Krivitsky, Walter G. I was Stalin’s Agent, London: H. Hamilton, 1939, p. 99

My agent had bought the 50 government planes for 4,000 pounds each, subject to inspection. When the question of the consignee came up, he offered a choice of a Latin-American country or China. The dealer preferred China.
Krivitsky, Walter G. I was Stalin's Agent, London: H. Hamilton, 1939, p. 102

I was ordered to send the planes to Alicante. But that port was blockaded by Franco's vessels. The master of the ship made for Alicante, but had to turn back to save the ship and cargo. He attempted to head for Barcelona, but was prevented by my agent on board. My shipload of aircraft plied back and forth in the Mediterranean. Franco kept it from Alicante. Stalin kept it from Barcelona.
…The Norwegian ship finally slipped through Franco's blockade and discharged its planes at Alicante. At the same time, other war supplies, including tanks and artillery, arrived from the Soviet Union. All loyalist Spain saw that tangible aid was actually coming from Russia. The Republicans, Socialists, anarchists, [and Trotskyists], and syndicalists had only theories and ideals to offer. The Communists were producing guns and planes to use against Franco. Soviet prestige soared.
Krivitsky, Walter G. I was Stalin's Agent, London: H. Hamilton, 1939, p. 103

While this International Brigade – the army of the Comintern – was taking shape in the foreground, purely Russian units of the Red Army were quietly arriving and taking up their posts behind the Spanish front. This Soviet military personnel in Spain never reached more than 2,000 men, and only pilots and tank officers saw active duty. Most of the Russians were technicians–general staff men, military instructors, engineers, specialists in setting up war industries, experts in chemical warfare, aviation mechanics, radio operators, and gunnery experts. These Red Army men were segregated from the Spanish civilians as much as possible, housed apart, and never permitted to associate in any way with Spanish political groups or figures. They were ceaselessly watched by the 0GPU, both to keep their presence in Spain a secret and to prevent any political heresy from corrupting the Red Army.
This special expeditionary force was under the direct control of General Berzin, one of the two leading Soviet figures assigned by Stalin to captain his intervention in Spain. The other was Arthur Stashevsky, officially the Soviet trade envoy stationed in Barcelona.
Krivitsky, Walter G. I was Stalin's Agent, London: H. Hamilton, 1939, p. 107

Berzin was selected by Stalin to organize and direct the Loyalist Army.
Stalin's chief political commissar in Spain was Arthur Stashevsky.
Krivitsky, Walter G. I was Stalin's Agent, London: H. Hamilton, 1939, p. 108

Dr. Negrin, of course, saw the only salvation of his country in close co-operation with the Soviet Union. It had become obvious that active support could come only from that source.
Krivitsky, Walter G. I was Stalin's Agent, London: H. Hamilton, 1939, p. 112

The splendid feats of the International Brigade, and the material help received from the Soviet Union, so prompted the growth of the Communist Party of Spain that by January 1937 its membership was more than 200,000. The saving of Madrid enormously enhanced Soviet prestige.
Krivitsky, Walter G. I was Stalin's Agent, London: H. Hamilton, 1939, p. 114

The successful defense of Madrid with Soviet arms gave the 0GPU new opportunities to extend its powers.
Krivitsky, Walter G. I was Stalin's Agent, London: H. Hamilton, 1939, p. 115

By February 15th, however, they [the Fascists] were forced to retreat by the newly-reorganized republican army… and the support of 40 Soviet warplanes–moscas and chatos–that had just arrived in Spain: not as many in number as the German warplanes, but technically superior.
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 327

Airplanes provided by the Soviet government, 500 pieces of artillery, and 10,000 machine guns were held up in France.
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 336

The people of Spain had a loyal friend in the Soviet Union, which could be relied upon to do everything in its power to promote their cause and to frustrate the designs of every imperialist power.
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 338

And henceforth the Soviet government did all it could to supply the Republicans with everything they needed, from men (through the international brigades who sent some 35,000 men to Spain), to military advisers from its own army, to armaments and food.
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 440

It is common knowledge that soon after the fascist rebellion and the beginning of the civil war in Spain the Soviet Union began to aid and support the Spanish Republic….
By the end of 1936 the Soviet Union had supplied Spain with 106 tanks, 60 armored cars, 136 airplanes, more than 60,000 rifles, 174 field guns, 3,727 machine guns, and an unspecified amount of ammunition.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 724

VYSHINSKY: In his message to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Spain addressed to Comrade Jose Diaz, Comrade Stalin said: "The toilers of the Soviet Union are merely fulfilling their duty in giving all the assistance they can to the revolutionary masses of Spain. They fully realize that the liberation of Spain from the yoke of the fascist reactionaries is not the private affair of the Spaniards, but the common cause of the whole of advanced and progressive humanity."
Report of Court Proceedings: The case of the Anti-Soviet Trotskyite Centre–1937, Moscow: Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R, p. 506

The experience of the Civil War in Spain–where no country except the Soviet Union provided assistance to the legal government of the Republic,…
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin's Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 10

In the summer [of 1936] the Spanish Civil War started. Stalin became involved to the extent of sending supplies including 648 aircraft and 407 tanks. Three thousand Soviet military 'volunteers' served in Spain, and the Comintern organized the 42,000 volunteers of the

International Brigade commanded by the supposed Canadian ‘Kleber ‘, in fact Red Army Corps Commander, Shtern.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 219

…Stalin, while professing Soviet adherence to non-intervention [in the Spanish Civil War], secretly approved the immediate dispatch of trained Soviet pilots to fly fighter aircraft supplied by the French.
Costello, John and Oleg Tsarev. Deadly illusions. New York: Crown, c1993, p. 254

Sixteen Soviet freighters put to see from the Black Sea port of Odessa, heading for the Mediterranean. By early November they had safely reached the Republican-held port of Cartagena, where they unloaded more than 800 tanks and aircraft along with thousands of gallons of badly needed fuel. Although military aid on a far more massive scale was needed to defeat Franco, Stalin’s first grudging commitment of Soviet support proved an important morale booster for the Spanish Republicans. Soviet supplies meant that the Loyalists were no longer battling alone against a Nationalist army being supplied with an increasing flood of arms from Germany and Italy.
” Madrid will not now fall,” declared Prime Minister Caballero, “now the war will begin, because we now have the necessary materials.” His defiant words were reinforced later that month with the arrival of hundreds of Soviet military personnel and more arms. Orlov and his comrades in the Red Air Force and Army units in Spain resented Stalin’s order that military personnel were to “keep out of range of artillery fire”. Their T-10 tanks and Mosca and Chato fighter aircraft proved more than a match for the German and Italian opposition. Even in the hands of hastily trained Republican pilots and crews the firepower and maneuverability of the Soviet weapons proved superior to Nationalist tanks and aircraft during the December battles for Madrid.
Costello, John and Oleg Tsarev. Deadly illusions. New York: Crown, c1993, p. 256

Stalin was as good as his word. Twenty years later, when Orlov testified in 1957 before the Senate Internal Security Sub-Committee and recounted how he had organized the looting of the Spanish treasury, Radio Moscow announced that the $420 million worth of Spanish gold smuggled to Russia in 1937 had been sent legitimately to “finance the Republican cause”. Franco’s government was pressing the Soviets to send back the bullion after Negrin’s heirs had returned to Madrid the official receipt for “510 million grams of gold” which the bank of Moscow had given to the cashiers of the Bank of Spain in 1938.
Khrushchev, the Soviet president in 1957 certainly was not going to return a single peseta of Republican money to the Fascist regime of Franco. This was made clear in a broadcast by Radio Moscow in which the USSR reminded the world that the value of Soviet aid delivered to the Spanish Government during the Civil War amounted to much more than the value of 510 metric tons of gold. According to the statement the Spanish account with the USSR was still overdrawn because of the Republicans’ failure to repay $50 million of an additional $85 million in supplies which they had allegedly been loaned officially.
Costello, John and Oleg Tsarev. Deadly illusions. New York: Crown, c1993, p. 263

After all, we had to intervene in Spain because of the fear of agitation on the part of Trotskyites. The Instantsia [Politburo] fears accusations of liquidation–accusations that we have let down the Spanish Left. This is absurd; questions of policy must be decided

according to the demands of the State, and not from the point of view of [dissidents, critics, and traitors]….
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 268

Stalin's role in the Spanish Civil War likewise comes under fire from the "left." Again taking their cue from Trotsky and such professional anti-Communist ideologues as George Orwell, many "Socialists" claim that Stalin sold out the Loyalists. A similar criticism is made about Stalin's policies in relation to the Greek partisans in the late 1940s, which we will discuss later. According to these "left" criticisms, Stalin didn't "care" about either of the struggles, because of his preoccupation with internal development and "Great Russian power." The simple fact of the matter is that in both cases Stalin was the only national leader any place in the world to support the popular forces, and he did this in the face of stubborn opposition within his own camp and the dangers of military attack from the leading aggressive powers in the world (Germany and Italy in the late 1930s, the U.S. 10 years later).
Because the USSR, following Stalin's policies, had become a modern industrial nation by the mid 1930s, it was able to ship to the Spanish Loyalists Soviet tanks and planes that were every bit as advanced as the Nazi models. Because the USSR was the leader of the world revolutionary forces, Communists from many nations were able to organize the International Brigades, which went to resist Mussolini's fascist divisions and the crack Nazi forces, such as the Condor Legion, that were invading the Spanish Republic. The capitalist powers, alarmed by this international support for the Loyalists, planned joint action to stop it. In March 1937, warships of Germany, Italy, France, and Great Britain began jointly policing the Spanish coast. Acting on a British initiative, these same countries formed a bloc in late 1937 to isolate the Soviet Union by implementing a policy they called "non-intervention," which Lloyd George, as leader of the British Opposition, labeled a clear policy of support for the fascists. Mussolini supported the British plan and called for a campaign "to drive Bolshevism from Europe." Stalin's own foreign ministry, which was still dominated by aristocrats masquerading as proletarian revolutionaries, sided with the capitalist powers. The New York Times of October 29, 1937, describes how the "unyielding" Stalin, representing "Russians stubbornness," refused to go along: "A struggle has been going on all this week between Josef Stalin and Foreign Commissar Litvinov," who wished to accept the British plan. Stalin stuck to his guns, in the Soviet Union refused to grant Franco international status as a combatant, insisting that it had every right in the world to continue aiding the duly elected government of Spain, which it did until the bitter end.
Franklin, Bruce, Ed. The Essential Stalin; Major Theoretical Writings. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p. 22

(Sinclair's comments)
Whenever you may think about them you can hardly dispute the fact that Russia is for all practical purposes at war today. Russian technicians are helping the democratic people of Spain to defend their existence. Russian technicians are helping the people China to the same end. Russia is fighting not merely Franco, but Hitler and Mussolini in Spain.
Sinclair and Lyons. Terror in Russia?: Two Views. New York: Rand School Press, 1938, p. 22

Those of us who are over 50 today remember well that the Soviet Union, fulfilling its internationalist duty, helped the legitimate Government and the people of Spain with everything it could–arms, provisions, and medicines. Imbued with revolutionary enthusiasm

and the spirit of romanticism Soviet tankmen, pilots, artillerymen, rank-and-file soldiers and prominent military leaders volunteered to fight in Spain.
Zhukov, Georgi. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 141

In the winter of 1936-37 most Russian planes in Spain were flown by Russian pilots, and the attack to drive the Nationalists back from Madrid was opened on Oct. 29 by Russian tanks, driven by Russians, led by the tank specialist General Pavlov and supported by Russian planes.
…Nonetheless, Soviet support was decisive in the autumn of 1936, preventing the Nationalists from winning the war in a few months. Russian advisers and the International Brigades brought order and discipline into the Republican army,…
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 540

[In December 1936] Stalin had sent a letter to the Spanish Prime Minister, Caballero, signed by Molotov & Voroshilov as well as himself, in which he urged the Republican government to avoid social radicalism, enlist the support of the middle class, and broaden the basis of his government "in order to prevent the enemies of Spain from presenting it as a communist republic."
The fact that the Soviet Union through the Comintern was the only reliable source of arms and supplies gave Stalin the power to intervene in Spanish politics as well as in the war.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 541

"… the Soviet Union sent to the Spanish Government 806 military aircraft, mainly fighters, 362 tanks, 120 armored cars, 1,555 artillery pieces, about 500,000 rifles, 340 grenade launchers, 15,113 machine-guns, more than 110,000 aerial bombs, about 3.4 million rounds of ammunition, 500,000 grenades, 862 million cartridges, 1,500 tons of gunpowder, torpedo boats, air defense searchlight installations, motor vehicles, radio stations, torpedoes and fuel".
('International Solidarity'; op. cit; p.329-30).

and under the new Soviet policy,
"… a little more than 2,000 Soviet volunteers fought and worked in Spain on the side of the Republic throughout the whole war, including 772 airmen, 351 tank men, 222 army advisers and instructors, 77 naval specialists, 100 artillery specialists, 52 other specialists, 130 aircraft factory workers and engineers, 156 radio operators and other signals men, and 204 interpreters".
('International Solidarity': op. cit. p.328).

In Berlin on 30 may 1937 Hitler stated: After Red airplanes bombed British, German, and Italian ships lying in the harbor of Majorca a few days ago and killed six officers on an Italian ship, German ships were forbidden to remain in the harbor any longer. On Saturday, May 29, 1937, the pocket battleship Deutschland was lying in the roadstead of Ibiza. The ship belongs to the forces assigned to the international sea patrol. In spite of this, the pocket battleship was suddenly bombed between 6 and 7 p.m. by two planes of the Red Valencia Government in a gliding attack…. The result of this criminal attack is that 20 were killed and 73 wounded.
Domarus, Max , Ed. Hitler's Speeches and Proclamations, 1932-1945. Vol. 2. Wauconda, Illinois: Bolchazy-Carducci, c1990, p. 899

As it became clear that Italy, Germany, and Portugal would not abide by the nonintervention formula and that the insurgent forces were winning, Stalin decided to intervene.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 351

[In a letter to Kaganovich and Chubar on 18 August 1936 Stalin stated] I consider it necessary to sell oil to the Spaniards immediately on the most favorable terms for them, at a discounted price, if need be. If the Spaniards need grain and foodstuffs in general, we should sell all that to them on favorable terms. Let me know how much oil we have already delivered to the Spaniards. Make it incumbent on the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade to act quickly and decisively.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 327

[in a letter to Stalin on 18 August 1936 Kaganovich, Ordzhonikidze, and Chubar stated] We heard Comrade Sudin's progress report on the sale of oil to the Spaniards. It was determined that 6000 tons of fuel oil have been sold as of 18 August, and another tanker has been ordered to fill up with oil.
In accordance with your [Stalin] telegram, the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade has been instructed to sell oil to the Spaniards immediately at a reduced price in the necessary amount on the most favorable terms.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 327

[In a letter to Kaganovich on 6 September 1936 Stalin stated] It would be good to sell Mexico 50 high-speed bombers, so that Mexico can immediately resell them to Spain. We could also pick about 20 of our good pilots to perform combat functions in Spain and at the same time give flight training on the high-speed bombers to Spanish pilots. Think this matter over as quickly as possible. It would be good to sell by the same means 20,000 rifles, 1000 machine guns, and about 20 million rounds of ammunition. We just need to know the calibers.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 351

[Footnote to a letter by Kaganovich on 11 October 1936 to Stalin]. On 29 September the Politburo had decided to begin arms deliveries. By 22 October 5 ships had been dispatched to Spain containing 50 tanks, plus fuel and ammunition, 30 hi-speed bombers, and artillery. Further Soviet arms shipments to Spain were made in larger quantities.
Shabad, Steven, trans. The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 368

In the cruel Spanish Civil War which followed, anti-fascists all over the world helped the Republican army. Stalin's reaction was instantaneous and, once again, enlightened: Soviet advisers, tanks, and planes were rushed to the aid of democracy in Spain–together with a large number of NKVD agents.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 337

… Stalin's Russia was the only country to provide real help to Republican Spain.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 426

The fact remained that Russia was doing something to try to stop the march of fascism, that communism appeared to extend a helping hand to an embattled democracy, while the French and British statesmen prattled on about nonintervention in Spain, where German planes and pilots and fascism legions were openly assisting Franco.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 427

While Russian military, air, and naval personnel helped the Republican side and the USSR furnished it with supplies, Soviet participation in the Spanish Civil War was veiled in much more mystification than that of the fascist powers.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 468

My father also wondered why the British had not supported the Spanish Republicans, since they had every interest in preventing the expansion of Italy and Germany into Spain. Germany and Italy had sent many troops. France and Britain acted as though neutral and blocked the approaches, and the Soviet Union alone sent arms via the Black Sea. I know this from Admiral Kuznetsov, whom my father met at this time. He commanded a cruiser which escorted the convoys.
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 31

On 15 Oct 1936 Soviet tanks, planes and "advisors" started arriving in Spain to support the Republican government against General Francisco Franco, backed by Hitler and Mussolini.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 200

…more than 2000 Soviet volunteers fought and worked in Spain on the side of the Republic throughout the whole war, including 772 airmen, 351 tank men, 222 army advisors and instructors, 77 naval specialists, 100 artillery specialists, 52 other specialists, 130 aircraft factory workers and engineers, 156 radio operators and other signals men, and 204 interpreters….
The total extent of Soviet military supplies may be seen from the following figures: the Soviet Union sent to the Spanish Government 806 military aircraft, mainly fighters, 363 tanks, 120 armored cars, 1,555 artillery pieces, about 500,000 rifles, 340 grenade launchers, 15,113 machine guns, more than 110,000 aerial bombs, about 3.4 million rounds of ammunition, 500,000 grenades, 862 million cartridges, 1500 tons of gunpowder, torpedo boats, air defense searchlight installations, motor vehicles, radio stations, torpedoes and fuel".
International Solidarity With the Spanish Republic, 1936-39. Moscow: Progress Publishers, c1974, p. 328-330

Among the more salient denunciations [of the Soviet Union's assistance to Spain during the Spanish Civil War] are the following: That military aid to Spain came too late and too little; that a large part of the arms were obsolete; that they were given only to communist-led units; that the arms were fed, piece-meal, as it were, to the Governments of Caballero and Negrin in direct proportion to reciprocal controls and influence purportedly granted the Soviets; that the Soviets limited their aid to appease Britain and France; that Russian officers controlled and directed the Madrid armies; that as early as autumn, 1937, the Soviet Union "gave up" on the Spanish revolution and ceased all arms shipments….
And so on, and so on.

The tragedy of the above is that a great part of this quite malicious and self-serving, right-wing propaganda was put forth by both capitulationists and ultras alike…. The word "malicious" is apropos in this case, since each and every point can be easily proven a skillfully perpetrated lie.
Landis, Arthur H. Spain, The Unfinished Revolution, Baldwin Park, California: Camelot Pub. Co. [1972], p. 231

To all those who fault the USSR for not having sent sufficient arms to the Republic the following data should be interesting. The Franco Admiral, Bastarreche, at a conference in Zaragoza in 1960 stated that, "The Nationalist Navy sunk during the period of our war 53 merchant ships with a total of 129,000 tons; captured on the high seas were another 324 ships of some 484,000 tons. Twenty-four foreign ships were also seized, and as many as 1000 detained on the high seas for examination and later released….
Interesting, isn't it? Among the known Russian ships sunk were the Komsomol, Timiriazev and the Blagoev, all in the Autumn of 1936. A number of others were torpedoed in 1937, as were many Spanish ships of the Republican fleet.
…The evidence then is more than sufficient to conclude that despite the tremendous losses of men, ships, and material along the thousand-mile, submarine-infested run from the Black Sea to Spain, the Soviets had never faltered in their aid to Spain….
Indeed, with 53 merchant ships loaded with Russian arms for Spain torpedoed and sent to the bottom of the Mediterranean, the Soviets have a right to suggest to their unconscionable attackers of the ultra-left, and others, that they not be so hasty with their quite self-serving accusations.
Landis, Arthur H. Spain, The Unfinished Revolution, Baldwin Park, California: Camelot Pub. Co. [1972] page 242-244

The Spanish government rallied all the forces it could on the political left. Spain's communists in particular stood by it.
The revolutionary tradition impelled Stalin to look favorably on the request from Madrid for help. So too did the awareness that if no resistance to German assertiveness were shown, Europe as a whole would be exposed to the expansionist aims of the Third Reich. Failure to act would be taken as a sign that the policy of the popular front had no substance. Finance and munitions were dispatched by boat to Spain from Leningrad. Simultaneously the Communist International sent the Italian Communist Party leader Togliatti under the alias Ercoli to direct the activities of the Spanish communists.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 387

But he [Stalin] and the Comintern at least did something, and it is hardly likely that the Republicans would have held out so long if he had not sanctioned the Spanish Communist Party's participation. His Trotskyist critics accused him of excessive pragmatism in his management of the Soviet foreign policy. They ignored the limited resources available to the USSR. Economically, militarily, and 'above all' geographically there was no serious chance for him to do more than he achieved at the time.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 389

CHURCHILL SUPPORTS SU MOVING INTO POLAND

Americans still talk as if Stalin and Hitler jointly and cynically divided the unfortunate Poles. But Winston Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty, said in a broadcast on October 1, 1939: “The Soviets have stopped the Nazis in eastern Poland; I only regret that they are not doing it as our allies.” A few weeks later, on October 26, Prime Minister Chamberlain himself rather sourly admitted in the House of Commons that “It had been necessary for the Red Army to occupy part of Poland as protection against Germany.”
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 164

There can be little doubt but that Moscow would’ve fallen had the blitz been launched from the old Polish-Soviet and Baltic-Soviet frontiers, rather than from the line which Berlin had been obliged to accept in 1939.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 429

In December 1944 Churchill said, “I cannot feel that Russian demands for reassurance about her western frontiers go beyond limits of what is reasonable or just.”
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 509

SU DESERVED PART OF POLAND AND TAKING IT WAS JUSTIFIED

The chaos that reigned throughout Poland was rapidly becoming civil war in the eastern part of the country. This territory, which Molotov called “Western Ukraine and Byelo– Russia” was inhabited by Ukrainian and Byelo–Russian peasants under Polish landlords. It was not given to Poland by the Versailles Treaty; both Woodrow Wilson and the British Lord Curzon left it outside their “ethnic Poland.” The Polish landlords thrust the new Polish State into a war of aggression in 1920 and took the lands. Through the Warsaw government, which they dominated, the landlords treated their peasants more brutally than had the Russian tsar…. In an effort to Polonize the territory by force they settled demobilized Polish soldiers along the frontier, often by dispossessing whole villages of natives. For 20 years the League of Nations reports indicated that Eastern Poland had one of the most brutally handled minority problems anywhere in Europe.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 165

Special attention must be paid to the secret protocols signed at the same time as the nonaggression pact. They provided for the division of Poland into German and Soviet spheres of influence “in the event of territorial and political changes on the territory belonging to the Polish state.” Some historians regard these agreements as totally wrong and speak of the “fourth partition of Poland.” In their view the Soviet Union could simply have liberated the Polish-occupied parts of Byelorussia and the Ukraine without any preliminary agreement with Germany. England and France had already declared war on Germany, they argue, and Germany would have had to resign itself to the actions of the Red Army. The fact is, however, that at the end of August 1939 no one could have said for certain how England and France would act after Germany’s invasion of Poland. They might still have refrained from declaring war. Both the prospect of German troops emerging on the Soviet border after occupying all of Poland and that of Soviet troops entering Polish territory without prior agreement with Germany entailed great dangers. I must agree that the secret protocols

attached to the nonaggression pact were a natural extension of that pact. The Soviet Union was unable to prevent Germany's invasion of Poland, but it could see to the strengthening of its own defensive positions in case of possible complications –especially since the territory involved was not strictly Polish but where the local Byelorussians and Ukrainian populations had long been struggling for national liberation.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 729

The outbreak of the Polish-Russian war is commonly blamed on the Poles and it is indisputable that their troops started it by invading, at the end of April 1920, the Soviet Ukraine.
Pipes, Richard. Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993, p. 178

Both [Germany and Russia] were agreed that the new Poland had no right to exist – but the Poles made quite sure of the Russians continuing hatred by invading the Ukraine on April.5, 1920, capturing Kiev, the capital, on May 6. They were only driven out a month later and forced to retreat to Warsaw by a Red Army brilliantly commanded by Tukhachevsky, the man Stalin was to execute in 1937.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 14

Polish leaders eager to take advantage of what they perceived to be the exhaustion of the Red Army invaded the Ukraine and occupied Kiev that May [1920]…. A treaty signed at Riga in March 1921 gave Poland a slice of the western Ukraine and pushed the Soviet frontier 100 miles further to the east.
Overy, R. J. Russia's War: Blood Upon the Snow. New York: TV Books, c1997, p. 23

The Katyn story must begin with the character of the Polish elitist officer corp. Poland was created as an independent country from the ruins of the Germanic, Austrian and Russian empires. The new Polish ruling elite was arrogant and opportunistic. As part of the all out imperialist assault against Soviet Russia, the newly created Polish state launched an unprovoked invasion into its neighboring countries in 1920. The new Soviet Russia was powerless against the Polish invaders, operating in conjunction with a dozen more imperialist countries. Poland annexed a large part of Ukraine, Byelorussia and Lithuania, even taking away its present capital, Vilnius. Some 20 million non-Poles were placed under the rule of the Polish landlords and gentry. Assured the support of England and France, Poland become the gangster of Eastern Europe. It took a fiercely anti-Soviet attitude, becoming an active base for all sorts of anti-Soviet political and terrorist groups that conducted raids and inserted agents into the USSR.
Mukhin, Y.I., Katyn Detective,1995

The Soviet Union had genuine territorial claims on Poland since the period of the Civil War when Poland took advantage of the weakness of the Russian Federation and in 1920 attacked the newly formed Ukrainian and Byelorussian republics as well as Lithuania. As a result of the defeat of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR.) in this war, Poland annexed the western regions of the Ukraine, Byelorussia, and Lithuania, including the cities of Lvov, Brest, Grodno, and Vilnius.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 235

POLAND TREATS JEWS BADLY

The frictions were complicated by the fact that the cities and trading towns of the region are largely Jewish…. Not even Hitler treated the Jews more brutally than did the ” Poland of the Pans” as the minor nationalities called it, using the Polish term for “Lord.” “A Jew-child is a future Jew; twist its neck when it is born,” read one of the Anti—Semitic posters the Red Army found when it marched into Poland. Frictions between all the minor nationalities had been kept at boiling heat by pogroms.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 165

EASTERN SUPPORT FOR SU MARCHING INTO POLAND

The Red Army’s march was seen in Eastern Europe as a check to this plan of the Nazis, preventing the organization of the East Poland chaos into a Nazi Ukraine.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 165

The arrival of the Red Army was not only unopposed by the population; there are evidences that it was hailed with passionate joy. “Russian troops went into Poland without firing a shot and were seen marching side-by-side with the retiring Polish troops,” said the first Associated Press dispatch.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 165

Ukrainian girls hung flowers on the tanks of the arriving Red Army.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 168

Few people who know the racial composition of Eastern Poland doubted that the population had resented the rule of Warsaw and felt “liberated” when the Red Army came…. Even the Polish Government–in–Exile did not venture to declare the Red Army’s march an act of war.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 169

Deputies from Grodno told how the Jewish and Byelo-Russian workers of the city had organized their own militia before the Red Army came and had rushed out and helped build a bridge for it into the city under the fire of Polish officers.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 169

Poles in fairly large numbers were deported to various places in the Soviet Union. Letters received by their relatives in Europe and America showed that they were scattered all over the USSR; the sending of the letters also indicated that they were not under surveillance but merely deported away from the border district. The Soviet authorities claimed that former Polish officers and military colonists had done considerable sabotage and kept the people disturbed by rumors of imminent invasions by Romanian and British troops…. Most of them then stated that they fully understood the necessity of the Red Army’s march into Poland.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 170

There is no question that the peasants preferred Russians to Germans along their border.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 175

The way was prepared by the Soviet refusal of the boundary line which Hitler first offered in Poland, and which would have given to the Soviets territory in “ethnic Poland” as far as Warsaw. This refusal not only preserved Soviet neutrality in the eyes of Britain but helped convince East European powers that the Soviets were not only strong but just.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 176

Next the Soviets presented Lithuania with her ancient capital Vilno, seized 20 years earlier by the Poles. It was an important gift, being twice the size of the present capital Kaunas; its 550,000 population increased Lithuania’s total population by 20 percent. Molotov later stated that it was not given because Vilno had a Lithuanian population; after 20 years of Polish domination, most of Vilno’s inhabitants were Poles and Jews. “The Soviet government took into consideration…the historic past and…the national aspirations of the Lithuanian people.” In other words that gift was made, not for the sake of Vilno, which didn’t particularly want to be transferred, but for the psychological effect on the Lithuanians.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 176

They added that the Soviets could have demanded anything up to annexation and complete Sovietization of their countries and neither Germany nor the Allies could have stopped it.” Their internal organization was no more affected by the new alliance than the governments in South America are affected by the acquisition of naval bases by the United States. The countries were not even required to join in the defense of the USSR unless the attack upon it came directly across their territory. Baltic diplomats and press therefore commented on the shrewdness and reasonableness of Moscow and on the expected trade advantages; they much resented the term “vassal” applied to them by the Anglo-American press.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 177-178

They [the Baltic Germans–ed.] formed the upper class in the Baltic states. For centuries they had been the outpost of German imperialism eastward; they owned the big estates and dominated the industries. At the time of the Russian revelation, much of the native population sided with the Bolsheviks; it was the Baltic Germans who overthrew the local Red governments, calling the troops of the Kaiser to their aid. The removal of these Baltic Germans by Soviet pressure on Hitler scattered what was, for the USSR the most dangerous Nazi fifth column anywhere in Europe. Baltic newspapers expressed regret mingled with pleasure at their going, and remarked that it gave the natives a chance at the better — paid jobs.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 178

In a sense, the expulsion of the Baltic Germans and the Soviet penetration into the Baltic countries seem to have been direct retribution for the German assault on Poland. A careful reading of the declarations of both Hitler and von Ribbentrop makes this evident.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 225

Americans still speak of Stalin as “Hitler’s accomplice” in cynically dividing Poland. But Winston Churchill said in a radio broadcast October 1st: “The Soviets have stopped the Nazis in Eastern Poland; I only wish they were doing it as our allies.” Bernard Shaw, in the London Times, gave “three cheers for Stalin,” who had given Hitler “his first set-back.” Even Prime Minister Chamberlain sourly told the House of Commons, October 26: “It has been

necessary for the Red Army to occupy part of Poland as protection against Germany." The Polish government-in-exile, which was in flight through Romania at the time but reached London some weeks later, never ventured to declare that Soviet march an act of war.
The population of the area did not oppose the Russian troops but welcomed them with joy. Most were not Poles but Ukrainians and Byelorussians. U.S. Ambassador Biddle reported that the people accepted the Russians "as doing a policing job." Dispatches told of Russian troops marching side-by-side with retiring Polish troops, of Ukrainian girls hanging garlands on Russian tanks. The Polish commander of the Lvov garrison, who for several days had been fighting against German attacks on three sides, quickly surrendered to the Red Army when it appeared on the fourth side, saying: "There is no Polish government left to give me orders and I have no orders to fight the Bolsheviks."
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 80

The American view that Stalin and Hitler had petitioned Poland in advance is not borne out by the way the partitioning occurred. The boundary between Germans and Russians changed three times before it was fixed at a conference, September 28. It is unlikely that German troops drove all the way to Lvov and attacked it for several days in order to give the city to the USSR. Nor is it likely that the Russians would have incurred casualties by rushing to Vilna, if the city had been allocated to them in advance.
"Respect for Russia has greatly increased; the peasants unquestionably prefer Russians to Germans along the border," read an AP cable from past Europe, September 27th.
The march into eastern Poland, thus, seems not a connivance with Hitler but the first great check the Soviets gave to Hitler under the Non-Aggression Pact.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 81

When it became absolutely clear that the Polish state had collapsed, then the Soviet forces entered Poland (on September 17) in order to safeguard her defenses and the people of territories invaded by Soviet forces alike. The truth is that the Soviet army was greeted by the local population as liberators and heroes.
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 572

And indeed, the invading Red Army units were welcomed by many Ukrainian, Belorussian, and Jewish inhabitants of this territory where the dominant Poles were an ethnic minority living mainly in the towns and the non-Polish population suffered discrimination.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 601

PRIESTS WELCOME BOLSHEVIKS

Dovzhenko laughed when I asked him about the attitude of the Ukrainian priests. "It is probably the first place where priests welcomed the Bolsheviks," he said…. Under the Poles they were constantly being arrested for such crimes as "false registry of names," which meant that they registered children in the Ukrainian language instead of in Polish.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 173

PEOPLE EXPERIENCE FREEDOM WITH FURY

There is no fury greater than that of people who, after centuries of oppression, have glimpsed freedom for a little while.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 174

FINNISH INDEPENDENCE CAME FROM BOLSHEVIKS

Finnish independence was a gift from the Bolshevik revolution. Any schoolteacher in present-day Finland would lose her job if she mentioned this incontrovertible historic fact. When Kerensky came to power, Finland applied for independence. The Kerensky government refused. Neither Britain, France, America, nor any foreign power approved of Finland's independence in those days. Only the Bolsheviks approved.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 180

FINLAND SERVED THE NAZIS

This early democratically elected Finland was quickly suppressed. Baron Mannerheim, a tsarist general, called in German troops to overthrow the government.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 180

Finland was therefore known to the Soviet leaders as the most hostile of all the Baltic states.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 182

With the aid of German officers and engineers, Finland had been converted into a powerful fortress to serve as a base for the invasion of the Soviet Union. Twenty-three military airports had been constructed on Finnish soil, capable of accommodating 10 times as many planes as there were in the Finnish Air Force.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 332

As for the Finns, they carried out unrestrained propaganda against the Soviet Union. There can be no doubt that Finland was eager to join in a campaign against the Soviet Union.
Schecter, Jerrold. Trans & Ed. Khrushchev Remembers: the Glasnost Tapes. Boston: Little, Brown, c1990, p. 51

BOLSHEVIKS GAVE FINNS GOOD TERMS

Moscow first proposed an alliance such a she had with her other Baltic states, but almost at once dropped the proposal in view of Finland's clear unwillingness…. The Soviets wanted the frontier moved back far enough to take Leningrad out of gunshot from Finland; they did not ask, as some have thought, for the Mannerheim Line. They also wanted some small islands that covered Leningrad's sea approach. They offered in return twice as much equally good but less strategic land; later they raised the offer. They also asked a 30 year lease of Hangoe, or some other point at the entrance to the Gulf of Finland, as a naval base.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 183

In the peace terms the Soviet Union exacted from Finland considerably more territory adjacent to Leningrad than had originally been asked….The naval base at Hangoe was secured. But the Soviets returned Petsamo and the nickel mines near it, which they had

captured. They asked no indemnities but agreed on a treaty whereby they supplied Finland with food. As terms go these were not excessive.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 191

Sir Stafford Cripps, British ambassador to Moscow, thinks that the terms might have been stiffer. He told me that all the Soviet annexations from Finland to Bessarabia had been necessary strategic moves against the coming attack by Hitler. He added: “the Soviets may be sorry someday that they didn’t take more of Finland when they could.”
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 191

Sir Stafford was wrong. Stalin’s sense of timing is better than Sir Stafford’s.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 191

EASTERN EUROPE SUPPORT FOR RED ARMY MARCHING IN

The most applauded folk in all Lithuania during my visit were the Red Army Boys. At concerts, dances, trade union meetings, I heard them mentioned scores of times and never without cheers.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 200

Old-time Lithuanians said: “we have seen in our lives three armies — the old tsarist Army, the German Army of occupation during the first World War, and now these Soviet troops. This is by far the most cultured Army we have ever known.” As boosters for the Soviet Union’s reputation, the Red Army did an excellent job.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 202

At the American Legation they explained that [Lithuanian] people were afraid not to come to the elections. But Smetona [right-wing Lithuanian president] had openly used police terror to make the peasants come to previous elections, yet they had not come. It was not terror that brought them to the places I visited; it was new hope.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 208

On July 21, 1940, Lithuania became a Soviet Socialist Republic by unanimous vote of the People’s Sejm…. A few hours later, on the same day, Latvia and Estonia followed.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 212

What is the use of all these little nations? They only put on heavy taxes for big armies and then their armies are no good anyway. We see what is happening in Europe to all the little countries.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 214

They secured a wide buffer belt from the coast of Finland to the Black Sea.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 220

Summing up, it seemed that life was no worse in Rumania for those who had stayed behind to greet the Russians, and that there were definite improvements for most people. The conservative peasant still had his land and kept more of the product of his labor. There were

still plenty of cattle about. The worker had freedom and a sense of new power. The Jew was out of the concentration camps. He had equal rights and a chance to live. All had religious freedom; churches and their institutions were not being molested.
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 38

In his speech to the supreme Soviet on October 31, 1939, Molotov said:
“When the Red Army marched into these regions it was greeted with general sympathy by the Ukrainian and Byelorussian population who welcomed our troops as liberators from the yoke of the gentry, from the yoke of the Polish landlords and capitalists.”
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 572

Some writers have condemned the “division of Poland” between Hitler and Stalin, the “occupation” of the Baltic states, and the “immoral collusion” of the two dictators. But the situation was more complicated. As a witness to the events that unfolded in the fall of 1939, I cannot forget the atmosphere in western Byelorussia and western Ukraine in those days. The people there met us with flowers, they held bread-breaking ceremonies to welcome us, gave us fruits and milk. Owners of small cafes offered free meals to Soviet officers. Those were genuine feelings. The people believed that the Red Army would protect them from Hitler’s terror. Similar things were happening in the Baltic countries. As the Wehrmacht units marched nearer, many people fled to the east, looking for safety in the territory controlled by the Red Army.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin’s Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 278

Units of the Byelorussians and Kiev special military districts met no resistance in crossing the Polish frontier. Stalin read dispatches from Timoshenko, Vatutin, Purkaev, Gordov, Khrushchev and others. One from Mekhlis drew his special attention:
“The Ukrainian population is meeting our army like true liberators…. The population is greeting our troops and officers; they bring out apples, pies, drinking water and try to thrust them into our soldiers’ hands. As a rule, even advance units are being met by entire populations coming out on to the streets. Many weep with joy.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 359

The troops were allowed to use their weapons only if attacked. Only isolated armed clashes took place. There was in fact no resistance. The ethnic majority, being Ukrainians and Byelorussians, sincerely welcomed the arrival of the Soviet forces.
…In June 1940 the Soviet government succeeded in recovering Bessarabia and the northern Bukovina by peaceful means, and by agreement with the Rumanian government the frontier was re-established along the rivers Prut and Danube. The Moldavian Soviet Republic had been formed.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 361

The decision to take over Western Ukraine and Byelorussia, in the face of advancing German Armies, was in my view justified, and it was broadly in accord with the desire of the local working-class population.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 386

I phoned the General Headquarters at once. Stalin told me:

“Don’t disarm the Bulgarian troops. Let them be while they are waiting for orders from their government.”
By this simple act the General Headquarters of the Supreme High Command expressed its full confidence in the Bulgarian people and army who gave a fraternal welcome to the Red Army as their liberator from Nazi occupation and from the Tsarist pro-Fascist regime.
Zhukov, Georgi. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 548

RUSSIAN-GERMAN NON-AGGRESSION PACT WAS NEEDED

The non-aggression pact was not an alliance…. Without violating the pact, the Soviet Union was free to oppose, even by armed force, a German attack on Turkey or Yugoslavia. She agreed not to take part in aggression against Germany, but had promised nothing about resisting an aggression that the Nazis might start…. The pact did more; the Soviet Union, acting as a neutral, blocked Nazi expansion on several important occasions more effectively than could have been done by engaging in war.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 220

The pact was accompanied by a trade agreement in which the USSR agreed to supply Germany with certain raw materials in exchange for German machines. No estimates ever made of this trade place it as high as that carried on in 1931 between the USSR and German Republic — in other words, normal commercial trade. The USSR never became the “arsenal” for Germany in anything like the sense in which America, while still technically neutral, became the arsenal for Great Britain. America has even been the arsenal for Japan in her war against China to a far greater extent then be USSR ever was for Germany. The only commodity sent by the Soviets to Germany that could be classed as a war commodity was oil; the highest foreign guesses assume that the Soviets may possibly have sent as much as a million tons. America’s supply of oil to Japan even under the government licensing system was more than three times as much. In the second year of the pact, the Soviets signed a trade treaty with Romania up by which they got Romanian oil that Hitler presumably wanted.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 220

There is no proof of the often–made assertion that the non-aggression pact provoked Hitler’s march into Poland.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 220

The boundary between Germany and the USSR in Poland was changed three times. This suggests a rapid improvising by two powers that do not wish to fight each other, rather than a pre-determination of boundaries.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 222

The Soviet Union, in the 22 months of the pact’s duration, had checked Nazi expansion more than it was checked by all of Europe’s Armed Forces — Polish, Norwegian, Dutch, Belgian, French, Greek, Yugoslav, and British — combined.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 234

Chamberlain spoke of the pact as a “bomb shell” and “a very unpleasant surprise.” But this was pretense. He was not surprised save at the sudden realization that he had been outplayed in the game of “lets you and him fight.”
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 373

In the last analysis neither the USSR nor the western democracies won the diplomatic game of 1939. Both lost. Only Hitler won. The fact remains that Anglo-French policy gave Stalin and Molotov no viable alternative to the course they finally adopted.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 379

If Stalin himself did not want to go under, he must fight for the existence of British-American ‘capitalism.’ To such a paradoxical result had the law of historical development led. Stalin had meant to be the leader of a world revolution. The destiny of his success forced him to become simply a Russian statesman. As such he had procured for the Soviet Union a respite of nearly 18 months. His policy did not lead to the onset of the world revolution, but it did bring Russia into the Second World War under the most favorable conditions that could be secured. The feared war on two fronts, which would probably had been the end of Russia, had been avoided. The danger had existed all the time that Russia might be faced alone with an enemy of superior strength, or even a number of enemies. Now the Soviet Union entered the war at the side of the most powerful states in the world. As head of the Russian state, Stalin had made good.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 358

From that time on, Russia used the breathing-space granted by the Pact, not only to prepare for defense but to block Hitler’s penetration of East Europe through measures short of war. Hitler revealed this later in his declaration of war against the USSR and bitterly listed the Russian acts that blocked him.
Moscow’s first move was to build a wide buffer belt along her western border by alliances…. Moscow invited Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia to send foreign ministers to Moscow to discuss an alliance. One by one, they went and signed…. The Baltic states, themselves, resented the term “vassal” applied to them by the Anglo-American press. They thought themselves not badly off. Their internal organization was not at the time affected; they merely gave bases to the USSR in return for help in their defense.
The dramatic expulsion of half a million Germans from the Baltic States followed. How bitterly Hitler resented this was shown in his declaration of war when he told how “far more than 500,000 men and women…were forced to leave their homeland…. To all this I remained silent, because I had to.” These are not words of a complacent victor. The Baltic Germans were the upper class in the Baltic States; some had been there as landed barons for centuries. It was they who, at the time of the Russian Revolution, brought in the German troops to overthrow local red governments. Their expulsion scattered what was for the USSR the most dangerous fifth-column in Europe.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 82

Many say that the treaty with Hitlerite Germany allowed us to do what we wanted with Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland, and Romania. Naturally, we understood that there were concessions to us in the Treaty and that they were to our advantage. I want to say this straightforwardly. The access we gained to the Baltic Sea significantly improved our strategic situation. By reaching the shores of the Baltic, we deprived the Western powers of a foothold

that they might use against us–and that they actually had used during the civil war–for establishing a front against the USSR.
Schecter, Jerrold. Trans & Ed. Khrushchev Remembers: the Glasnost Tapes. Boston: Little, Brown, c1990, p. 51

At half-past-six on the afternoon of July 3, 1941, the day after his return to Moscow, Stalin spoke to his people:
“One must ask how could it have happened that the Soviet Government consented to conclude the Pact of Non-Aggression with such felons and monsters as Hitler and Ribbentrop. Had not the Soviet government thereby made a mistake? Of course not. A Pact of Non-Aggression is a pact of peace between two countries. It was just such a Pact that Germany offered us in 1939. Could the Soviet Government reject such an offer? I think no peace-loving country should reject an agreement with a neighboring State, even if at the head of that state stand such monsters and cannibals as Hitler and Ribbentrop. This, naturally, depends on the indispensable conditions that the peace agreement does not infringe either directly or indirectly the territorial integrity, independence, and honor of the peace-loving country.”
Fishman and Hutton. The Private Life of Josif Stalin. London: W. H. Allen, 1962, p. 141

SELFLESS AID TO OTHER COUNTRIES

Second Meeting of Hoxha with Stalin
March-April 1949

I mention this, Stalin continued, to show how important it is to bear in mind the concrete conditions of each country, because the conditions of one country are not always identical with those of other countries. That is why no one should copy our experience or that of others, but should only study it and profit from it by applying it according to the concrete conditions of his own country.
“The chief of your General Staff,” Comrade Stalin told me, “has sent us some requests for your army. We ordered that all of them should be met. Have you received what you wanted?”
“We have not yet received any information about this,” I said.

At this moment Stalin called in a general and charged him with gathering precise information about this question. After a few minutes the telephone rang. Stalin took up the receiver and, after listening to what was said, informed me that the materiel was en route.

“Did you get the rails?” he asked. “Is the railway completed?”
“We got them,” I told him, “and we have inaugurated the railway, and continued to outline the main tasks of the plan for the economic and cultural development of the country and the strengthening of its defenses.”
On this occasion I also presented our requests for aid from the Soviet Union.
Just as previously, Comrade Stalin received our requests sympathetically and said to us quite openly:
“Comrades, we are a big country, but you know that we have not yet eliminated all the grave consequences of the war. However, we shall help you today and in the future, perhaps not all that much, but with those possibilities we have. We understand that you have to set up

and develop the sector of socialist industry, and in this direction we agree to fulfill all the requests you have presented to us, as well as those for agriculture."
Then, smiling, he added:
"But will the Albanians themselves work?"
I understood why he asked me this question. It was the result of the evil-intended information of the Armenian huckster, Mikoyan, who, at a meeting I had with him, not only spoke to me in a language quite unlike that of Stalin, but also used harsh terms in his criticisms about the realization of plans in our country, alleging that our people did not work, etc. His intention was to reduce the rate and amount of aid. This was always Mikoyan's stand. But Stalin accorded us everything we sought.
"We shall also send you the cadres you asked for," he said, "and they will spare no effort to help you but, of course, they will not stay in Albania forever. Therefore, comrades, you must train your own cadres, your own specialists, to replace ours. This is an important matter. However many foreign cadres come to your country, you will still need your own cadres. Therefore, comrades," he advised us, "you must open your university, which will be a great centre for training your future cadres."
"We have opened the first institutes," I told Comrade Stalin, "and work is going ahead in them, but we are still only at the beginning. Apart from experience and textbooks, we also lack the cadres necessary for opening the university."
"The important thing is to get started," he said. "Then step by step, everything will be achieved. For our part, we shall assist you both with literature and with specialists, in order to help increase the number of higher institutes which are the basis for the creation of the university in the future."
"The Soviet specialists," Comrade Stalin went on, "will be paid by the Albanian government the same salaries as the Albanian specialists. Don't grant them any favor more than your specialists enjoy."
"The Soviet specialists come from far away," I replied, "and we cannot treat them the same as ours." Comrade Stalin objected at once:
"No, no, whether they, come from Azerbaijan or any other part of the Soviet Union, we have our rules for the treatment of the specialists we send to the assistance of the fraternal peoples. It is their duty to work with all their strength as internationalist revolutionaries, to work for the good of Albania just as for the good of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Government undertakes to make up the necessary difference in their salaries."
Hoxha, Enver. With Stalin: Memoirs. Tirana: 8 N'ntori Pub. House, 1979.

We assisted Spanish democracy, which had not yet become Socialist. We assisted China in her struggle against Japanese imperialism, although China is not yet a Socialist country.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 241

COMINTERN WAS NECESSARY REGARDLESS

It has been asserted that the Comintern was formed as an appendage of the Soviet Foreign Office. That assertion I regard as wholly inaccurate. There is ample evidence in Lenin's writings to prove that he would have established it even had there been no Russian Revolution.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 190

STALIN SIGNED WITH HITLER BECAUSE OF ALLIED REJECTION

This [the masses having to choose between bourgeois democracy and fascism] continued until 1939, when the reluctance of the non-aggressor powers to ally themselves with the Soviet Union led Stalin to sign the non-aggression pact with Germany.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 198

SOVIETS BANKED ON CAPITALIST DISAGREEMENTS

While they [communist parties of other countries] recognized differences in the capitalist countries and differences between them, there is always the assumption in their policy that the capitalists would converge into a common front against the USSR…. But once again the contradictory interests of the capitalist States intervened and saved us [communist parties] from that disaster.
Fortunately capitalism as a whole has never been able to secure world unity on anything.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 199

STALIN TRIED TO AID THE WORLD'S WORKERS

Naturally the capitalist elements of every country, each influenced by their own special interests, accused the Bolsheviks in general and the Soviet Government in particular of responsibility for all the "disturbances" and "unrest" in the world. Stalin answered the critics: "The accusation does us too much honor! Unfortunately, we're not yet strong enough to give all the colonial countries direct aid in their struggle for liberation…"
Russian trade unions collected 1 million pounds from their members to aid locked-out British miners. This incident undoubtedly paved the way to the severing of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in 1927, but the severance did not divert Stalin from the policy of aiding the workers of other countries.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 206

To be sure, Stalin never ignored the interests of the Soviet state and he was often cautious to the point of pessimism about the prospects for immediate revolution. But the letters show that he was also capable of hope and enthusiasm when revolution seemed to be on the move and ready to put his money where his mouth was.
… All in all, Stalin comes out of the letters with his revolutionary credentials in good order.
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 36

In an October 7, 1929, letter to Molotov Stalin stated, "I think that it's time to think about organizing an uprising by a revolutionary movement in Manchuria…. We need to organize two double regiment brigades, chiefly made up of Chinese, outfit them with everything necessary (artillery, machine guns, and so on), put Chinese at the head of the brigade, and send them into Manchuria with the following assignment: to stir up a rebellion among the Manchurian troops, to have reliable soldiers from these forces join them…to occupy Harbin, and after gathering force, to declare Chang Hsueh-liang overthrown, establish a revolutionary government (massacre the landowners, bring in the peasants, create soviets in the cities and towns, and so on). This is necessary. This we can and, I think, should do….

…The matter will have to be put on the agenda of the Central Committee plenum. I should think that Bukharin is going to be kicked out of the Politburo."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 182

When Stalin looked out onto the capitalist world and the survivals within it of its "feudal" predecessor, he saw that it was evil. He saw that the overwhelming majority of the world's people were compelled to work back-breakingly hard just to continue to exist in dreadful poverty, starvation, ignorance, humiliation, oppression, and war. Many Westerners are tempted to say that Stalin and the other Communists exaggerated the misery of the tolling masses of the world, but after looking carefully we realize that it is impossible for anyone, even Stalin, to exaggerate the horror of being poor.
Randall, Francis. Stalin's Russia. New York: Free Press,1965, p. 81

[In an interview with an American labor delegation on September 7, 1927 Stalin stated] But what would happen if the Communist Party of America did appeal to the Communist Party of the USSR for assistance? I think that the Communist Party of the USSR would render it what assistance it could. Indeed, what would be the worth of the Communist Party, particularly as it is in power, if it refused to do what it could to assist the Communist Party of another country living under the yoke of capitalism? I should say that such a Communist Party would not be worth a farthing.
Let us assume that the American working-class had come into power after overthrowing its bourgeoisie; …would the American working-class refuse such assistance? I think it would cover it self with disgrace if it hesitated to render assistance.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 10, p. 136

STALIN FELT FULLY JUSTIFIED IN SIGNING THE PACT

It was a dramatic moment when in the conference room of the Kremlin, Stalin and Molotov, the leaders of world revolution, stood side-by-side with Ribbentrop the spokesman of Hitler, the leader of world counter-revolution. But Stalin was unperturbed. His evaluation of the course of events and of the forces engaged was not that of the frantic critics in the West. Rightly or wrongly, he was convinced that he had averted, at least for a time, a war with Nazi Germany in which the Chamberlain and Daladier Governments of Britain and France would have become first Hitler's arms merchants and finally his co-belligerents. He felt that his conscience had nothing with which to reproach him. He laughed to scorn those who regarded the pact as a wedding of Bolshevism and Nazism, and regarded their attacks as the chatter of fools. Why should he be regarded as a criminal for signing such an agreement when the statesmen of the critics' own governments had been in constant political and personal association with the leaders of Nazism and Fascism, and had made pacts with them without consulting the Soviet Union or even the League of Nations, of which they were members and with which they were pledged to prior consultation?
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 215-16

As for Stalin's decision to sign the Treaty, that was also a political maneuver. He thought he was deceiving Hitler, turning him against the West. I don't think either Stalin or Hitler took the Treaty seriously. Each was pursuing his own goals. Hitler's were those that we knew from

Mein Kampf. Stalin understood correctly what Hitler was up to, but he thought he could deflect the blow of the German army away from the USSR and direct it at the West, and in that way buy time. Of course, the West, meanwhile, did everything it could to turn Hitler against the East.
Schecter, Jerrold. Trans & Ed. Khrushchev Remembers: the Glasnost Tapes. Boston: Little, Brown, c1990, p. 50

These events served to feed the suspicion and arouse the dissatisfaction of the realistic Soviet leaders, including Stalin. Apparently they got “fed up” with attempting to stop the aggressors by participation in European affairs, and characteristically boldly reversed their attitude and decided to secure their own position by making a pact of nonaggression with Germany, which would assure peace for Russia, at least for a time, regardless of any possibility of war in Europe.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 456

At the same time, however, it was obvious that a rapprochement between the Soviet Union and France, marked by the signing of a mutual assistance treaty, was proceeding at an even more intense pace. The Soviet Union had also joined the League of Nations and was conducting intensive diplomatic and political activities aimed at curbing the aggressive aims and actions of the ruling circles in Germany, Italy, and Japan.
The policy of the Soviet Union found very little support among the ruling parties of England and France. They, like Hitler, were pursuing a double game at that time, playing now an anti-Soviet card, now an antifascist one. Under the circumstances, Soviet diplomats also had to play a double game….
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 725

…As Stalin learned, his negotiating partners were, moreover, simultaneously continuing their secret efforts to reach an acceptable understanding with Hitler. It was clear that Britain and France were simply playing for time while seeking the most favorable outcome from their own point of view and without regard for Soviet interests. In effect, the Western powers offered no concrete ideas for joint action against Germany. Their intention was plainly to let the USSR play the chief part in resisting possible German aggression without giving guarantees that they would share a proportion of the burden.
…By the end of the summer of 1939 in had become plain to the Soviet leadership that, with Nazi Germany to the West and militaristic Japan to the East, in had no one on whom to rely. The argument Stalin had put forward at the 18th Congress seemed justified:
anti-communism and a lack of a desire by Britain and France to pursue a policy of collective security had opened the sluice gates for aggression by the anti-Comintern pact. London and Paris were blinded to the real danger by their self-interest and hatred of socialism.
Short-sighted politicians were saying, let Hitler make his anti-Communist crusade in the east. He seemed to them the lesser evil.
The Soviet Union faced an extremely limited choice, but Stalin realized that it must be made, however negative the reaction in other countries. As a pragmatist, he cast ideological principles aside and, once he was sure the Anglo-French-Soviet talks would not produce results, he resorted to the German option which was being offered so assiduously by Berlin. He thought there was now no other choice. The alternative was to place the USSR in confrontation with the broad anti-Soviet front, which would be far worse. He had no time to

think of what successive generations would say. The war was at hand and he had to postpone its outbreak at any cost.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 351

Looking back, the Non-Aggression Pact appears extremely tarnished, and morally an alliance with the Western democracies would have been immeasurably preferable. But neither Britain nor France was ready for such an alliance. From the point of view of state interest the Soviet Union had no other acceptable choice. A refusal to take any step would hardly have stopped Germany. The Wehrmacht and the nation were tuned to such a degree of readiness that the invasion of Poland was a foregone conclusion. Assistance to Poland was hampered not only by Warsaw's attitude, but also by the Soviet Union's unpreparedness. Rejection of the pact would could have led to the formation of a broad anti-Soviet alliance and threatened the very existence of socialism.
In any case, Britain and France had both signed similar pacts with Germany in 1938 and were conducting secret talks with Hitler in the summer of 1939 with the aim of creating an anti-Soviet bloc. It is commonly suggested that the pact triggered the start of the Second World War, while it is commonly forgotten that by then the Western powers had already sacrificed Austria, Czechoslovakia and Memel to Hitler, and that Britain and France had done nothing to save the Spanish republic.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 356

After the war, the French Communist leader Bonte stated that the Kemsley visit, along with knowledge of the clandestine meeting between Goering and the British businessman, had been the chief factors in influencing the Soviets to seek an agreement with Germany. While this is certainly an exaggeration, there can be no doubt that the undercover dealings did have a strong influence on Stalin, as well as on Hitler, who was convinced by them that Britain would not fight. How could the Soviet leader trust a government which continued to indulge in such underhand activities while supposedly negotiating seriously with him? Admittedly, he was himself talking to the Germans, but he could always justify this as insurance, in case the Allied talks failed.
In keeping his options open until the very last moment, Stalin does seem to have been prepared to give the allies every opportunity to succeed.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 230

To the people of the USSR and foreign Communists, this Soviet-German Pact was a blow. True Communists were dismayed that Socialist Russia should make a treaty with the arch-enemy Hitler. They regarded Fascism as "the most aggressive form of Capitalism and Imperialism."
But Stalin had his answer. He called the unpopular pact a "Marriage of Reason" and slowly the Soviet nation swallowed the pill, accepted their leader's explanation, and even began to agree that Stalin had made "one of the wisest moves in history."
Fishman and Hutton. The Private Life of Josif Stalin. London: W. H. Allen, 1962, p. 131

At half-past-six on the afternoon of July 3, 1941, the day after his return to Moscow, Stalin spoke to his people:
"What did we gain by concluding a Pact of Non-Aggression with Germany? We assured our country peace during 18 months, as well as an opportunity of preparing our forces for the

event of Germany's attacking our country. This was a gain for us, and a loss for Fascist Germany."
Fishman and Hutton. The Private Life of Josif Stalin. London: W. H. Allen, 1962, p. 142

STALIN MOVED INTO POLISH TERRITORY WHEN JUSTIFIED

Accordingly, in the hour when the Polish government and general staff abandoned their country to its fate, with a promptitude that once more surprised the world Stalin set the Red Army on the march towards the "Curzon line." This line, which had been universally recognized as the Russo-Polish boundary until the Poles tore a great area of white Russia and the Ukraine from the Soviets during the intervention wars, meant an advance through territory containing 12 million inhabitants. The banner of Revolution was raised, and to the rescue of these 12 million former Soviet subjects the Red Army hastened.
However the argument may go, the fact is that Stalin did not send the Red Army into the onetime Polish territory until there was no government left in Poland and the country was wide-open for the Nazis to acquire land as far beyond the "Curzon Line" as they chose.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 215

Their [the Russians] immediate purpose was to occupy as quickly as possible the Polish area whose possession they had wrung from Germany as part of the price for their pact of friendship and their supplies of oil, grain, manganese, and cotton. That they did this with no regard for Polish or Anglo-American public opinion is neither to their detriment nor their credit; it simply showed that Stalin, fully alive to the danger of Nazi invasion, was determined to put as much space as possible between his prepared defense zone and the coming blitzkrieg.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 251

STALIN FEELS THE COMINTERN MUST BE DISBANDED

Stalin stated, "It is true that at one time I did think, with Lenin, that the process of world Revolution could be led by a centralized international Communist Party–the Communist international. Experience, however, has proved that this is not possible. Hence the dissolution of the Communist international and the decision that each Communist Party must pursue its own aims and tasks independently, guided by the teachings of Marx and Lenin and the experiences of the Comintern…."
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 241

In this regard, Stalin said on 11 May 1943, "Experience has shown that one cannot have an international directing center for all countries. This became evident in Marx's lifetime, in Lenin's, and today. There should perhaps be a transition to regional associations, for example, of South America, of the United States and Canada, of certain European countries, and so on, but even this must not be rushed….
Dimitrov, Georgi, The Diary of Georgi Dimitrov, 1933-1949. Ed. Ivo Banac. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 271

On 21 May 1943 Stalin explained that experience has shown that in Marx's time, in Lenin's time, and now, it is impossible to direct the working-class movement of all countries from a

single international center. Especially now, in wartime conditions, when Communist parties in Germany, Italy, and other countries have the tasks of overthrowing their governments and carrying out defeatist tactics, while Communist parties in the USSR, England, America and other countries, on the contrary, have the task of supporting their governments to the fullest for the immediate destruction of the enemy. We overestimated our resources when we were forming the Comintern and believed that we would be able to direct the movement in all countries. That was our error. The further existence of the Comintern would discredit the idea of the International, which we do not desire.

There is one other reason for dissolving the Comintern, which is not mentioned in the resolution. That is the fact that the Communist parties making up the Comintern are being falsely accused of supposedly being agents of a foreign state, and this is impeding their work in the broad masses. Dissolving the Comintern knocks this trump card out of the enemy's hands. The step now been taken will undoubtedly strengthen the Communist parties as national working-class parties and will at the same time reinforce the internationalism of the popular masses, whose base is the Soviet Union.
Dimitrov, Georgi, The Diary of Georgi Dimitrov, 1933-1949. Ed. Ivo Banac. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 275

SU REPEATEDLY SEEKS TO UNITE ANTI-FASCIST NATIONS

In face of the growing war threat, the Soviet government repeatedly called for united action by all countries menaced by fascist aggression.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 270

The verdict of the record is unmistakable and obvious: responsibility for the breakdown of collective security rests on the Western democracies, not on the Soviet Union.
The melancholy details of the record need no restatement, except as they bear upon the situation in which the USSR found itself by 1939. Eight times during the preceding eight years the aggressors posed to the Western democracies a test of their willingness to organize and enforce peace. Eight times the Soviet Union called for collective action against aggression. Eight times the Western power evaded their responsibilities and blessed the aggressors.
The first test was posed by the Japanese seizure of Manchuria in September 1931. The second test was posed by Hitler's repudiation of the disarmament clauses of Versailles in March 1935. The third test was posed by the fascist invasion of Ethiopia in October 1935. The fourth test was posed by Hitler's remilitarization of the Rhineland in March 1936. The fifth test was posed by the fascist attack of the Spanish Republic. The sixth test was posed by the resumption of the Japanese attack on China in July 1937. The seventh test was posed by the nazi seizure of Austria in March 1938. The eighth test was posed by the unleasheding, through propaganda, diplomacy, and terrorism, of the nazi campaign against Prague in the summer 1938.
Chamberlain flew three times to Germany on the principal that "if you don't concede the first time, fly, fly, again.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 275-80

On May 3, 1939, Litvinov resigned as Commissar for Foreign Affairs. He was the incarnation of collective security.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 366

By March 1938 there was a ample reason for Soviet leaders to fear war. Japanese aggression in the Soviet Far East and in China, the Spanish fascists' victories over the army of the Spanish Republic and the International Brigades, Germany's increasingly menacing policies and its occupation of Austria, and the anemic reaction of Western powers to these events and their reticence in supporting Soviet collective security efforts provided sufficient cause for concern in Moscow.
Chase, William J., Enemies Within the Gates? translated by Vadim A. Staklo, New Haven: Yale University Press, c2001, p. 294.

STALIN OFFERED FINLAND VERY GOOD TERMS

During the first week of October, 1939, while still negotiating its new treaties with the Baltic states, the Soviet Government proposed a mutual assistance pact with Finland. Moscow offered to cede several thousand square miles of Soviet territory on central Karelia in exchange for some strategic Finnish islands near Leningrad, a portion of the Karelian Isthmus, and a 30 year lease on the port of Hango for the construction of a Soviet naval base. The Soviet leaders regarded these latter territories as essential to the defense of the Red naval base at Kronstadt and the city of Leningrad.
…But the pro-Nazi clique dominating the Finnish government refused to make any concessions and broke off all the negotiations.
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 333

Then Finland sued for peace, and, surprisingly, the Kremlin asked little more than its terms before the war began–a frontier somewhat more distant, the Mannerheim Line disrmed, and the occupation by Soviet units of strategic points like the island of Hango.
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1941, p. 179

Having secured the southern Baltic against surprise attack, Moscow approached Finland, which holds the gateway of the north. Though Finland's independence was a free gift from the Russian Revolution, Finland was known as the most hostile of the Baltic States. That early democratic Finland had been bloodily overthrown by Baron Mannerheim, an ex-Czarist general, with the aid of the kaiser's troops. Finland had become a base for international actions against the USSR…. Finland's air fields were built by the Nazis. Made to accommodate 2,000 planes, when Finland had 150, they were clearly designed for use by a major power….
The Finnish delegation came to Moscow October 11th. The Soviets proposed an alliance, but dropped it since the Finns were unwilling. Then they proposed an exchange of territory to protect Leningrad. They asked that the border be moved back enough to take Leningrad out of gunshot and that some small islands, guarding the sea approach, be given to the USSR. They offered in return twice as much territory, equally good but less strategic. They also asked a 30 year lease of Hangoe or some other point at the entrance to the Gulf of Finland–that long thin waterway that leads to Leningrad–as a naval base. President Cajander, of Finland, broadcast a statement that the terms did not affect Finland's integrity.

A month of bargaining went on in which Moscow raised her offers. Finland stood to get nearly 3 to 1 in the territorial trade; and Hangoe base would be held, not 30 years, but only during the Anglo-German war and would then come to Finland fully equipped. Many Finns were boasting of the “smart bargain” their diplomats were getting. Then, suddenly, the Finnish negotiators broke off discussions with the cryptic remark that circumstances would decide when and by whom they would be renewed….
So when Finnish artillery shot over the border in late November and killed Red Army men, Moscow sharply protested, and, when Finland disregarded the protest, Soviet troops marched into Finland on November 30, 1939. Finland declared war and appealed for foreign aid.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 83

Compared with our own vast territorial and natural resources, Finland had little to offer us in the way of land and forests. Our sole consideration was security– Leningrad was in danger.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 152

On April 8, 1938, the NKVD resident in Finland, Rybkin, was summoned to the Kremlin,… Rybkin was ordered to offer the Finnish government a secret deal, sharing interests in Scandinavia and economic cooperation with the Soviet Union, on the conditions of their signing a pact of mutual economic and military assistance in case of aggression by third parties. The pact was to guarantee Finland eternal safety from attack by European powers and mutual economic privileges for the two countries on a permanent basis. Included in the proposals was a division of spheres of military and economic influence over the Baltic areas that lay between Finland and the Soviet Union.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 94

On Oct. 14, 1939, a Soviet note made firm proposals for an exchange of territory, together with a 30 year lease of the Hango peninsula and frontier adjustments in the Petsamo area and on the Karelian Isthmus. The Finns refused to yield at any point. Attempts to negotiate continued, but made no progress. On Nov. 13, 1939, Stalin broke them off. His patience was exhausted. He decided to use force.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 312

Encouraged by the success of his [Stalin] measures on the western borders, he now turned his attention to the northwest. He was worried by the proximity of the Finnish border to Leningrad and Finland’s obvious inclination towards Germany. Talks were conducted with the aim of compelling the Finns to move their border further from Leningrad for appropriate territorial compensation, but the Finnish foreign minister, Tanner, was under instruction from the country’s head of state, Field Marshal Mannerheim, a former general in the tsarist army, not to yield to the Russians…. At the end of November mutual recriminations started up over unprovoked exchanges of fire, notably in the vicinity of the Soviet village of Mainilo. Molotov handed the Finnish envoy, Irne-Koskinen, a note which contained a demand, amounting to an ultimatum, ‘for the immediate withdrawal of your forces 20 to 25 kilometers away from the frontier on the Karelian peninsula.’ Two days later the envoy replied that his government was ‘ready to enter talks on the mutual withdrawal of forces to a certain distance from the frontier’. Finland had taken up the challenge and, being equally unyielding, announced mobilization. On Nov. 28, 1939 the USSR renounced the 1932 Soviet-Finnish treaty of

non-aggression. Neither Moscow nor Helsinki had exhausted all means to avoid war, to put it mildly.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 363

In 1938, the Soviet fear was that in the event of war between Germany and the Soviet Union, the islands [Aalands] could be used as a base for the protection of ships carrying vital German supplies of iron ore from Sweden. For Finland, the Aalands were important for the protection of her western shore. Now, Stalin was prepared to allow Finland to fortify the islands, on two conditions. One was that the Soviets should participate in the building and send observers to supervise the work. The other was that the Finns should allow them to build a fortified air and naval base on Suursaari, one of the Finnish islands which commanded the approach to Leningrad and the Soviet Baltic Fleet's base at Kronstadt. The protection of both had become a matter of urgency for Stalin, and he was now, for the first time, prepared to do deals in order to acquire strategic bases for this purpose.
Once again, however, mutual distrust caused the talks to end in deadlock. Yartsev suggested that they should be continued under cover of the official trade negotiations which were then taking place in Moscow. The Finns refused. But Stalin did not give up. In March 1939 he sent a new emissary to Helsinki: Boris Stein, then Soviet ambassador in Rome. Stein had served for some years in Helsinki and was known personally to many members of the Finnish government. No doubt Stalin hoped someone more senior than Yartsev might carry greater weight.
Stein brought fresh proposals. The Soviet Union agreed that a fortified base on Suursaari might compromise the neutrality which the Finns had gone to such great links to establish. Therefore, the Soviets had another, less contentious offer: would Finland agree to lease to the USSR the string of islands including Suursaari? Or, if this proved unacceptable, would Finland be prepared to exchange the islands for an area of Soviet territory on the mainland? The islands measured 183 square kilometers. Stalin was willing to give a larger area in exchange, and to undertake not to fortify the islands.
In spite of advice from Marshal Mannerheim that they should negotiate seriously with the Soviets, and that it would be a mistake to send them away empty handed yet again, the Finnish government said no.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 379

The preliminary skirmishing of was now over. Molotov stepped back and Stalin took charge, running the conference himself from then on. He was consistently brief and to the point. Sometimes, when some particularly knotty problem came up, he would, as was his habit, rise from his seat and pace up and down, puffing on his pipe and listening carefully to all the arguments before making up his mind.
He made it clear that with the advent of the European war, the protection of Leningrad had become the immediate Soviet concern. Leningrad must be protected at all costs from any potential attack by land or sea. He therefore proposed moving the present Soviet-Finnish border northwards, up the Karelian Isthmus into Finland, a matter of some 25 miles, to take it well out of artillery range of Leningrad. In addition, in order to protect the city from attack by sea, he proposed that the USSR should take over all the islands in the Gulf of Finland, and lease the port of Hanko on the Finnish mainland for use as a Soviet naval base. He offered a payment of 8 million Finnish marks for a 30 year lease.
In the far north, he pointed out that the approaches to Murmansk, the Soviet Union's only ice-free ocean port in the western part of the huge country, were also vulnerable. Here, he

demanded that Finland should cede to him the Rybachi Peninsula, which commanded the approaches to Murmansk.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 388

In return for the territory to be ceded to the Soviet Union in both the north and south, Stalin offered the Finns over twice as much territory alongside the center of Finland. This would have the beneficial effect to Finland of thickening her dangerously narrow 'waist ', the nightmare of Finnish military strategists since it meant an invader can swiftly divide the country in two.
The meeting ended on that note, and Paasikivi [the Finnish representative] and his team returned to the legation to wire the Soviet demands to their government in Helsinki. The government's reply was uncompromising: they were not disposed to concede much, if anything at all.
Stalin was not a soldier – he was a bureaucrat. His days of military glory, such as they were, were long past. Yet throughout the conference he was evidently haunted by the ghosts of the Russian Civil War of 20 years before, when British warships had lurked in the Gulf of Finland and the White General Yudenich had tried to take Petrograd, the home of the Revolution. Then Stalin, having already claimed the glory for saving Tsaritsyn, the city which was later to be renamed Stalingrad, took control of the Red forces, as the special representative of the party's Central Committee, and saved Petrograd, the city which was to become Leningrad.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 389

In June 1919, against the advice of his military experts, he [Stalin] had flung units of the Baltic Fleet, a few aircraft, and 800 troops from Petrograd into an assault on the two forts, Krasnaya Gorka and Seroya Loshad, which guarded the approaches to the city. "The swift capture of Gorka," he had written in a report at the time which did nothing to play down his part in the proceedings, "came as a result of the rudest intervention by me and other civilians in operational matters, even to the point of countermanding orders on land and sea and imposing our own." He had added ominously, "I consider it my duty to announce that I shall continue to act in this way in the future." In 1939, his vision of himself as "Stalin, the Savior of Petrograd" kept intruding into the problems of the present.
"It is not the fault of either of us," he told the Finns, "that geographical circumstances are as they are. We must be able to bar entrance to the Gulf of Finland. If the channel to Leningrad did not run along your coast, we would not have the slightest occasion to bring the matter up. Your memorandum is one-sided and over-optimistic…. It is a law of naval strategy that passage into the Gulf of Finland can be blocked by the cross-fire of batteries on both shores as far out as the mouth of the Gulf. Your memorandum supposes that an enemy cannot penetrate into the Gulf. But once a hostile fleet is in the Gulf, the Gulf can no longer be defended.
"You ask why we want Koivisto? [A Finnish island off the east coast of the Karelian Isthmus.]…. Regarding Koivisto, you must bear in mind that if 16-inch guns were placed there they could entirely prevent movements of our fleet in the inmost extremity of the Gulf [i.e.: round the port of Kronstadt]. We asked for 2700 square kilometers and offer more than 5500 in exchange. Does any other great power do that? No. We are the only ones who are that simple."
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 390

At the end of this second day of the conference, Paasikivi informed Stalin that their discussions had now reached the point where he must return to Helsinki in order to obtain fresh instructions from his government. Stalin agreed, but reminded him of the urgency of the matter: the Finnish army was already mobilizing, while the Soviets were reinforcing their own border troops. The situation was therefore explosive.
“This cannot go on for long without the danger of accidents,” he said. Later that evening, the Soviets handed over a written memorandum containing their proposals. Stalin made no threats, delivered no ultimatum. He did not think it necessary to do so. He believed he made the Finns a fair offer, one they could not afford to refuse. But Paasikivi sounded a note of warning.
Paasikivi was not so optimistic. “The Hanko Neck concession and the cession of the area on the Isthmus are exceptionally difficult matters,” he said.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 391

Paasikivi did not care for the implication of this last remark. His country was neutral and wished to remain so. “We want to continue in peace,” he said, “and remain apart from all incidents.”
Stalin’s reply was blunt. “That is impossible,” he said brusquely.
Paasikivi refused to be put down, however. “How do these proposals of yours fit in with your famous slogan, “We do not want a crumb of foreign territory, but neither do we want to cede an inch of our own territory to anyone”? he asked.
“In Poland, we took no foreign territory,” came the reply, meaning that the Red Army had simply re-occupied land that once belonged to the tsars. “And this is a case of exchange.”
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 392

Paasikivi started by saying Finland was now prepared to make some concessions. These included ceding various islands in the Gulf of Finland and moving the Karelian frontier back up the Isthmus some 13 kilometers, eight miles, though not the 25 miles demanded by Stalin. However, he made it clear that on Hanko the Finns had not changed their position.
Stalin was not impressed, and insisted the new concessions were not enough. The original demands, he said, had been the bare minimum required for Soviet security, and could not be bargained away. He thought the present European war could easily escalate into a world war which might last for many years. In that event, the USSR must be able to defend Leningrad from attack via the Gulf.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 393

Paasikivi’s tough stand paid off. At about 9 p.m., barely an hour after the Finns had walked out, Molotov’s secretary telephoned them to ask if they would come back to the Kremlin for further talks that night. The resumed meeting started at 11 p.m.
Again, Stalin and Molotov faced the Finns alone. Molotov had drafted a memorandum after the earlier session, in which the Soviets made certain modifications to their position. Instead of demanding the right to put a Soviet garrison of 5000 men into Hanko, they were prepared to reduce the number to 4000, and guarantee to remove them on “the termination of the British-French-German war”. In addition they were prepared to compromise on the Karelian frontier issue.
Neither Paasikivi nor Tanner thought these concessions were in themselves enough to change the mind of the government, but they agreed to report them to Helsinki nevertheless.

Early next morning, Paasikivi went to Tanner's room in the legation, after a sleepless night spent trying to find a way through the impasse. He had come to the conclusion, he told Tanner that for the past 20 years the Finns had been living in a fool's paradise. They had chosen neutrality, but the truth was that neutrality was a luxury they could not afford with the Soviet Union as a next-door neighbor. Since they could not change the geography, they would have to change their policies.
If they refused the Soviet demands, he continued, this would lead to war – a war which Finland would inevitably lose. He proposed, therefore, to advise the Finnish government to accept Moscow's terms….
Paasikivi and Tanner arrived back in Helsinki on Oct. 26 to find the Council had still failed to grasp the realities of the situation. The ministers seemed to be living in an Alice in Wonderland world, making statements which were totally at variance with the coldly pessimistic assessments of their own military advisers. Marshal Mannerheim himself bluntly forecast national disaster in the event of war with the Soviet Union. But the politicians refused to heed such warnings. Defense Minister Nuikkanen pooh-poohed his own generals. "The military command is always too pessimistic," he told Paasikivi airily.
To compound their stupidity, the members of the Council of State also conspired to keep the Finnish people in ignorance of the true state of affairs. Erkko [Finnish Foreign Minister] even continued to preserve the fiction that in the last resort they could rely on Sweden to come to their aid. Bolstered by this false confidence, he drafted yet another set of proposals for Paasikivi to take back to Moscow. These offered a little more territory in Karelia – taking the border to 37 miles from Leningrad – and some in the far north, but not enough to come close to satisfying even the latest, scaled-down Soviet demands.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 394

On the Soviet side it is clear that Stalin, no doubt advised by Otto Kuusinen, his Finnish confidant, still believed the Finns would see sense in the end. Perhaps Kuusinen overestimated the political flexibility of his countrymen. In any event, the last thing Stalin wanted at this time was a war on his northern frontier. He and his advisers had analyzed the Finnish position with great care, concluding that it was hopeless. They presumed the Finns must have come to the same conclusion – what other conclusion was there to be reached? Surely, their argument went, no country would contemplate its own destruction when, by coming to an agreement, it would actually gain rather than lose territory? As always with Stalin, political logic dictated his own actions, and, as always, he presumed it dictated the actions of others.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 395

Molotov told Schulenburg in Moscow that he was extremely angry with the Finns, saying their stubbornness in refusing such modest Soviet demands could be explained as only "resistance bolstered by England." The Soviet Union, he said, had even offered to pay all the expenses involved in moving the Finnish population from areas ceded to her, including the cost of building new homes for them. It could not understand their refusal of such generosity.
The failure of the negotiations to achieve the peaceful transfer of territory which he desired had far-reaching effects, even on Stalin himself. He came under considerable pressure from a strong body of opinion within the Politburo, led by Zhdanov. Lined up with Zhdanov were Adm. Kuznetsov, General Meretskov, commander of the Leningrad Military District, and Adm. Tributz, the new commander of the Baltic Fleet. No doubt Molotov, whose earliest political positions of any note had been in the Petrograd (as it then was) party, and who had

been chairman of the economic council for the northern region, which included Karelia, was among those who had become convinced Stalin was being too soft with the Finns. These hard-liners thought the time for polite negotiation was over – in their view, even Stalin's initial demands had been quite inadequate in military terms. They made no bones about the fact that they wanted a return to Peter the Great's frontier with Finland, which had included the whole of the Karelian Isthmus and the city of Vipuri.
In Zhdanov's eyes, the security of Leningrad was the single most important foreign policy issue facing the USSR. If Leningrad were not made secure from any external threat, the country could be sucked into the so-called "Second Imperialist War" because of the need to defend the city.
Stalin was a cautious man, but in the end he was won over by Zhdanov's argument – and possibly by the fear of the consequence of his not backing the judgment of his own military men.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 400

The Finnish government instigated the incident, and did not deny that seven shells had struck the village of Mainila…. With a certain bravura, the Finns suggested that in order to avoid any further incidents, both sides should withdraw their forces the same distance from the frontier.
The Soviets were not amused by the Finnish reply. Molotov delivered another blast on Tuesday, Nov. 28, 1939. The relative positions of the two forces, he argued, were not comparable. "The Soviet forces do not threaten any vital Finnish center, since they are hundreds of kilometers from any of these, whereas the Finnish forces, 32 kilometers away from the USSR's vital center, Leningrad, which has a population of 3,500,000 creates for the latter a direct menace. It is hardly necessary to state that there is actually no place for the Soviet troops to withdrawal to, since withdrawal to a distance of 25 kilometers would place them in the suburbs of Leningrad, which clearly would be absurd from the point of view of the security of Leningrad.
The Soviet Union regarded the concentration of troops near the frontier, and the incident of the seven artillery shots, as hostile acts. This was, Molotov declared, "incompatible" with the 1934 non-aggression pact between the two countries. "Consequently, the Soviet government considers itself obliged to declare that it considers itself as of today as being relieved of its obligations under the non-aggression pact…which is being systematically violated by the government of Finland."
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 404

Only that afternoon [December 1st] a "People's government of Finland", under the presidency of Kuusinen, had been established in Terijoki, which the Red Army had managed to "liberate." The Soviet Union instantly recognized this government as representing the "Democratic Republic of Finland," and announced the formation of a "1st Finnish Corps" made up of volunteers, which would form the nucleus of the future people's army.
Next day, Molotov signed a pact of mutual assistance with Kuusinen. Stalin, Voroshilov, and Zhdanov, Moscow Radio announced, were all present at the "negotiations." It was no surprise to anyone that the new pact gave the Soviets everything they had demanded in the talks with Paasikivi, including the whole of the Karelian Isthmus, Hanko and the islands in the Gulf. What was surprising was that in return the Soviet Union gave the Finnish Democratic Republic no less than 70,000 square kilometers of central Karelia – over 20 times the amount of territory being ceded by the Finns – plus 120 million Finnish marks as

compensation for the railways in the Isthmus and 3 million marks for the islands and the Rybachi peninsula in the far north.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 405

The proposal that Stalin put to the Finns on Oct. 12 was to move the existing Soviet-Finnish border on the Karelian isthmus 25 miles farther away from Leningrad; and, for better protection of the city from attack by sea, for the Soviet Union to take over all the islands in the Gulf of Finland and lease the port of Hankow for use as a naval base. In the north, he asked for the cession of the Rybachi Peninsula, which commanded the approaches to Murmansk, the Soviet Union's only ice-free port on its western side. In return the Russians offered twice as much territory adjoining the center of Finland, where the narrow "waist" between the Russian frontier and the Gulf of Bothnia exposed the Finns to the danger of an invader cutting the country in two.
In the negotiations, which continued until November 8, Stalin showed himself willing to moderate his demands but not to withdraw them. Both Marshall Mannerheim, the hero of the earlier Finnish-Soviet war, and Paasikivi were in favor of coming to terms with the Russians, but the Finnish government, fully supported by public opinion, refused;…
Stalin was surprised at the Finnish intransigence; he appears to have hesitated before accepting the view of the hard-liners led by Zhdanov, the party boss of Leningrad, that they should not waste any more time but take what they needed by force. He finally agreed, subject to the proviso that only troops from the Leningrad Military District were to be involved.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 660

It so happened that I was gone, during that week, on a visit to Finland. I found the Finns pleasant and friendly. I was received in audience by President Paasikivi, that great Finnish realist, who, though originally a highly conservative businessman, considered it in Finland's interests never to quarrel with the Russians. He said he had done his utmost, in November 1939, to meet the Russians at least half-way, since he regarded their demand for a frontier or rectification north-west of Leningrad "understandable and reasonable" in the tense atmosphere of the Second World War, which had already begun. He was prepared at the time to make concessions to the Russians, but he was overruled by the Finnish government. … I met the future president of Finland, Mr. Kekkonen. Kekkonen's line was very similar to Paasikivi: Finland had to be realistic; the Finnish government of 1939 was wrong to have dug in its heels; but although the Russian armistice terms– particularly the $300 million in reparations–were pretty tough, Finland was lucky not to be occupied by Russian troops and the most important thing for her was to maintain good-neighborly relations with Russia and to remain strictly neutral. The Finns, he said, were happy to have remained masters in their own house. Needless to say, a good deal was said about the Fulton speech; nobody present was happy about it. On the contrary, as Kekkonen said, it was going to poison the international atmosphere. This kind of thing, he remarked, would do nobody any good, and Finland was frankly worried about it, for it might provoke the Russians who until then had been "pretty reasonable" in their relations with the Finns.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co. 1971, p. 110-111

He [Stalin] expressed strong resentment over the Iron Curtain speech made at Fulton, Missouri, by former Prime Minister Winston Churchill. This speech, Stalin said, was an

unfriendly act; it was an unwarranted attack upon the USSR. Such a speech, if directed against the United States, never would have been permitted in Russia.
Smith, Walter Bedell. My Three Years in Moscow. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1950, p. 52

Would the czarist government have dealt so reasonably with Finland, asked Stalin? 'There is no doubt on this', he replied. Would any other great power offer 5500 km2 in exchange for 2700 (for the Soviets were willing to compensate the Finns in the north for the territory that the Finns were asked to cede in the south)? 'No. We are the only one that is so stupid.'
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 223

Early in 1939 Stalin, with security in mind, asked the Finns to meet him for discussions about frontier adjustments, offering to exchange territory. In addition, he wanted the lease of a port on the Gulf of Finland, and asked the Finns to give up other strategic parcels of territory, totalling 1066 square miles in return for nearly twice as much–but less valuable–Russian territory in the far north. No agreement was reached. After the signing of the German-Soviet non-aggression pact and Hitler's invasion of Poland, Stalin again sought territorial adjustments with Finland….
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 56

STALIN EXTRACTED THE MINIMUM FROM FINLAND

Hostilities between Finland and the Soviet Union ended on March 13, 1940. According to the peace terms, Finland gave to Russia to Karelian Isthmus, the Western and Northern Shores of Lake Ladoga, a number of strategic islands in the Gulf of Finland essential to the defense of Leningrad, the Soviet government restored to Finland the port of Petsamo, which had been occupied by the Red Army, and took a 30 year lease on the Hango Peninsula for an annual rental of 8 million Finnish marks.
Addressing the supreme Soviet of the USSR on March 29 Molotov declared: the Soviet Union having smashed the Finnish Army and having every opportunity of occupying the whole of Finland, did not do so and did not demand any indemnities for its expenditures in the war as any other power would have done, but confined its desires to a minimum…. We pursued no other objects in the peace treaty than that of safeguarding the security of Leningrad, Murmansk, and the Murmansk railroad…."
Sayers and Kahn. The Great Conspiracy. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946, p. 334

In the end Stalin seems to have realized the farcical nature of the whole proceeding. Although the Russian troops were victorious and all Finland could have been conquered, he concluded a moderate peace. The shadowy Finnish Soviet government disappeared from the scene. Stalin contented himself with little more than the territorial demands originally put forward. He was also realistic enough to see that, unlike the Baltic States, Finland offered not the slightest basis for the setting up of a Soviet regime established by the use of foreign bayonets. This recognition saved Finland after her second defeat in war.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 347

When Stalin actually gained his point after a hard-fought campaign, the policy he followed forces the observer to think that he never had any real intention of instituting a Finnish Soviet

State. He certainly dropped the Kuusinen government the moment his demands were granted, though the military situation would have permitted him to overrun the entire country without further resistance.
In spite of the difficulties encountered, the Russian terms were surprisingly light. The Soviet assumed control of the Karelian Isthmus, possession of which assisted in the defense of Leningrad, together with certain vital coastal areas on the Arctic seaboard and several small islands in the Gulf of Finland. The whole area comprised only 3970 square kilometers, but it contained the whole of the Mannerheim Line and many of Finland's most important defensive centers. As compensation for this annexation, the Soviet ceded over 70,000 square kilometers of territory situated in a less vital spot.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 116

In the peace terms, the Soviets took the Mannerheim Line and the naval base at Hangoe, protecting both land and sea approaches to Leningrad. But they returned Petsamo and its nickel mines; they asked no indemnities but agreed to supply a starving Finland with food. As terms go, these were not excessive. Sir Stafford Cripps, British ambassador to Moscow in 1940, told me, as I sat at tea in his embassy, that the Russians might someday be sorry they had not taken more when they could. He was thinking of Petsamo, which was soon to be a Nazi base against Allied shipping on the Murmansk run. But Sir Stafford was wrong; Stalin's political sense was better than Sir Stafford's. The Soviets were well advised to make easy terms. Had their demands gone beyond the obvious needs of Leningrad's security, Sweden's neutrality might have been shaken.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 86

It would be to claim that Stalin started the war intending to seize Finland. You might ask, why didn't we seize Finland during World War II, when the Finnish army was virtually wiped out? Stalin showed statesmanly wisdom here. He knew that the territory of Finland wasn't relevant to the basic needs of the world proletarian Revolution. Therefore when we signed a treaty with the Finns during World War II, just ending the war itself was more profitable for us than an occupation would have been. Finland's cessation of hostilities set a good example for other satellites of Hitlerite Germany, and it also made good marks for us with the Finnish people.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 156

The Finns were overwhelmed by weight of numbers and by constant bombardment. They sued for peace on March 8, and four days later the treaty was signed in Moscow. The territories needed to secure the Baltic approaches to Russia's frontiers had been won. Stalin did not consider occupying Helsinki or encroaching on other parts of Finland. The callousness and contempt that the Russians showed towards the Poles did not extend to the Finns, whom they respected.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 313

…Stalin recognized there were limits beyond which it would be dangerous to push one's luck. The most striking example of this is his retreat over Berlin in 1949; but there are two other examples in 1944 that are more surprising because they affected areas closer, in one case very much closer, to Russia's borders.
The first was Finland. When the Finns sought peace, the terms they were granted in September made permanent the loss of territory they had suffered in 1940, imposed a

substantial indemnity, and required them to lease the naval base at Porkkala to Russia for 50 years. But remembering the international reaction to Russia's earlier attack on them, Stalin allowed Finland to retain a greater degree of independence than any other East European country and acquiesced in the exclusion of the Finnish Communist party from a share in power.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 856

So the Kuusinen government was told to disband, and on March 12, 1940, the USSR concluded a lenient peace (considering everything) with Finland.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 522

The Government of Finland declined, one after another, all the friendly proposals made by the Soviet Government with the object of safeguarding the security of the USSR, particularly of Leningrad, and this in spite of the fact that the Soviet Union was willing to go out to meet Finland and satisfy her legitimate interests.
The Finnish Government declined the proposal of the USSR to shift back the Finnish border on the Karelian Isthmus a few dozen kilometers, although the Soviet Government was willing to compensate Finland with an area twice as large in Soviet Karelia.
The Finnish Government also declined the proposal of the USSR to conclude a pact of mutual assistance, thereby making it clear that the security of the USSR from the direction of Finland was not safeguarded.
In his speech at the session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on March 29, 1940, Molotov said:
"…The Soviet Union having smashed the Finnish army, and having had every opportunity of occupying the whole of Finland, did not do so and did not demand any indemnities for its war expenditure as any other Power would have done, but confined its demands to a minimum….
We pursued no other object in the Peace Treaty than that of safeguarding the security of Leningrad, Murmansk, and the Murmansk Railway."
Foreign Lang. Pub. House. Schuman, F. L. Intro. Falsifiers of History. Moscow, 1948, p. 44

Liddell Hart says that after a negotiated peace was signed in March 1940, Stalin 'showed statesmanship' by offering the Finns 'remarkably moderate terms'.

George Bernard Shaw, In a comment on the Winter War, said that the 'only novelty' about it was that Stalin took only what he needed instead of taking back the whole country as any other Power would have done. (This was an allusion to the fact that before the Russian Revolution, Finland had been a part of the Czarist Empire.)
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 57

On 21 January 1940 Stalin said, "We have no desire for Finland's territory but Finland should be a state that is friendly to the Soviet Union.
Dimitrov, Georgi, The Diary of Georgi Dimitrov, 1933-1949. Ed. Ivo Banac. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 124

SU-NAZI TREATY INVOLVED ECONOMIC EXCHANGES AND TRADE

The nazi-Soviet pact had also a strong economic aspect. By this and later agreements, the USSR agreed to deliver great quantities of oil, grain, cotton, manganese, and other raw materials; but this was no mere tribute or sacrifice imposed by force. The Soviet received in exchange, through a clearing system, German machines and spare parts, machine tools, instruments of precision, chemicals and drugs. Soviet industry had run down badly during the purge, and most of its machines and tools needed replacement or repair. It was already beginning to produce such things for itself, but of all machinery imported in the last ten years, more than 60 percent was of German origin.
Thus Germany received much-needed raw materials, but the USSR benefited even more by the change,…
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1941, p. 169

Recently, much has been written about Soviet shipments to Germany, and Stalin has been rightly blamed for supplying Hitler with grain, oil, and rare metals and for helping the Nazis accumulate strategic reserves that they subsequently used in the war against the Soviet Union. But at the same time, it should be pointed out that in return we also obtained much that we needed in the way of equipment and modern military hardware. Only on those terms did the Soviet government agree to supply to Germany the resources it was requesting. Among our acquisitions from the Germans was the Lutzov, a state-of-the-art cruiser of the same class as the cruiser Prinz Eugen. Both ships were built by Germany for its own fleet. The Germans also gave us the shop drawings for their newest battleship, the Bismarck, for thirty different combat aircraft, including Messerschmitt 109 and 110 fighters and Yunker 88 dive bombers, samples of field-artillery pieces, modern fire-support systems, tanks together with the formulas for their armor, and a variety of explosive devices. In addition, Germany undertook to supply us with locomotives, turbines, diesel motors, merchant ships, metal-cutting machine tools, presses, press-forging and other equipment for heavy industry, including the oil and electric industries.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin’s Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 75

I saw clearly now why Soviet materials continued to be shipped into Germany on a regular basis even though the Germans didn’t comply with their delivery schedules. The idea was to gain time, to appease Hitler, and at the same time to demonstrate to him that it made no sense for Germany to go to war with the Soviet Union since this would effectively cut it off from a rich source of supplies.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin’s Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 102

The Soviet-German trade agreement, concluded a few days before the signing of the nonaggression pact, provided for deliveries of modern equipment and the latest technology to the Soviet Union. Among others, our navy was very much interested in getting new equipment and technology.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin’s Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 269

By early evening [in August 1939], the complete text of the trade treaty had been agreed. It was a complex document, allowing the Soviet Union to buy capital goods such as machinery

and machine tools, construction and scientific equipment, chemical plants, ships and vehicles, to the value of 200 million Reichmarks over a two-year period. In order to pay for them, the Soviet Union would export to Germany equivalent values of raw materials, semi-finished products, oil, grain, timber, ores, phosphates and so on.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 208

Stalin, for his part, was as conscious of the military deficiencies revealed by the Winter War as any German general. It was clear that something had to be done. The question was what?
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 422

The assistance the Soviet Union was able to give Germany in Murmansk and in the transit of goods from other countries was welcome and undoubtedly of great value. But the most important area of whole operation for both sides during the period of the pact was the direct trade between them. There has long been a myth that in order to buy time and postpone the threat of invasion by the mechanized might of the Wehrmacht, Stalin was Hitler's dupe, prepared to pay any price he demanded. The reality was entirely different.
Stalin could have had no illusions about Hitler's ultimate ambitions. Neither did he have any illusions, even before the debacle of the Red Army's performance in Finland, about the Soviet Union's ability to withstand a German attack. But before he could prepare his country, and perhaps even increase its military strength to such an extent that Hitler would be deterred from attacking, Stalin needed to buy not only time but also technology. The only people he could obtain either from were the Germans.
For his part, Hitler needed vital raw materialsfor his arms industry in order to build up his forces to the level necessary for attacking the Soviet Union, and food to sustain his people while the military machine was made ready. Once he had failed to keep Britain, and to a lesser extent France, out of the war, the only place he could obtain either of his needs was the Soviet Union.
By September 1939, therefore, the two leaders found themselves in the ludicrous situation where Hitler needed food and raw materials from the Soviet Union in order to attack her, while Stalin needed machinery, arms, and equipment from Germany in order to be able to fight her off. The question was, who needed what most? Certainly, Stalin was perfectly well aware of Hitler's needs. And while Germany still faced the allies in the west, he was able to drive a very hard bargain indeed.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 433

Three days later, however, on Feb. 7, 1940, there was a message from Stalin, asking the German negotiators to call on him at the Kremlin at 1 a.m. the next morning. When they arrived, they found him smiling and friendly, all sweetness and light. Ribbentrop's letter, he said, had changed everything. The Germans could have their treaty. The Soviet Union would deliver commodities worth 420 to 430 million Reichmarks within 12 months, in addition to the 200 million Reichmarks worth agreed in the August 19 treaty. For the following six months, the Soviets would make deliveries worth 200 to 230 million Reichmarks. Germany would make deliveries to the same value over a period of 15 months for the first part, and 12 months for the second.
Stalin, still playing his role of the reasonable man, politely asked the Germans not to ask too high prices as they had done before – 300 million Reichmarks for aircraft and 150 million

Reichmarks for the cruiser Lutzow, he quoted as examples, was really far too much. “One should not take advantage,” he said gently, “of the Soviet Union’s good nature.”
When Stalin had finished, Mikoyan, playing a friendly role after all the hard-man tactics of the preceding four months, raised another matter which the Germans had been vainly pursuing for months. This was to station a mother ship in Murmansk for the fishing fleet, to process its catches. Without a moment’s hesitation, Stalin agreed to it.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 441

On February 11, the new trade treaty was signed. Germany was assured of all the raw materials and grain she wanted – but the price exacted by Stalin was a heavy one. The list of war material to be given to him covered 42 closely typed pages. At the top of the list was the cruiser formerly known as the Lutzow [after the Graf Spee incident Hitler had given the name Lutzow to the Deutschland, since it would have been unbearable for a ship with that name to be sunk), the hull of which was to be delivered to Leningrad after launching, for completion in the Soviet Union. The complete drawings for the Bismarck were to be handed over after all, together with plans for a large destroyer and complete machinery for such a ship, and full details of performance of the other two cruisers.
The aircraft list included 10 Heinkel He-100s, 5 Messerschmitt Bf-110s, 2 Junkers Ju-88 twin-engined dive-bombers, 2 Dornier Do-215s; 3 Buker Bu-131s and 3 Bu-133s; 3 Fokke-Wulf Fw-58-v-13s and 2 Fokke-Wulf Fa-255 helicopters, plus the experimental Messerschmitt 209. All of these were regarded as test aircraft, which the Soviets could then buy in quantity or build under license later – they vigorously denied that they intended to copy them.
On and on went the list of equipment, guns, machinery, instruments, other ships and shipbuilding gear, plus installations and plants for chemical and metallurgical processes, many of them highly secret.
In return, the Soviet Union agreed to provide an impressive list of materials including:
1,000,000 tons of feed grains and legumes
900,000 tons of petroleum
100,000 tons of cotton
500,000 tons of phosphates
100,000 tons of chromium ores
500,000 tons of iron ore
300,000 tons of scrap iron and pig iron
2400 kilograms of platinum
Manganese ore, metals, lumber, and numerous other raw materials.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 442

Behind the facade, however, Stalin was thinking very hard about the situation. On the economic front, he was prepared to continue the friendship – whatever it cost he had to have German tools and technology. He ordered Mikoyan to take the breaks off the negotiations he was holding with Schnurre [a German trade Representative]….
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 536

SU SELLS GOODS BELOW WORLD PRICES

But nothing short of a world embargo will prevent Soviet Russia from selling her goods–at a lower price than any capitalist country can meet–in order to buy the equipment she requires.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 194

POLISH CLAIMS TO EASTERN REGIONS ARE NOT VALID

It has been contended that the territorial gain assured to the Soviet Union in the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact represented the commencement of Russian neo-imperialism. That is not so, at least in regard to the Polish territories. There were four Polish regions which the Soviet Union claimed: Eastern Galicia (formerly Austrian), Volhynia, Polish White Russia, and the Vilna region. Volhynia had a purely Ukrainian population; it had been torn way from Soviet Russia by the Treaty of Riga, without the population being consulted, after the Polish-Russian war of 1921. Eastern Galicia was also mainly Ukrainian. Its capital, Lemberg, had the appearance of a Polish city, but only because a large proportion of the Jewish intelligentsia of Lemberg had been culturally Polonized in the preceding half-century. Eastern Galicia, which in Russia was called Red Russia, was an old Russian demand; it had been one of the Russian objectives in the First World War. Its Ukrainian population had offered armed resistance to Polish rule in 1918 and 1919; the West Ukrainian Republic had been proclaimed there, and had been given international recognition. In the end the Poles subjugated Galicia by armed force. The Ambassadors Conference in Paris, which then had to decide the future of the region, permitted Poland to retain it, but stipulated that it should be granted autonomy under a Ukrainian governor-general, a condition which Poland never fulfilled. Again and again the Ukrainians attempted risings, which ended in a sanguinary Polish pacification of the region.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 336

One final point: circles hostile to the Soviet Union have always equated the Soviet march into Poland east of the Curzon Line with the Nazi invasion and occupation of the rest of Poland. The two are qualitatively different. First, the Soviet forces moved only into territory which was theirs before it had been snatched by Poland after the October revolution. Second, and much more importantly, the Soviet Union waited for 16 days after the Nazi invasion of Poland.
“When, on September 5th [1939], Ribbentrop began to press the Russians to march into their share of Poland, Stalin was not yet ready to issue the marching orders… He would not…lend a hand in defeating Poland, and he refused to budge before Poland’s collapse was complete beyond doubt.” (Deutscher, op. cit. page 432).
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 571

STALIN SOUGHT SENSIBLE, ETHNICALLY BASED WESTERN BORDERS

Undoubtedly the population of Eastern Galicia had no desire to be under Polish rule; what is not known is whether it was ready to join Soviet Ukraine. Nevertheless when Stalin marched into Eastern Galicia, claiming that he must protect from the Germans, on national grounds, a population that was identical with that living in the Soviet Union, these were not empty words. As a matter of prudence he had halted along the Curzon Line, the line drawn by the Western Powers in 1919, almost exactly following the ethnographic dividing line between Poles and Ukrainians;….

Polish White Russia was also taken from the Russians in the Polish-Russian war in 1920. There is no doubt about the feeling of the population, who are Orthodox White Russians. These peasants always wanted to belong to Soviet White Russia.
The Vilna region was inhabited by Lithuanians and the White Russians. Only the city of Vilna was regarded as Polish. That city had actually a Jewish majority, but was even closer to Polish hearts than Lemberg. The Vilna region had also been annexed by armed force by the Poles. In its peace treaty with Lithuania in 1920 the Soviet state had recognized the Vilna region as belonging to Lithuania and the city of Vilna as the Lithuanian capital. The result was that from 1922 right up to the outbreak of the Second World War there had never been a reconciliation and resumption of normal diplomatic relations between Lithuania and Poland. Throughout the period the Soviet Union had steadily refused to recognize the region as Polish and had always recognized the Lithuanian claim to it. Now, when the Polish State seemed to have come to an end, it was only natural that Moscow should not abandon the Vilna region to the Germans. It turned it over to the then formally independent Lithuania, in conformity with the treaty of 1920. Barely a year later, however, Lithuania became a Soviet State and a part of the Soviet Union.
This policy of Stalin's is quite intelligible. In his distrust of Hitler he had obviously, for reasons of military security, to push forward his frontier as far as possible. He chose the ethnographic frontier, the frontier that in 1919, in fact, had been internationally assigned to Russia. In his view, moreover, he had finally solved the Ukrainian and White Russian question by uniting those two peoples in a single State.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 337-338

And 1939-1940 hardly anyone was concerned about abiding by international legal standards. The Soviet Union hastened to take advantage of the situation in Western Europe to establish more favorable borders and better strategic positions before it's inevitable entry, sooner or later, into the world war.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 732

On Sept. 17, 1939 prime minister Molotov spoke on the radio:
"No one knows the present whereabouts of the Polish government. The Polish population has been abandoned to its fate by its unfortunate leaders…. The Soviet government regards it as its duty to proffer help to its Ukrainian and Byelorussian brothers in Poland…. The Soviet government has instructed the Red Army command to order its troops to cross the border and to take under its protection the life and property of the population of the western Ukraine and western Byelorussia."
Stalin had a note of similar content delivered to the Polish ambassador in Moscow. With hindsight and from the Soviet point of view, this step was largely justified: the territory entered by Soviet troops was indeed inhabited by Ukrainians and Byelorussians.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 358

STALIN'S TREATMENT OF THE BALTIC STATES WAS FAIR AND SENSIBLE

Stalin's treatment of the Baltic states is also intelligible. As already said, no Russian Government will ever voluntarily renounce the Baltic provinces. The majority of the Russian revolutionaries, including the Bolsheviks, had always recognized the right of the Poles and

Finns to secede from Russia. No one dreamed of according a somewhere right to the three Baltic peoples. Until 1917 the Latvians and Estonians had had no idea of demanding it. Until then not one of the revolutionary parties among those peoples had put forward any such claim. They had all fought side-by-side with the Russian revolutionaries, contenting themselves with the promise that in the hour of victory the Russian revolution would secure equal rights for all the peoples within the Russian Federation. As for Latvia, national feeling awakened there very late and first showed itself in the war of 1914-18.
In regard to the Baltic states, Stalin acted entirely in accordance with the views of Lenin. It was his opinion, as it had been Lenin's, that the independence acquired by the Baltic states in 1918 was not the outcome of any popular demand. The capitalists and the big farmers, they considered, had started the demand for independence, with the support first of the Germans and then of the British, simply in order to avert social revolution. Certain facts seemed to confirm that view. The new Estonian Government met with considerable difficulties in the raising of an army. Only after a number of Estonian peasants had been hanged at Dorpat for refusing military service did the organization begin to make progress. In 1919, however, there were further plain indications that the Estonian peasants were fighting only unwillingly against Bolshevism. With the aid of anti-Bolshevik Russian troops, the Reds had been expelled from Estonia. The White Guard General Yudenich began his offensive against Petrograd with the aid of the Estonian Army. It was barely an hour's journey by rail from the Estonian frontier to the former capital of the Russian empire. At the frontier the Estonian regiments mutinied, and had to be sent home.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 339

I have been told by people in Russia, who ought to know what they are talking about, that the Soviet police have been deliberately clearing out almost all the border regions between Europe and Soviet Russia, moving whole towns and villages from these regions out into Siberia or some other pioneer section where they begin life over again. The Russians are thus creating a vast no man's land along the European borders, which can be heavily fortified, strung with electrified wires and barbed wires and made as nearly impassable as modern science will permit.
The government thus seeks to insure itself against an invasion from the west. But at the same time it also reassures European nations, especially the little border nations, who had more reason to fear Russia than Russia had to fear them. Noting that the borders are being sealed tight, the neighboring governments are pleased, being desirous only of being left alone so far as Russia is concerned.
But out in Asia the Russians are establishing no such quarantine along the borders.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 282-283

In late September-early October 1939, Stalin ordered Molotov to propose to Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia that they sign a treaty of mutual assistance. After brief hesitation, some internal struggle and consultation with Berlin, the Baltic governments signed treaties permitting the entry of Red Army units. At the request of the Baltic governments, the number of Soviet troops was less than the armies of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. The Soviet military contingents were to remain in their quarters and not interfere in the internal life of these countries, although Stalin was perfectly aware that the presence of the Red Army was bound to affect the political climate.
Despite some inevitable friction, the sides on the whole followed the spirit and the letter of the treaties. Sometimes the Baltic partners went further. For instance, when the

Soviet-Finnish war broke out, the military attache in Riga, Col. Vasiliev, reported to Moscow: 'On December 1 General Hartmanis declared: "If because of the circumstances of the war you need any landing strips for your air force, you can use all our existing airdromes, including Riga airport".' The Lithuanian government informed Moscow that 'a committee has been formed for securing food products and forage for the armed forces [of the Red Army] in Lithuania.' During the visit to Moscow in early December 1939 of the commander-in-chief of the Estonian army, General Laidoner–a former lieutenant colonel on the tsarist General Staff–an impression was gained that friendly relations were developing between both states and their armies.
When Hitler took Paris in June 1940, Stalin felt that if he did not at once invade England he was bound to turn his gaze to the east, and Stalin, aware of being unprepared and making sporadic efforts to make up for lost time, now took a new step. In the middle of June 1940, Moscow requested permission from the governments of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia to deploy additional contingents of troops on their territory.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 362

While the moral aspect of the annexation of the Baltic states was distinctly negative, the act itself was a positive one, given the threats looming over both the USSR and the Baltic states…. Dekanozov nevertheless reported to Stalin and Molotov in early July 1940:
"A large meeting and demonstration took place in Vilna on July 7. Some 80,000 people took part. The main slogans were 'Long live the 13th Soviet republic!'. 'Proletarians of all lands, unite!'. 'Long live comrade Stalin!' And so on. The meeting passed a vote of greeting to the Soviet Union and the Red Army. A concert was given by the band of the Lithuanian Army, attended by the president and several members of the government and general staff…."
It is reasonable to suggest that, had Soviet troops not been there, the Germans would have marched into the Baltic states before June 1941, since they already had a plan to 'Germanize' part of the population and liquidate the rest, as a 1940 memorandum by Rosenberg shows. The overwhelming majority of the Baltic population was favorable to their countries' incorporation into the Soviet Union in August 1940….
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 363

To save appearances, he falsified the popular will and staged plebiscites, in which Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians begged to be absorbed into the Soviet Union. His conduct was not more reprehensible than that of any other leader of a great power holding fast to or seizing strategic bases.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 447

While the acquisition of Bessarabia was proceeding, albeit cautiously, Stalin could afford to act more decisively in the Baltic. In fact, he could scarcely afford not to. As seen from the Kremlin, the Baltic states offered Hitler a most convenient springboard for an attack on the Soviet Union. What was worse, ideologically they looked to Berlin rather than to Moscow, in spite of having effectively become client states of the Soviet Union. True, there were now sizable Soviet garrisons in all three countries, but those troops were there to hold down the population during what Stalin had hoped would be the gradual process of Sovietization, rather than to protect the frontier with Germany. The Baltic states were beginning to look like the weak link in his defensive chain.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 465

LATVIANS AND LATVIAN TROOPS SUPPORTED THE BOLSHEVIKS

Still more ambiguous was the situation at that time in Latvia. Latvia had in the past harbored the most radical of Socialist movements. The revolution of 1905 had there been exceptionally sanguinary. After the fall of the Tsardom, Kerensky had permitted the Latvian soldiers in the Russian army, together with the new volunteers, to form regiments of their own under Latvian officers. These Latvian guards soon became specially well disciplined, first-class troops. When the Bolshevik revolution broke out, these were almost the only units that did not disintegrate but remained disciplined. Nor did they obey the order from Latvia to return there; on the contrary, they unanimously declared their support of the Bolsheviks, and remained in Russia. They were fanatical followers of the revolution. In the first two years of the revolution they were almost the only disciplined troops on which the new Soviet government could count. For a long time they formed the principal protection of the Government itself, and they were also the troops of the new terrorist authority, the Cheka. In that terrorist organization the Latvians occupied the principal key positions. Very soon the whole of the senior staff of the organization were Latvians.
The Red Army that marched against Latvia in 1918, captured Riga, and proclaimed the Latvian Soviet Republic, consisted almost exclusively of Latvians. They were not opposed by Latvians but by the hated Germans. Riga was not reconquered by Latvian troops but by German bands of adventurers, whom the Latvian commander, Ullmanis, had recruited, and by the Baltic Militia, the troops of the Baltic barons, so hated by the Latvians. It is significant that these formations wrecked a sanguinary terror against all the Latvians; they regarded all Latvians as Bolsheviks….
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 340

SU RECOGNIZED EARLY-ON THE INDEPENDENCE OF ESTONIA AND LATVIA

When in 1920 and 1921 the Soviet Government concluded treaties of peace with Latvia and Estonia, and recognized the independence of those States, this, in the eyes of the Moscow politicians, was not really a conclusion of peace with those two States themselves, but primarily with the European Western Powers–part of the steps intended to bring to an end the foreign intervention in the Russian revolution and to give the young Soviet State a ‘breathing space’.
In the minds of the Bolsheviks, including Lenin and Stalin, the circumstances of the birth of those States governed their whole existence. They were always regarded as the creations of the anti-Bolshevik Powers, and not of the Latvian and Estonian peoples.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 341

STALIN INVADED THE BALTIC STATES ON VERY VALID GROUNDS

The question for Stalin in August 1939 was quite clear. He distrusted Hitler. The Baltic states neither would nor could resist a German lightning invasion. That would face him with an accomplished fact, but it would be difficult to declare war on that account against the Baltic States; and, of course, he had no desire to do so. If, however, he placed Russian garrisons in the Baltic States, it would be known in Berlin that any invasion would bring immediate fighting with Soviet troops. That would be a deterrent for Berlin.

Stalin went to work very cautiously. The Russian troops sent into the Baltic States were stationed in encampments of their own, far away from any settlement, and nowhere did they come into contact with the population. They were hardly seen. The Soviet State in no way interfered in the affairs of the three Baltic States; it did not even attempt to influence their armies. The regime remained as it was in all three states; and they retained their own diplomatic representation abroad. Even their communists, particularly in Latvia, still remained in prison.

Probably it will never be known how Stalin expected this to end. But he was overtaken by events. He seemed to have judged well; indeed, when war came the Western Powers seemed even weaker than he had assumed. France collapsed, and the British troops returned to their island. Hitler was virtually master of the whole of Europe outside Russia. Stalin had to safeguard his country. It proved that the garrisons in the Baltic states were insufficient. President Ullmanis, in Latvia, began to move. He was in intimate personal touch with Berlin. It seemed to him [Ullmanis] to be possible to bring about a German-Russian conflict. He no longer contented himself with dealing through the Latvian minister in Berlin, but sent men in his confidence as his personal representatives, to persuade the Germans to intervene. Naturally the Russians did not remain unaware of this. A pretext was given them by a small incident with a British warship in Estonian territorial waters. Moscow declared that the Baltic states were much too weak to be able to defend their neutrality. Such a breach of neutrality as had occurred might bring the Soviet Union into the war. On this ground, further Soviet troops marched into the Baltic States, and by a coup d' etat completed the sovietization of the three States and their incorporation into the Soviet Union.

From Stalin's point view, this policy was no abandonment of the old principles; indeed, it was the fulfillment of an injunction of Lenin's. Lenin had not had any hesitation about bringing particular peoples of the Russian Empire back into the Russian Federation by force. An example had been Stalin's own native country, Georgia…. Thus, in 1917 Georgia proclaimed its independence. It had a social democratic government, and soon established diplomatic relations with a number of European States. It even became a Member State of the League of Nations; but every effort to interest the great powers in its fate came to grief. When Azerbaijan and Armenia were sovietized, Georgia, too, was compelled to conclude peace with Soviet Russia. The peace treaty seemed entirely normal. In it Soviet Russia unreservedly recognized Georgian independence and bound itself not to interfere in internal Georgian affairs. But this treaty had a secret clause, which was published later. Under this clause the Georgian Government bound itself not only to amnesty all the imprisoned Georgian communists but to grant legal existence and freedom of propaganda to the Communists. Scarcely had this clause been given effect when the Communists provoked rioting in one of the public gardens of Tiflis. It was a trifling incident, but Lenin at once declared that the Georgian Government was unable to guarantee law and order in its own territory, thus endangering the neighboring states. Russian troops marched into Georgia, and the country was sovietized. Stalin had entirely concurred. In 1923 there was a new rising in Georgia, on an important scale; it was brutally crushed, with a great deal of bloodshed. Thus it cannot be said that Stalin's policy toward the Baltic states was an innovation; it was entirely in line with the Leninist policy.

Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 342

A new and important shift thus occurred in Stalin's foreign policy. His first move in the Baltic lands, the establishment of bases, had been dictated solely by strategic expediency. He had apparently had no intention of tampering with their social system. His sense of danger,

heightened and intensified by the collapse of France, now impelled him to stage revolutions in the three small countries. For the first time he now departed, in a small way, from his own doctrine of socialism in one country, the doctrine that he had so relentlessly inculcated into a whole Russian generation.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 446

Of course, Hitler said, the Soviets were determined to exact a price for their cooperation with the Third Reich. But as far as Hitler could see, their principal aim was merely to extend Soviet access to the Baltic via Latvia and Estonia – a modest enough demand in all conscience.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 192

STALIN'S INVASION OF FINLAND WAS NECESSARY BUT NOT ETHNICALLY JUSTIFIED

The Finnish-Russian frontier came almost up to the suburbs of Leningrad. Stalin now went so far as to demand from Finland, among other things, the cession to Russia of the Karelian Isthmus with the town of Viborg. It was impossible for Finland to submit to that. Finnish Karelia was one of the richest provinces of the country. A large part of the Finnish industries was concentrated there; Viborg was the second city of Finland. The population of the province was entirely Finnish. The Russian demands were inspired not only by strategic considerations but also by nationalist instincts. Lenin had long been criticized on this matter by party leaders; it had been pointed out that the Karelian isthmus had been conquered by Peter the Great and had for 80 years been a Russian province. When in 1809 Alexander the First captured Finland from the Swedes, he negotiated with the Finnish estates about the new Constitution. Finland became an independent State, whose Grand Duke was the Russians Tsar. Alexander I then returned the province of Viborg to the Finns. Now it was declared to be a mistake of Lenin's when in 1917, in recognizing Finnish independence, he failed to demand the return of that province to Russia.
This demand was, of course, a breach with the Leninist and the whole Bolshevik tradition. The Bolsheviks, like all Marxist, condemns such arguments from so-called 'historical rights' as reactionary and a pretext for imperialistic claims. Only the actual ethnographic facts counted for them. Lenin had therefore acted entirely consistently in 1917. In putting forward the new demand, Stalin departed from the line of argument on which he had relied in the past in annexing Polish and Romanian territory; in those cases he had relied on the ethnographic conditions.
The Soviet Union nevertheless declared war on Finland. This was Stalin's first real breach with all past tradition, in three respects: it was a breach with Lenin's past policy toward Finland; it was also definitely a preventive war, a sort of war which until then all Bolshevik theorists had condemned; and finally it was impossible, from the standpoint of Bolshevism itself, to reconcile the action against Finland with that against the Baltic states….
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 346

Even though today we rightly condemn Stalin, we should also recognize that, given the situation at the time, many of the measures he took to delay the war and strengthen the USSR's western defenses were to a large extent forced on him.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 366

We doubt whether Stalin had any more illusions about the value of this Pact than Hitler had. That is best proved by the Russian invasions of Poland, Finland, and Bessarabia which–tragic and indefensible though they were when judged by any moral standards, particularly in view of the hypocritical propaganda that accompanied these acts of aggression–were clearly and unambiguously measures of strategic protection against a threatening German attack. They were nothing more, certainly nothing in the nature of a “red imperialism,” as many people suggested.
Socialist Clarity Group. The U. S. S. R., Its Significance for the West. London: V. Gollancz, 1942, p. 59

SU CLOSELY ADHERED TO THE RUSSO-GERMAN PACT

It was obvious that the Soviet Union must be ready to supply Germany’s economic requirements. Especially at must be ready to supply strategic raw materials. This was the price not only of the peace enjoyed by the Soviet Union, but of its territorial gains. And Stalin delivered the supplies, carefully keeping to the agreements. Only in this way could he keep war away from his frontiers.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 348

Stalin was clearly determined, from the very start of the alliance, that nothing should be done which might in the slightest agree offend or upset his new partner.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 296

DESPITE HARD TIMES STALIN AIDED CHINA REPEATEDLY

In 1931 Japan delivered the first armed blow at the system of Versailles by occupying Manchuria. Stalin openly assisted the Chinese in every way possible, short of a declaration of war. He did this in spite of the fact that the whole of his country’s energies were directed towards the fulfillment of the first Five Year Plan and that widespread famine and sabotage were decimating the land.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 111

In September, 1931, on a trumped-up pretext the Japanese seized the Manchurian capital, Mukden, and within a few months extended their conquest over the whole of Manchuria, including the Chinese Eastern railroad, jointly owned and operated by the Russians and Chinese. Russia and Japan were brought to the verge of war because the Russians were convinced early in 1932 that Japan proposed to follow its Manchurian action by a drive through Outer Mongolia to the Russian area south of Lake Baikal, with the purpose of cutting off the Maritime Provinces of Eastern Siberia from the Soviet Union. The Russians faced this threat alone; far from having confidence in the Western Powers to check Japanese aggression, they believed that London at least was encouraging Japan to invade Siberia.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 183

Between 1919 and 1926 Sun Yat-Sen and and his followers turned definitely to the Soviet Union for help in their independence struggle. After repeated attempts to obtain aid from the United States and from various European governments, Sun Yat-sen became convinced that

his best source of support was the Soviet Union. At the request of his government, and of the People's party which he headed, the Soviet Union sent to China a core of technical assistants that at one time numbered approximately 300. The titular head of this group was Borodin.
Nearing, S. The Soviet Union as a World Power. New York: Island Workshop Press, 1945, p. 54

No figures are available showing the exact amount of material assistance sent by Russia into China during the 20 years that ended in 1937. In the first decade the material aid was probably considerable. In the second decade it diminished sharply. From the Japanese invasion of China in 1937 until the German invasion of Russia in 1941 Soviet aid to China again increased. Military necessity forced Soviet supplies to follow old caravan routes converted into extemporized truck roads across the Gobi desert.
Nearing, S. The Soviet Union as a World Power. New York: Island Workshop Press, 1945, p. 55

With minor exceptions Soviet Russia has extended consistent help to the movement for a Chinese Republic in the hope that a China directed by a Chinese Soviet government would be able to win its independence from the western empires, industrialize China, raise the standard of well-being of the Chinese masses and by so doing blaze the trail toward a Soviet Asia.
Nearing, S. The Soviet Union as a World Power. New York: Island Workshop Press, 1945, p. 56

On the question of the Sino-Soviet treaty of 1945,… the Russians would withdraw their troops from Port Arthur when the Chinese wished, and also yield up control of the trans-Manchurian railways. On other practical matters, Mao requested Soviet credits of 300 million U.S. dollars, as well as help developing domestic air transport routes and developing a navy, to all of which Stalin agreed.
Spence, Jonathan D. Mao Zedong. New York: Viking, 1999, p. 111

SU FULFILLED LEAGUE EFFORTS AGAINST AGGRESSORS

On September 18, 1934, in order to identify herself absolutely with the idea of European stability and peace, the USSR entered the League of Nations. Alone of all the members, she gave practical proof of a readiness to contribute more to the cause of peace than words and sympathy. When Mussolini sent his legions into Abyssinia, Moscow loyally fulfilled her obligations and welcomed the application of sanctions. Abyssinia was not Russia's concern, she had no interest in arresting Italian designs in the Mediterranean and no African colonies to protect. She acted because she had no desire to see aggression elevated into a successful principle.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 112

STALIN CRITICIZES THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY

Stalin has paid particular attention to the Chinese Communist Party and the heroic efforts of the Chinese Soviets. He personally undertook the stiffening of the line of the Chinese Party

at the Chinese Commission of the Comintern in 1926. His intervention, which has become famous in the annals of the Communist international, contended against the errors and faults resulting from diffidence with regard to the Workers' and Peasants' Revolution, and a certain tendency to consider the Chinese Revolution as having to remain a middle-class democratic revolution. Well, "all the measures which he recommended have been ultimately justified by events."
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 107

In a July 9, 1927, letter to Bukharin and Molotov Stalin stated, "I believe that such a danger is more real (I mean the danger of the disintegration of the Chinese Communist Party) than some of the seeming realities so abundant in China. Why? Because unfortunately, we don't have a real or, if you like, actual Communist Party in China. If you take away the middle-ranking Communists who make good fighting material but who are completely inexperienced in politics, then what is the current Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party? Nothing but an 'amalgamation' of general phrases gathered here and there, not linked to one another with any line or guiding idea. I don't want to be very demanding toward the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. I know that one can't be too demanding toward it. But here is a simple demand: fulfill the directives of the Comintern. Has it fulfilled these directives? No. No, because it did not understand them, because it did not want to fulfill them and has hoodwinked the Comintern, or because it wasn't able to fulfill them. That is a fact. Roy blames Borodin. That's stupid. It can't be that Borodin has more weight with the Chinese Communist Party or its Central Committee than the Comintern does. Roy himself wrote that Borodin did not attend the Chinese Communist Party Congress since he was forced to go into hiding…. Some explain this by the fact that the bloc with the Kuomintang is to blame, which ties the Chinese Communist Party down and does not allow it to be independent. That is also not true, for although any block ties down the members of the bloc one way or another that doesn't mean that we should be against blocs in general. Take Chiang's five coastal provinces from Canton to Shanghai, where there's no bloc with the Kuomintang. How can you explain that Chiang's agents are more successful at disintegrating the 'army' of the Communists, than the Communists are at disintegrating Chiang's rear guard? Is it not a fact that a whole number of trade unions are breaking off from the Chinese Communist Party, and Chiang continues to hold strong? What sort of Chinese Communist Party 'independence' is that?…. I think the reason is not in these factors, although they have their significance, but in the fact of the current Central Committee (it's leadership) was forged in the period of the nationwide revolution and received its baptism by fire during this period and it turned out to be completely unadaptable to the new, agrarian phase of the revolution. The Chinese Communist Party Central committee does not understand the point of the new phase of the revolution. There is not a single Marxist mind in the Central Committee capable of understanding the underpinning (the social underpinning) of the events now occurring. The Chinese Communist Party Central committee was unable to use the rich period of the bloc with Kuomintang in order to conduct energetic work in openly organizing the revolution, the proletariat, the peasantry, the revolutionary military units, the revolutionizing of the army, the work of setting the soldiers against the generals. The Chinese Communist Party Central Committee has lived off the Kuomintang for a whole year and has had the opportunity of freely working and organizing, yet it did nothing to turn the conglomerate of elements (true, quite militant), incorrectly called a party, into a real party…. Of course there was work at the grassroots. We are indebted to the middle-ranking Communists for that. But characteristically, it was not the Central

Committee that went to the workers and peasants but the workers and peasants who went to the Central committee, and the closer the workers and peasants approached the Central Committee, the farther away from them went the so-called Central Committee, preferring to kill time in behind-the- scenes talks with the leaders and generals from the Kuomintang. The Chinese Communist Party sometimes babbles about the hegemony of the proletariat. But the most intolerable thing about this babbling is that the Chinese Communist Party does not have a clue (literally, not a clue) about hegemony–it kills initiative of the working masses, undermines the 'unauthorized' actions of the peasant masses, and reduces class warfare in China to a lot of big talk about the 'feudal bourgeoisie'.
That's the reason why the Comintern's directives are not fulfilled.
That is why I now believe the question of the party is the main question of the Chinese revolution.
How can we fix the conglomerate that we incorrectly call the Chinese Communist Party?… Both Borodin and Roy must be purged from China, along with all those opposition members that hinder the work there. We should regularly send to China, not people we don't need, but competent people instead. The structure has to be set up so that all these party advisers work together as a whole, directed by the chief adviser to the Central Committee (the Comintern representative). These 'nannies' are necessary at this stage because of the weakness, shapelessness, political amorphousness, and lack of qualification of the current Central Committee. The Central committee will learn from the party advisors. The party advisors will compensate for the enormous shortcomings of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee and its top regional officials. They will serve (for the time being) as the nails holding the existing conglomerate together as a party…. As the revolution and the party grow, the need for these ' nannies' will disappear."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 140

On July 11, 1927, Stalin sent a letter to Molotov stating, "I read the Politburo directives on the withdrawal from the national government in China. I think that soon the issue of withdrawing from the Kuomintang will have to be raised. I'll explain why when I come. I have been told that some people are in a repentant mood regarding our policy in China. If that is true, it's too bad. When I come, I will try to prove that our policy was and remains the only correct policy. Never have I been so deeply and firmly convinced of the correctness of our policy, both in China and regarding the Anglo-Russian Committee, as I am now."
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin's Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 143

Stalin, despite what is implied in the Trotskyite literature on the subject, did not love or trust Chiang; he simply underestimated him.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 277

… Stalin was to claim, and there is a hard-core of common sense in his argument, that though the Chinese policy failed, the premises under which it had been conducted could not be faulted. The Communists had to take the risk inherent in collaboration with the Kuomintang. Certainly the latter's successes curtailed the influence of imperialist powers on China and set the stage for Communist successes some time in the future. The Chinese Communists could never have grown so impressively in membership and influence without collaborating with the Kuomintang, and it would have been sheer fantasy to imagine that in

1923 or 1927 they could have conquered a sizable part of China by themselves. There were occasions, he implied, when ideological incantations and citations from Marx and Lenin are powerless to change the disposition of class forces. Was it wrong to have the Revolution of 1905? he asked. It had ended in disaster, but it had also set the stage for 1917.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin: The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 277

In-substance the Trotsky-Zinoviev charges about China were absurd. To visualize how much so, we may compare them to the outcry of the American right wing a little more than 20 years later about how Truman and Acheson “lost China.” Those charges were unfair enough: how can one nation in peacetime determine the course of events in another vast and distant country? But at that time the United States was unquestionably the most powerful nation in the world, its industry producing more than half the entire global output. The American protEgE, Chiang, was until well into 1947 in control of most of mainland China, and it was his own policies as much as the Communists’ clever ones that brought about his doom. But here was a weak and impoverished Soviet Union, with its clients, the Chinese Communists, mustering a strength of only about 60,000. Could the most brilliant understanding of dialectic, the most “correct” directives sent to the Chinese comrades, have affected the issue of the struggle? Suppose that by some miracle the Chinese Communists had seized southern China: would the imperialist powers have tolerated their attempt to conquer the whole country? In his memoranda throughout 1926 Trotsky himself stressed the absolute necessity of not provoking Japan, of respecting her sphere of influence in Manchuria and north China. Any likely Communist conquest would have brought the capitalist powers together, would have presented the Soviet Far East with the danger of Japanese invasion, an invasion which everybody recognized, the Soviet Union was in no position to defeat.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 278

CHIANG’S GOVT IS AN IMPERIALIST LACKEY

In an August 29, 1929, letter to Molotov Stalin stated, “The point is really to use our tough position to unmask completely and to undermine the authority of Chiang Kai-shek’s government, a government of lackeys of imperialism, for attempting to become the model of ‘national government’ for the colonial and dependent countries. There can be no doubt that each clash between Chiang Kai-shek’s government and the Soviet government, just as each concession Chiang Kai-shek makes to us (and he is already starting to make concessions), is a blow against Chiang Kai-shek exposes Chiang Kai-shek’s government as a government of lackeys of imperialism and makes it easier to carry out the revolutionary education of the workers in colonial countries (and the Chinese workers above all). Litvinov and Karakhan (and they are not the only ones) don’t see that. So much the worse for them.”
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin’s Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 174

LITVINOV TALKS LIKE A SECRET TRAITOR TO THE SU

MOLOTOV: Litvinov was utterly hostile to us. We bugged his talk with an American correspondent, an obvious spy,… What did Litvinov say?

He said, “You Americans won’t be able to deal with this Soviet government. Their positions preclude any serious agreement with you. Do you think this government, these hard-liners will meet you halfway in any sense? Nothing will come of your dealings with them. …For the people have no tanks, but the government has…. The government has party officers in such numbers that the people cannot exert their own will to change things. Only external pressure can help, that is, a military campaign. Only Western intervention can change the situation in the country.”
He said nothing to me personally. That too was unconscionable. Utter treason.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 68

CHUEV: They write a lot about Litvinov these days. I remember you saying you didn’t trust him.
MOLOTOV: He was, of course, not a bad diplomat–a good one. But at heart he was quite an opportunist. He greatly sympathized with Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev, and thus couldn’t enjoy our absolute confidence.
I believe at the end of his life he turned rotten politically.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 69

I [Litvinov] do not like Koba and consider his policy pernicious….
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 89

For once I am in full agreement with the Instantsia.
[This is the Foreign Minister speaking?]
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 269

My own view is that we need no security measures at all…. Foreigners don’t understand anything about our affairs in any case… except the Poles, who understand only too well all that is happening here…. They have the only real information network in the USSR….
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 278

STALIN UNDERSTANDS THE TRICKS OF CAPITALIST GOVTS

In a September 9, 1929, letter to Molotov Stalin stated, “It’s not Henderson [British Foreign Office official] who is dangerous, since we have pushed him to the wall, but Litvinov, who believes Wise and other bastards more than the logic of things. Remember we are waging a struggle (negotiations with enemies is also struggle), not with England alone, but with the whole capitalist world, since the MacDonald government is the vanguard of the capitalist governments in the work of “humiliating’ and “bridling’ the Soviet government with “new,’ more “diplomatic,’ more disguised, and thus more “effective’ methods. The MacDonald government wants to show the whole capitalist world that it can take more from us (with the help of “gentle’ methods) than Mussolini, Poincare, and Baldwin, that it can be a greater Shylock than the capitalist Shylock himself. And it wants this because only in this way can it win the trust of its own bourgeoisie (and not only its bourgeoisie). We really would be worthless if we couldn’t manage to reply to these arrogant bastards briefly and to the point: “You won’t get a friggin’ thing from us.”
Naumov, Lih, and Khlevniuk, Eds. Stalin’s Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1995, p. 178

MUNICH SELL-OUT WAS TO GET NAZIS HEADED EASTWARD

Britain, however, under Prime Minister Chamberlain, built up Hitler, granting to him in haste everything that had for a decade been refused to the German Republic–the remilitarization of the Rhineland, the Nazi-terrorized plebiscite in the Saar, German re-armament, naval expansion, the Hitler-Mussolini intervention in Spain. British finance, which had strangled German democracy by demanding impossible reparations, helped Hitler with investments and loans. Every intelligent world citizen knew that these favors were given to Hitler because British Tories saw in him their "strong-arm gangster" against the Soviets. If any doubt remained of the aims of both the British and French foreign offices, the Munich Conference removed it. That cynical sell-out of Czechoslovakia was their trump-card in inducing Hitler to march East.

Anyone who watched, as I did, the British moves of those days, saw that Chamberlain, who spoke of "appeasing" Hitler, really egged him on. He suggested giving the Czech's Sudetenland to Hitler before anyone in Germany dared demand it….

The only ally that proposed to help the Czechs resist this sellout was the USSR.

…Why were Chamberlain and Daladier willing to sacrifice 27 Czech divisions and one of the best fortification lines in Europe? What made them give Hitler one of Europe's best armament plants–the Skoda Works? Where they conscious traitors, or weak? A manager of a local industry said: "You can say it in four words–They're afraid of Bolshevism."

Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 74

Although the main imperialist rivals in Europe were the same as in World War I (namely, British and French versus German), the British and French in the pre-World War II years not only allowed the German ruling class to rearm but made great concessions to it. They allowed the German rulers to take Austria, Czechoslovakia, and other territories on the understanding that these new economic and military resources would be used in war against the USSR. In the first phases of the war the British and French acquiesced in the German conquest of Poland, Denmark, Norway, Belgium, and Holland; and the French ruling class in effect gave its German counterpart a lease on its economic resources for the conquest of the socialist state. The British ruling class split on whether to follow suit but finally decided, with U.S. prodding, that the price was too high. U.S. imperialism saw such concessions as a serious risk, realizing that if German imperialism controlled all of Europe, including the USSR and Britain, it would next join forces with Japan and mount a war against the United States. On the hand, neither the American imperialists nor the British wish to see the USSR victorious. Both hoped that the USSR and Germany would mutually exhaust each other and allow British and American imperialist interests to penetrate deep into Europe. Thus they supplied the USSR with what they thought was just enough assistance to help it to resist but not conquer the Germans. They delayed opening a second front in the hope of a Soviet-German stalemate, but delayed too long–until the Soviet armies were rolling on to Berlin and seemingly threatened to overrun Europe. The reason for their miscalculation was that they did not understand the special strengths of the socialist state.

Stalin, in spite of later assertions to the contrary, was well aware of all these matters. In March 1939, more than two years before the German invasion of the USSR, he commented: "Or take Germany, for instance. They let her have Austria, despite the undertaking to defend her independence; they let her have the Sudeten region; they abandoned Czechoslovakia to

her fate, thereby violating all their obligations; and then began to lie vociferously in the press about “the weakness of the Russian army,” “the demoralization of the Russian Air Force,” and “riots” in the Soviet Union, egging the Germans on to march farther east, promising them easy pickings, and prompting them: “Just start war on the Bolsheviks, and everything will be all right.”
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 109

Stalin understood perfectly that France and Britain were preparing a new Munich, that they were ready to sacrifice Poland, encouraging Hitler to march on the Soviet Union. Harold Ickes, U.S. Secretary of the Interior, wrote at the time in his journal:
“(England) kept hoping against hope that she could embroil Russia and Germany with each other and thus escape scot-free herself.”
Harold L. Ickes, The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954), Vol. 2, p. 705.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 233 [p. 187 on the NET]

To complete the picture of our mood I must say what we felt about the Western Democracies. Tragically, they offered us no hope. Both in the eyes of the thinking opposition and of the man in the street the Munich agreement had destroyed their moral authority. By that agreement Britain and France committed moral suicide. Hard though it is to say, in that crucial period between 1938 and 1941 hardly anyone in the USSR had a warm place in his heart for the British or the French. There was no need for any central Party directive. At meeting after meeting the opinion was expressed with genuine spontaneity that the Western Powers would betray us at the slightest opportunity and that we must, therefore, keep the utmost vigilance regarding the West. We mistrusted it from the bottom of our hearts.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 169

To the Russians, Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister, was the archvillain. They held him in contempt, and blamed him for the collapse of the Soviet policy of collective security. They were convinced that he was encouraging Germany to march eastwards, leaving Britain and France to enjoy peace while fascism and communism destroyed each other….
It was probably about this time that Stalin decided to open the door to an alliance with Hitler. It was a calculated gamble, but he could see no alternatives.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 304

In April 1939 diplomatic negotiations among the Soviet Union, England, and France were re-activated with the aim of establishing a system of collective security in Europe. But the most important Soviet proposals were rejected, while many of the English and French proposals were clearly unacceptable to the USSR. Moreover, the government of Chamberlain secretly continued to seek an agreement with the Germans to guarantee England’s security. The French and English ruling circles had obviously not abandoned their primary hope of turning German aggression eastward, against the Soviet state. Under these conditions Soviet diplomats again began to seek contacts with Germany.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 726

… England and France were playing an insecure and dangerous political game. They dragged out the negotiations with the Soviet Union while holding secret talks with Germany, still hoping that Germany would direct its aggression eastward.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 727

Most Western authors recount these events in a very tendentious manner–as though the Soviet Union were responsible for supporting Hitler in his attack on Poland and thus contributing to the outbreak of World War II. But this opinion is mistaken.
I do not intend to justify Stalin's entire policy…. But the nonaggression pact should not be added to this list of Stalin's errors….
The Soviet government was compelled to sign the pact because Britain and France, with their policy of toleration and nonintervention, had been encouraging German fascism and helped Germany recreate a strong military machine in the hope that it would be used against Bolshevism. Some of the big corporations in the United States had also helped, with the same aim in mind. The Munich accord of 1938, agreed to by Germany, Italy, England, and France, was what truly unleashed Hitler. After the occupation of Austria and Czechoslovakia the next step for Germany was almost certainly to try to destroy Poland. It was also clear to Hitler that England and France would "give up": if they could be certain that German aggression would be directed eastward. "The enemy cherishes the hope," Hitler declared at a military conference in Berlin on Aug. 22, 1939, "that Russia will become our enemy after the conquest of Poland." Hitler considered France and Britain the weaker opponents, however, and at first planned to make war only on his Western front. To this day every document published in the West has confirmed that the Western governments of that time were responsible for the breakdown of negotiations for collective security in Europe. Under the circumstances the Soviet Union had to look after its own interests and security. In 1939 the nonaggression pact with Germany served that purpose.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 728

I would note in passing that, under the terms of an existing treaty, the Soviet Union and France were to assist Czechoslovakia jointly in case of an act of aggression against her. When in the fall of 1938 the threat became real, Moscow was ready to fulfill its commitment. Mobilization orders were issued in the western part of the Soviet Union. France, on the other hand, did not live up to its part of the agreement and struck a deal in Munich without even consulting Moscow.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin's Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 22

[In 1936 Stalin said to Radek], "You know they'll do all they can to forestall us by offering Hitler the neutrality of the West, to force him in our direction. We must put a stop to that."
Alexandrov, Victor. The Tukhachevsky Affair. London: Macdonald, 1963, p. 28

With the temperature of the crisis soaring towards boiling point in September, 1938, Britain and France studiously avoided all the Soviet efforts to form a united front against Hitler.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 27

We must make it clearly understood that we shall continue the old historical process, that our dispute with Germany will be settled on the battlefields and that if somebody else–say Roosevelt–also resolves to fight Hitler, we shall be on his side in that hour when the fate of

mankind is at stake." Again he [Stalin] paused, and then added, "Please understand me! We must not act prematurely…. The danger is extremely great…. We cannot afford to receive the first blow… the most terrible blow of that war-machine–the biggest the world has ever seen…. If we did, we should be betrayed and finished…. All these Chamberlains, Halifaxes and the like wait only for that moment to let us down… to make us the prey of German imperialism…. They have less interest in us than in Togoland or the Cameroons…. They would rather give away the Ukraine than sacrifice any of their colonies…. We must be cautious…."
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 253

Europe in early 1939 was, in Stalin's own words, a "poker game" with three players, in which each" hoped to persuade the other two to destroy one another and leave the third to take the winnings.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 302

The principle matter was settled: everyone, Stalin included, believed that Chamberlain was urging Hitler to embark on a crusade against the Russians, and that the Soviet government would have to take steps to divert the Germanic flood, and to direct it toward the valley of the Lower Danube, and then the Balkans and Asia minor,…
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 230

German Foreign Office documents captured by the Soviet troops after Germany's defeat reveal the true purport of Great Britain's and France's policy at that period. They show that, essentially, British and French policy was not to unite the forces of the peace-loving states for a common struggle struggle against aggression, but to isolate the USSR and direct Hitler's aggression toward the East, against the Soviet Union, using Hitler as a tool for their own ends.
Foreign Lang. Pub. House. Schuman, F. L. Intro. Falsifiers of History. Moscow, 1948, p. 16

Stalin chuckled, and said:
"The French Government headed by Daladier and the Chamberlain Government in Britain have no intention of getting seriously involved in the war with Hitler. They still hope to be able to persuade Hitler to start a war against the Soviet Union. They refused to form an anti-Hitler bloc with us in 1939, because they did not want to hamper Hitler in his aggression against the Soviet Union. But nothing will come of it. They will have to pay a high price for their short-sighted policy."
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 206

While wishing to preserve peace as the decisive condition for building socialism in the USSR, Stalin saw that the governments of Britain and other Western countries were doing everything possible to prod Hitler into a war with the Soviet Union, that, being in a critical military situation and striving to save themselves from catastrophe, they were strongly interested in having the Germans attack the USSR. That was why Stalin distrusted the information he was getting from Western governments that Germany was about to attack the Soviet Union.
"Don't you see?" Stalin would say. "They are trying to frighten us with the Germans and to frighten the Germans with us, setting us one against the other."

Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 267-268

Stalin stated, “In deciding to wage war against the Soviet Union, Hitler took into account the imperialist circles in Britain and the USA, who totally shared his thinking. And not without reason: they did everything they could to direct the military actions of the Wehrmacht against the Soviet Union.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 282

SUMMARY OF BRITAIN AND FRANCE DRAGGING THEIR FEET IN SUMMER OF 1939

Voices in Britain and France demanded an alliance with the USSR to stop Hitler…. The USSR made several proposals for a triple alliance to guarantee both East and West Europe against the Nazis. Every suggestion was put on ice by the Chamberlain government and after delay, turned down. Chamberlain sought agreement rather with Hitler; on May 3, 1939, he startled the House of Commons by saying he was ready for a non-aggression pact with Germany. Two days later, he refused the proposal of the USSR for a military alliance.
Even Conservatives began to protest Chamberlain’s actions. Winston Churchill, on May 7th, in the House of Commons, demanded an alliance with the USSR. Under such pressure, the British and French ambassadors in Moscow were finally instructed, May 25th, to “discuss” an alliance. Ten vital weeks had been lost since the rape of Czechoslovakia. Three more weeks were wasted in waiting for a certain Mr. Strang to get to Moscow. This representative, sent by the British foreign office to “handle discussions,” proved, on arrival, to have no authority to sign anything…. The Soviets were clearly in haste; the British as clearly delayed. Suddenly, Moscow learned that the British Parliamentary Secretary of Overseas Trade had been discussing with a German official a loan of half a billion or a billion pounds.
To the Moscow leaders, it was clear that Britain either trifled or was trying to push war East….
Twice, Moscow signaled the British people that the discussions were getting nowhere. The first signal was the resignation on May 3rd, of Maxim Litvinov, Soviet Foreign Minister. For a decade he had symbolized to the world a program for peace through collective agreements against aggression. This program had failed, said Moscow through Litvinov’s resignation. It failed in Manchuria, in Abyssinia, in Spain, in China, in Austria, in Albania, in Czechoslovakia, in Memel–eight years of failure, because the government chiefs of the Western democracies appeased or encouraged the aggressors….
After six weeks, Moscow gave another signal. On July 29, Zhdanov, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Supreme Soviet, declared in an article in Pravda that the talks with Britain and France were getting nowhere and that he did not think either Britain or France wanted an alliance or intended to check Hitler, but might be negotiating just to keep the Russians quiet while Hitler prepared to attack them.
At the end of July, when all Europe’s foreign offices knew that Hitler intended to seize the Polish corridor within a month, the Soviets made a last attempt. They suggested that Britain and France send military missions to Moscow to plan the mutual defense of East Europe on the spot. The missions waited ten days, then traveled by the slowest route; when they reached Moscow it was found they had no authority to agree to anything….

Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 76

BENEFITS OF RUSSO-GERMAN NON-AGGRESSION PACT

The British and French, who had not scrupled to force the Czechs, by threats, to yield to Hitler, used no pressure to induce the Poles to accept the Soviet help.
So the Soviet Union made its decision. Hitler had offered a Non-Aggression Pact–he later admitted, in his declaration of war against the USSR, that the request came from him. The pact was signed between Germany and the USSR on August 23rd.
Hitler's allies were angry. Mussolini and Franco openly disapproved. Terrible was the blow to Tokyo, for Japan was already fighting the USSR on the edge of Mongolia, and was reported to have told Hitler that she would be ready by August to join "the big push."
In that tragic time, when Poland was breaking, a Soviet diplomat said to me: "But for our Non-Aggression Pact, we would now be under attack, from both Europe and Asia, by the Alliance of Germany, Italy, and Japan. Britain and France would have held the Maginot Line and financed Hitler. America would have been Japan's arsenal against us, as she has been against China. By our Non-Aggression Pact, we drove wedges between Hitler, Japan, and Hitler's London backers. It was too late to stop the invasion of Poland; Chamberlain didn't even try. But we have split the camp of world fascism and shall not have to fight the whole world."
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 78

I believe that the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact of 1939 was historically inevitable, given the circumstances of the time, and that in the final analysis it was profitable for the Soviet Union. It was like a gambit in chess: if we hadn't made that move, the war should have started earlier, much to our disadvantage. As it was, we were given a respite. I think the vast majority of the Party considered the signing of the treaty tactically wise on our part, even though nobody could say so publicly….
All the while the English and French and the whole bourgeois press were trying to sic Hitler on the Soviet Union, trumpeting, " Russia is nothing but a colossus with feet of clay!"
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 129

The same Edward H. Carr, noting that the Chamberlain government "as a defender of capitalism" turned down an alliance with the USSR against Germany, made the following estimation of the gains made by the Soviet Union as a result of signing the Non-aggression treaty with Germany:
"In the pact of August 23rd, 1939, they [the Soviet government] secured: (a) a breathing space of immunity from attack; (b) German assistance in mitigating Japanese pressure in the Far East; (c) German agreement to the establishment of an advanced bastion beyond the existing Soviet frontiers in Eastern Europe; it was significant that this bastion was, and could only be, a line of defense against potential German attack, the eventual prospect of which was never far absent from Soviet reckonings. But what most of all was achieved by the pact was the assurance that, if the USSR had eventually to fight Hitler, the Western powers would already be involved." (Carr, From Munich to Moscow: II, in Soviet Studies, Vol. I, October 1949, page 103).
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 570

On the hand, the signing of a nonaggression pact could avert war between Germany and the Soviet Union, at least for some time. Stalin did not rule out the idea that eventually he would have to confront Hitler. However, he wanted to put off the conflict for as long as he could. A pact appeared to offer a prospect of that.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin's Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 29

Russia was to supply Germany with grain and raw materials and to receive German machines and machine tools. One of the first things Stalin did, after the conclusion of the pact, was to dispatch his military missions to Germany. With what avidity those missions tried, in the first flush of friendship, to ferret out the German war industries can be seen from the complaints about their 'excessive curiosity', which Goering, Keitel, and Rader were already lodging at the beginning of October 1939. A little later Nazi economic leaders complained that the Russians wanted too many machine tools for the production of artillery and too much other war material.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 443

Four days later, on May 11, 1939, the first attack came. The crack Japanese army that had invaded Manchuria struck into the Soviet Union. The Soviet-Japanese war of 1939 is conveniently omitted from our history books, but this war, together with the Anglo-French collaboration with the Nazis and fascists in the West, form the context for another of Stalin's great "crimes," the Soviet-German nonaggression pact of August 1939. Stalin recognized that the main aim of the Axis was to destroy the Soviet Union, and that the other capitalist nations were conniving with this scheme. He also knew that sooner or later the main Axis attack would come on the USSR's western front. Meanwhile, Soviet forces were being diverted to the east, to fend off the Japanese invaders. The nonaggression pact with Nazi Germany, which horrified and disillusioned Communist sympathizers, particularly intellectuals, in the capitalist nations, was actually one of the most brilliant strategic moves of Stalin's life, and perhaps of diplomatic history. From the Soviet point of view it accomplished five things: (1) it brought needed time to prepare for the Nazi attack, which was thus delayed for two years; (2) it allowed the Red Army to concentrate on smashing the Japanese invasion, without having to fight on two fronts; they decisively defeated the Japanese within three months; (3) it allowed the Soviet Union to retake the sections of White Russia and the Ukraine that had been invaded by Poland during the Russian Civil War and were presently occupied by the Polish military dictatorship; this meant that the forthcoming Nazi invasion would have to pass through a much larger area defended by the Red Army; (4) it also allowed Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, which also had been part of Russia before the Civil War, to become part of the USSR as Soviet republics; this meant that the forthcoming Nazi attack could not immediately outflank Leningrad; (5) most important of all, it destroyed the Anglo-French strategy of encouraging a war between the Axis powers and the Soviet Union while they enjoyed neutrality; World War II was to begin as a war between the Axis powers and the other capitalist nations, and the Soviet Union, if forced into it, was not going to have to fight alone against the combined fascist powers. The worldwide defeat of the fascist Axis was in part a product of Stalin's diplomatic strategy, as well as his later military strategy.
Franklin, Bruce, Ed. The Essential Stalin; Major Theoretical Writings. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p. 25

At Munich the British and French had given Germany parts of Czechoslovakia “as a price for undertaking to launch war on the Soviet Union, which the Germans now refused to honor.”
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 604

No counterfeiters can expunge from history or from the minds of the people’s the overriding factor that under the circumstances the Soviet Union was faced with the alternative:
Either, in its self-defense, to accept Germany’s proposal for a pact of non-aggression, and thereby insure the Soviet Union prolongation of peace for a certain period, which might be utilized to better prepare the forces of the Soviet State for resistance to eventual aggression;
Or to reject Germany’s proposal for a non-aggression pact, and thereby allow the provocateurs of war in the camp of the Western Powers to embroil the Soviet Union immediately in an armed conflict with Germany, at a time when the situation was utterly unfavorable to the Soviet Union, seeing that it would be completely isolated.
Under these circumstances, the Soviet Government was compelled to make its choice and conclude a non-aggression pact with Germany.
The slanderous claptrap that all the same the USSR should not have agreed to conclude a pact with the Germans can only be regarded as ridiculous. Why was it right for Poland, who had Britain and France as allies, to conclude non-aggression pact with the Germans in 1934, and not right for the Soviet Union, which was in a less favorable situation, to conclude a similar pact in 1939? Why was it right for Britain and France, who were the dominant force in Europe, to issue joint a declaration of non-aggression with the Germans in 1938, and not right for the Soviet Union, isolated as it was because of the hostile policy of Britain and France, to conclude a pact with the Germans?
Is it not a fact that of all the non-aggressive Great Powers in Europe, the Soviet Union was the last to agree to a pact with the Germans?
Foreign Lang. Pub. House. Schuman, F. L. Intro. Falsifiers of History. Moscow, 1948, p. 39-40

SU HAD HINDERED NAZIS PRIOR TO BEING INVADED

Hitler saw that the USSR, as a neutral, was the immediate barrier in his path to world rule. In the 22 months of the Non-Aggression Pact, the USSR had three times blocked the Nazi advance. The Soviet march into Poland had checked for a year Hitler’s advance to the East; the Soviet return to Bessarabia had pulled him back from invading Britain; and Moscow’s power politics in the Balkans and Baltic had delayed him at the Dardanelles.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 90

SU WANTED PEACE SO BAD IT SIGNED A PACT WITH THE NAZIS

The USSR wanted peace above all things else and to get it, in his [The—–minister] opinion, would pay even the price of an agreement with Hitler. This is an extraordinary view in the face of the violent way in which Hitler and Stalin are calling each other all the vile names under the sun.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 82

…the Soviet government left no stone unturned to impart to the rest of Europe its own awareness of the Nazi peril. Its representatives ran hither and yon offering to all and sundry pacifist agreements, nonaggression pacts, and economic accords. They conducted negotiations not only with nations that might become victims of Nazi aggression, but with powers unfriendly to Russia, like Poland and Finland, and, on an economic basis, with Germany itself. In those days the Russians were like Cassandra, prophesying evil and striving desperately to avert it, but finding few to heed their warnings. Even the Comintern was pressed into the campaign for peace. It instructed foreign Communist Parties to make common cause wherever possible with Labor and liberal groups and to form a "United Front against the Nazi-Fascist danger."
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 226

…As leader, he [Stalin] could say he was aiming the country towards catching up and overtaking the developed capitalist countries, but he needed time and he needed peace, peace at any price.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 384

For Stalin, the options had expired. Between Schulenburg's visits to the Kremlin… Stalin finally took the decision to go with Hitler. It was, on the evidence available, the only way left for him to protect his country.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 220

DAVIES SAYS WEST'S POLICY MAY DRIVE SU TO PACT WITH NAZIS

In a January 18, 1939, letter to Harry Hopkins Ambassador Davies said, "The Chamberlain policy of throwing Italy, Poland, and Hungary into the arms of Hitler may be completed by so disgusting the Soviets that it will drive Russia into an economic agreement and an ideological truce with Hitler. That is not beyond the bounds of possibility or even probability…."
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 434

In a March 21, 1939, letter to Sen. Key Pittman, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the United States, Ambassador Davies stated, "From information that I get from most responsible sources and that I think is reliable, Hitler is making a desperate effort to alienate Stalin from France and Britain. Unless the British and French wake up, I am afraid he will succeed. If he does, he can turn his attention to Western Europe without any concern as to an attack from behind.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 439

STALIN GIVES UP TRYING TO SIGN PACTS WITH THE WEST

…Stalin's speech to the Communist Party, delivered to the 18th Congress in March last (1939), definitely indicated a disposition toward withdrawal of Soviet activities so far as Europe was concerned, and a tendency to be extremely cautious "not to allow our country to be drawn into conflicts by warmongers who are accustomed to have others pull their chestnuts out of the fire for them";…
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 444

[Report to the 18th Congress on March 10, 1939]
The tasks of the Party in the sphere of foreign policy are:
2. To be cautious and not allow our country to be drawn into conflicts by warmongers who are accustomed to having others pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them;
Franklin, Bruce, Ed. The Essential Stalin; Major Theoretical Writings. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p. 346

In a July 18, 1941, letter to Harry Hopkins Ambassador Davies said, “From my observation and contacts, since 1936, I believe that outside of the President of the United States alone no government in the world saw more clearly the menace of Hitler to peace and the necessity for collective security and alliances among nonaggressive nations than did the Soviet government. They were ready to fight for Czechoslovakia. They canceled their nonaggression pact with Poland in advance of Munich because they wished to clear the road for the passage of their troops through Poland to go to the aid of Czechoslovakia if necessary to fulfill their treaty obligations. Even after Munich and as late as the spring of 1939 the Soviet government agreed to join with Britain and France if Germany should attack Poland or Romania, but urged that an international conference of nonaggressor states should be held to determine objectively and realistically what each could do and then serve notice on Hitler of their combined resistance. They claimed that this was the only thing that would stop Hitler’s aggression against European peace. The suggestion was declined by Chamberlain by reason of the objection of Poland and Romania to the inclusion of Russia; and the disastrous unilateral agreements were then promoted and entered into by Britain. During all the spring of 1939 the Soviets, fearful that they were being used as the “cat’s paw” to “pull the chestnuts out of the fire” and would be left to fight Hitler alone, tried to bring about a definite agreement that would assume unity of action and co-ordination of military plans to stop Hitler.
Even as late as August 1939 the commissions of France and Germany were in Moscow for that purpose. Britain, however, refused to give the same guarantees of protection to Russia with reference to the Baltic states which Russia was giving to France and Britain in the event of aggression against Belgium or Holland. The Soviets became convinced, and with considerable reason, that no affective, direct and practical, general arrangement could be made with France and Britain. They were driven to a pact of nonaggression with Hitler.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 495

In his diary dated October 28, 1941, Ambassador Davies recorded the following answer to the question: Will Stalin make a separate peace with Hitler? “The last question indicated to me how utterly people of this country misjudge the Russian situation. The real question which is vital now is, “Will WE force Stalin to make peace with Hitler again?” We, or rather the European democracies, forced Stalin into Hitler’s arms in August of 1939. We–that is to say, England and America–could force Stalin into Hitler’s arms again if Stalin were to believe that we were ready to let him down, use the Soviet army merely as a cat’s paw and double-cross him in the way that Chamberlain and Daladier did before and after Munich and up to the eve of Armageddon.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 509

The English and French representatives who came to Moscow to talk with Voroshilov didn’t really want to join forces with us against Hitler at all. Our discussions with them were

fruitless. We knew that they weren't serious about an alliance with us and that their real goal was to incite Hitler against us. We were just as glad to see them leave.
That's how the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, as it was called in the West, came into being. We knew perfectly well that Hitler was trying to trick us with the treaty. I heard with my own ears how Stalin said, "Of course it's all a game to see who can fool whom. I know what Hitler's up too. He thinks he's outsmarted me, but actually it's I who have tricked him!" Stalin told Voroshilov, Beria, myself, and some other members of the Politburo that because of this treaty the war would pass us by for a while longer. We would be able to stay neutral and save our strength.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 128

Stalin, however, was aware–as were all Marxists at the time–that the British and French ruling classes were split on the issue. Hence the Soviet government offered to honor their treaty with France to come to the aid of Czechoslovakia. This the French government, with Chamberlain's backing, turned down. The Soviet government then (April 1939) offered Britain and France a mutual assistance pact. This, too, was rejected. When it became clear that the right-wing, fanatically anti-Soviet sections of the British and French bourgeoisie were in political control, then, and only then, the Soviet government signed a nonaggression pact with Germany (August 1939). This pact gave the USSR a breathing space of almost two years to build up its armed forces for what it saw as an inevitable attack. At the time the pact was stigmatized by some as an alliance. If it had been, Britain would have been conquered and the United States put under siege. Churchill at the time considered the Soviet action as "realistic in a high degree."
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 110

It is certain that the Soviet-German nonaggression pact delayed the Soviet Union's entry into the war by two years.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 731

Stalin's speech of March 10, 1939, delivered to the Eighteenth Congress of the communist party, was, however, a clear indication of his dissatisfaction with the democracies, and his impending withdrawal from their front. He pointed out that war–"the second imperialist war"–had been going on since the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931. He pointed out that the non-aggressor democracies were beyond doubt stronger than the aggressor states, but that nevertheless the democracies continued to give way to them. They surrendered Spain, Czechoslovakia, parts of China. Why? One reason he adduced was fear of revolution. Another was that the democracies, no longer interested in collective security, found that non-intervention, a policy of isolation and neutrality, served their best interests. Stalin indicated quite clearly that he could play this same game. Britain, he implied, played Germany off against Russia. Very well. Why should not Russia, in turn, play Germany off against Britain?
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 574

SU DID NOT LIKE THE APPEASEMENTS

Then followed a series of developments which aggravated the relationships between the Soviet government and the Western democracies.

The Soviets were “humiliated” and “deeply hurt” by being excluded from Munich.
Out of “appeasement” there grew still greater distrust, so far as the Soviet government was concerned, in either the capacity, the intention, or even the “pledged word” of the Chamberlain government or the Daladier government.
The Soviet proposals for a “realistic alliance” to stop Hitler were rejected, be the Chamberlain government….
During the Soviet-British-French negotiations, including the sessions of the Strang mission and Military Missions to Moscow, this distrust was intensified by the fact that these authorities were not clothed with power to close a final, definite realistic alliance.
The suspicion continued to grow that Britain and France were playing a diplomatic game to place the Soviets in the position where Russia would have to fight Germany alone.
Then there came the Hudson proposals for economic rehabilitation of Germany which again smacked of “appeasement” from the point of view of the Soviets. This was followed by the adjournment of Parliament by the Chamberlain government, without the conclusion of any definite agreement with Russia and the discovery by the Soviet leaders that a British Economic Mission had been sent to Denmark, allegedly with Chamberlain’s blessing, to study economic appeasement, along the line of policy which has been initiated by Hudson.
Added to this France and England had persisted in a refusal to enter into an unequivocal agreement to support Russia in the protection of Russia’s vital interest, in preventing the absorption through internal aggression of the Baltic states, whereas Russia had offered unequivocal support to Britain and France to come to their aid if their vital interests were affected by a German attack upon Belgium or Holland, regardless of the character of the aggression.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 455

STALIN AIDED SMALL NATIONS AGAINST FASCIST AGGRESSION

The Soviet Union, from the beginning, never faltered in getting aid and assistance to China.
Throughout their participation in the League of Nations, the Soviet government led the fight for the protection of little nations vigorously and boldly. This was the fact in the case of Ethiopia and Spain.
No government saw more clearly or stated with greater accuracy what Hitler was doing and would do and what ought to be done to preserve peace and prevent the projection of a war by Hitler than did the Soviets. That is a fact regardless of whether their motive was ideological or whether it was for the safety of their own people.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 496

Those who have criticized the USSR for failing to intervene “arms in hand” to advance or save a revolution abroad have either urged the impossible or advocated an adventurism which would injure not only the USSR but the world proletariat. At the same time, when the USSR has been able to intervene directly the same critics condemn the action as unwarranted interference and suppression of “rights.”
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 91

LONDON POLES ARE HINDERING THE ANTI-NAZI WAR

At the end of the dinner, I asked how America could help Poland. Their [the London Poles] reply was, “If America really wants to help Poland, don’t have a second front in France.” I was appalled. Their attitude was so twisted that they were perfectly willing to prolong the war, endanger the chances of victory, and bring death to countless additional American boys, not to mention continued slavery and death for Nazi occupied Poland.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 99

The Home Army’s policy was thus the military reflection of the London Polish Government’s political strategy, which continued to the last to refuse to recognize one basic and inescapable fact about the nation’s destiny. It was simply that Poland could be restored to greatness only as a result of Red Army victory and heavy sacrifice of Russian blood.
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 56

Before the Polish government could move its seat from Lublin to Warsaw, the Hitlerites had to be driven back further. Our troops advanced all the way to the Vistula River, coming literally within a few steps of the German-occupied capital.
Suddenly an uprising broke out in the city [Warsaw]. It’s leader was the General Bor-Komorowski. He was acting on instructions from Mikolajczyk, an outrageous anti-Soviet and anti-Communist who headed the Polish government-in-exile under Churchill’s wing in London.
Ever since the Soviet army began its advance into Poland, Bor-Komorowski had been under orders from London not to engage in actions against the Hitlerite occupiers and not to aid the Soviet liberators in any way. It seems Mikolajczyk’s anti-Communist government-in-exile wanted to save its armed forces in Poland for the coming struggle against the Soviet army.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 187

SU SLOWLY MOVED FROM BEING NEUTRAL TO SUPPORTING COMMUNISTS IN CHINA

In 1945 a significant strain became apparent in Sino-Soviet relations, and the Crimean conference did nothing to alleviate it, as many had hoped it might. In general the Soviet attitude had shifted from one of formal “neutrality” in the internal quarrel between the Kungchantang, or Communist Party, and the Kuomintang, the nationalist party of the Generalissimo, to one of openly expressed repugnance for the “ruling circles” of the Kuomintang’s government at Chungking, and nearly all it represented.
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 121

…Today (1945) Moscow views the Kuomintang regime with only slightly more confidence than it ever placed in the Polish Government-in-exile.
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 122

CHINESE COMMUNISTS ARE REAL MARXISTS

Thus, it is misleading to contend that Chinese Communists are not Marxists, or that they do not hope, ultimately, to build up a classless, socialist state in China, or that they are not very close to the Soviet Union in their sympathies. People who try to persuade Americans to

accept them on the ground that they are not “real Communists”–in the foregoing sense–are either misinformed or deliberately dishonest.
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 136

The Chinese further deepened the rift because they are semi-Marxists rather than true Marxists.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 386

MOLOTOV SAYS TAKING PART OF POLAND WAS NECESSARY TO KEEP NAZIS AWAY

MOLOTOV: We negotiated with the British and French before talking to the Germans. If the West had permitted our troops in Czechoslovakia and Poland, then of course we would have fared better. They refused, thus we had to take at least partial measures; we had to keep German troops at a distance.
If we hadn’t moved toward the Germans in 1939, they would have invaded all Poland right up to our old border.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 9

MOLOTOV SAYS HITLER MET HIM TO GET THE SU TO ATTACK ENGLAND

CHUEV: Was there any point for the Germans to meet with you in 1940?
MOLOTOV: They wanted to fool us and draw us into a war with England on the side of Germany. Hitler wished to see whether he could involve us in the adventure.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 19

STALIN WANTS SAFE, SENSIBLE BORDER WITH POLAND

But we, Stalin and I, insisted on having at our border an independent but not hostile Poland. At the negotiations and even before, disputes raged over borders–the Curzon Line, the Ribbentrop-Molotov Line. Stalin said, “Call it what you please, but our border will be here!” Churchill objected, “But Lvov was never a Russian city!” “But Warsaw was,” Stalin calmly replied.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 53

We cannot lose Poland. If this line is crossed they will grab us too.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 54

“Churchill wants the Soviet Union to border with a bourgeois Poland, alien to us, while we cannot allow this to happen,” Stalin said. “We want to have, once and for all, a friendly Poland as our neighbor, and that’s what the Polish people want too.”
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 583

Now, Stalin had already insisted that the future government of Poland, which would be subject to the Soviet government, should accept as the eastern frontier the Curzon line, leaving the territories which were ethnically Ukrainian and White Russian to the USSR. The

Poles installed in London would not agree to this, and finally created a situation which threatened the normal relations between Stalin, Roosevelt, and Churchill.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 366

Before a further meeting with the President of the USA Stalin accordingly tried to enlarge the future Government of Lublin by accepting representatives of the London Government and of the Polish resistance groups, on condition that all should solemnly recognize the Curzon line. In exchange, he promised Poland the territories to the West which she had lost during the centuries of German pressure. This compensation was economically greater than the value of the territories lost in the east. He was evidently seeking to make the new Poland, by gifts bestowed at the expense of the Reich, a friendly country…. The London Poles proclaimed that those who accepted the Curzon line were ” traitors to their country.”
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 367

STALIN AND MOLOTOV KEPT CLOSE CHECKS ON ALL DIPLOMATS

…But we had honest, prudent, competent, and well-read diplomats. I think it was hard to fool us because Stalin and I kept a tight hold on everything–we couldn’t do it any other way at the time.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 69

I don’t recall our ever being cheated by foreign diplomacy. Of course, in some cases we acted more skillfully, and others less. We were always careful and didn’t pull any big blunders, to my mind. But there were small mistakes, of course.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 70

But it seems that diplomats need special training. They’re not just party workers.
I personally was never specially trained. My experience was party work and party polemics….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 76

STALIN DEFINITELY WANTED TO AVOID A TWO FRONT WAR

The strategic goal of the Soviet leadership was to avert war on two fronts, in the Far East and in Europe, at any cost.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 96

ENGLAND AND FRANCE SENT LESSER FIGURES TO NEGOTIATE PRIOR TO THE WAR

The French and British delegations that arrived in Moscow in August 1939 to probe the possibility of an alliance against Hitler were headed by secondary figures. Stalin’s policy of appeasing Hitler thus was based on the reasonable belief that hostility against Soviet communism by the Western world and Japan would forever keep the USSR in isolation from the international community.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 97

What is certain is that, if the western governments had wanted to drive him [Stalin] into Hitler's arms, they could not have set about doing so more effectively than they did. The Anglo-French military mission delayed its departure for 11 precious days. It wasted five days more en route, traveling by the slowest possible boat. When it arrived in Moscow its credentials and powers were not clear. The governments whose prime ministers had not considered it beneath their dignity to fly to Munich almost at Hitler's nod, refused to send any official of ministerial standing to negotiate the alliance with Russia. The servicemen sent for military talks were of lesser standing than those sent, for instance, to Poland and Turkey. If Stalin intended an alliance, the way he was treated might almost have been calculated to make him abandon his intention.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 434

THE MOLOTOV-RIBBENTROP SECRET PROTOCOLS WERE NOT SECRET

…When I look now at the Molotov-Ribbentrop secret protocols, I find nothing secret in them. The directives based on these agreements were definite and clear, and were known not only to the intelligence directorate but to the heads of military, diplomatic, economic, and border guards administrations. In fact, the famous map of the division of Poland, which was attached to the protocols in October 1939, was published a week later in Pravda, without Stalin's and Ribbentrop's signatures, for the whole world to see. By then, of course, Poland had fallen to Germany, and Britain and France had entered the war.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 98

STALIN AIDED THE CHINESE COMMUNISTS

Nevertheless, the seed of freedom was bearing fruit and the Chinese nation was ready to hear the Moscow Gospel. Stalin, like Lenin his master, a subtle opportunist, must have welcomed the chance of confuting by action in China the Trotskyist charge that he was betraying the cause of World Revolution. Actually, whether Stalin knew it or not, he was swimming with the tide of Russia's eastward surge when in 1925 he sent military and political advisers, Army Commander Blucher, called Galen, and Borodin to Canton, where Sun Yat-sen's brother-in-law, Chiang Kai-shek, had headed a new nationalist movement for Chinese unity and freedom from foreign control.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 143

In view of the Kuomintang treachery and the Communist Party defeat in the cities, it has been argued that the Communist International was wrong in its united front policy. Trotsky, for instance, lamented in 1928 that Stalin's "monstrous" policy had "broken the spine of the young Communist Party of China." Events, of course, showed otherwise. The Party not only survived but the united front policy had given the very small Communist Party access to the workers and peasants under the massive Kuomintang Party's control. Mao, for instance, was able to organize the peasants in these years on the scale that he did, not because of his Communist Party membership, but because he was deputy head and actual leader of the Kuomintang's Peasant Movement Training Institute. (At the same time Chou En-lai was deputy head of the political section of the Kuomintang's Military Academy, and other Communist leaders simultaneously occupied leading positions in the Kuomintang.) Largely

because of these connections, the Communist Party grew from a small sect to a party of 57,000 within six years. If it had not grown thus, it could not have survived the attack upon it–which, given the existing class forces, would have come anyway, alliance or no alliance–and lived to lead movements that soon resulted in a mass revolutionary base including rural Soviets.
The policy of collaboration between the Communist Party and the Kuomintang was not initiated by Stalin but by Lenin. Stalin apparently did not come actively on the China scene until 1925, and when he did he followed the already established policy, with which he agreed. Even after Chiang's attack on the Communist Party, Stalin for a time hoped that the Party could continue an alliance with the left wing of the Kuomintang led by Sun Yat-sen's widow, Ching-ling Soong, among others. However, the left wing folded under pressure and the right became dominant. When this happened, Stalin (like Mao) placed the emphasis on the peasantry–with a mass revolutionary perspective–rather than on a new alliance with bourgeois or petty bourgeois leaders:..
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 95

It was only when it became clear that Chiang was uniting with U.S. imperialism for a concerted drive against the communists that the Chinese Communist Party decided that a revolutionary war presented the only way out. Stalin did not oppose this view because he was opposed to the Chinese revolution as such. That he was not is shown by his release of large amounts of captured Japanese arms and equipment to the Chinese communists in 1945, following the Soviet invasion of Manchuria. He opposed Mao's view presumably because he did not believe that the Chinese communists would win a civil war in which Chiang had superior armaments and numbers…. However, the conversation with Djilas also shows that Stalin did not conceive of himself as giving "orders" to the Chinese communists but only advice, and that Stalin was not only pleased but rather amused that they had shown him to be wrong. Later Stalin welcomed Mao in Moscow.
…Mao, then, did not argue that Stalin had tried to hold back the Chinese revolution at any stage as part of a policy of placing Soviet nationalist interests above international revolutionary ones, as his enemies were contending. He said only that Stalin made mistakes, "without realizing that they were errors," the implication being, perhaps, that he had too narrow a revolutionary vision. Mao felt that Stalin had supported the Chinese revolution unselfishly, and, as he noted in 1950, Stalin rejoiced in its triumph. Stalin also introduced the policy of economic and technical aid to China that was later reversed by Khrushchev. We should note, too, that, as events were to show, Stalin was right in his feeling that insufficient emphasis was being given to the Chinese working-class.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 98

After the war, Stalin gave a great deal of assistance to the Chinese revolution. Arms and equipment of all kinds were delivered to the People's Liberation Army, and by the second half of 1947 the winds of victory were filling its sails and Chiang was forced to flee with his remnant to Taiwan. Given persistent U.S. hostility, Mao was bound to opt for friendship with the Soviet Union, and after the Chinese revolution relations developed rapidly in numerous spheres, culminating in Mao's invitation to Moscow to join in the celebration of Stalin's 70th birthday.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 539

… Stalin very early outlined the basic theory of the Chinese revolution. Trotsky attacks this theory, which he sneers at as “guerrilla adventure,” because it is not based on the cities as the revolutionary centers, because it relies on class allies of the proletariat, particularly the peasantry, and because it is primarily anti-feudal and anti-imperialist rather than focused primarily against Chinese capitalism. After 1927, when the first liberated base areas were established in the countryside, Trotsky claimed that this revolution could no longer be seen as proletarian but as a mere peasant rebellion, and soon he began to refer to its guiding theory as the Stalin-Mao line. To this day, Trotskyites around the world deride the Chinese revolution as a mere “Stalinist bureaucracy.” The Chinese themselves do acknowledge that at certain points Stalin gave some incorrect tactical advice, but they are quick to add that he always recognized and corrected these errors and was self-critical about them. They are very firm in their belief that they could not have made their revolution without his general theory, his over-all leadership of the world revolutionary movement, and the firm rear area and base of material support he provided. Thus the only really valid major criticism comes from anti-Communists, because without Stalin, at least according to the Chinese, the Communists would not have won.
Franklin, Bruce, Ed. The Essential Stalin; Major Theoretical Writings. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p. 21-22

Soviet experts and Soviet weapons helped Mao seize control of Northern and Central China.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 510

STALIN FOOLED THE JAPANESE WHO WERE PREPARING TO ATTACK

Stalin met the peril [of Japanese aggression in the early 1930’s] with guile and determination. He and his Soviet Russia have proved their merit since then, but Stalin was never so great as when he did what he now did… and never so vilified as for doing it. Russia’s position was desperate–must I say that again? Japan, as Russia believed and as was probably true, was on the verge of invasion, and the Red Army had not enough food reserves, irrespective of other supplies, to fight a war; but the Japanese didn’t know it, and Stalin’s bluff succeeded, at frightful cost to his country.
Although I had been the New York Times correspondent in Moscow for more than ten years, I don’t for a moment pretend that I knew what was going on. I did not know, for instance, that the grain reserve of the Red Army was greatly depleted, that much of it had been taken to feed the towns and construction camps and pay foreign obligations in 1930 and 1931. Like other foreigners, including the Japanese, I thought that the measures adopted by the Kremlin to hasten the grain collections in the spring of 1932 meant simply that Stalin had decided he could rush through the fight for rural Socialism and win it by quick ruthless action. That indeed was the note of the Moscow press, with the obbligato of triumph about the Five-Year Plan in Four, and the great Dnieper Dam, the biggest in the world, to be completed in the summer, two years ahead of time. The Bolshevik habit of secrecy and distrust, acquired in years of conspiracy and prosecution, of living devious lives under “alias” names, and watching always for police spies in their midst, served Stalin well at this time. There was a gasoline shortage in Moscow, even for diplomats and other privileged foreigners; the Five-Year Plan demanded it. Their facilities for travel were restricted; the railroads could hardly bear the strain of the Five-Year Plan. There came stories from the provinces that the peasants once more were dismayed and bewildered by collectivization methods; that was

due to the Five-year Plan. But no word of the danger of war, no suggestion that the Army needed gas and grain to be able to fight a war, not to mention boots and clothing which vanished from Moscow's stores. Foreign observers in Moscow were fooled, but so were the Japanese, and it was only many months later that I learned what had really happened in the spring of 1932.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 191

STALIN'S REACTION TO MUNICH SELL-OUT

Moscow's reaction to Munich was one of wounded pride and savage anger, but hardly of dismay, despite the Kremlin's certainty of what Munich presaged. It was as if the Bolsheviks were like a man who has dreaded for years a dire event and done his best to avert it, but finds his efforts vain, and says, almost with relief: "All right, now I know where I stand. If I have to fight, I'll fight, and depend on myself alone."
…The USSR was alone, but it would continue to strive for peace and refused to let itself be used as a cat's-paw by anyone.
These last words were both cryptic and prophetic. Stalin meant them as a warning to France and Britain that he saw through their schemes of embroiling Nazi Germany with the USSR.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 242

That, in history's perspective, was the real effect of Munich, that Stalin had a free hand.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 245

In March 1938 Hitler seized Austria. The crisis over the Sudeten Germans in Czechoslovakia followed. The belligerence of the Nazi leaders and the threats of violence repeated by German propaganda unnerved the British and French prime minister's. They held anxious consultations with Hitler, and both governments agreed to bring pressure to bear on Czechoslovakia to surrender the borderlands in the interests of peace.
Stalin was not readily unnerved. He responded at once with proposals that Britain, France, and Soviet Russia should present a united front against Germany and prepare with the Czechoslovak High Command a combined military plan. All three powers should invoke the League of Nations and prepare to enforce the provisions of the charter in the event of German aggression….
The Soviet government was not consulted or included in the Munich conference which, meeting on September 28-30, 1938, surrendered Czechoslovakia into the hands of Germany.
The Western powers failed completely to respond to the Soviet proposals for a grand alliance under the aegis of the League. Churchill observed: "The Soviet offer was in effect ignored. They were not brought into the scale against Hitler and were treated with an indifference –not to say disdain–which left a mark on Stalin's mind. Events took their course as if Soviet Russia did not exist. For this we afterwards paid dearly."
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 302

…Then the Munich agreement was signed and Stalin realized that the fear of the 'Communist contagion' was greater than the voice of reason. And he was right.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 348

Winston Churchill summed up the result of the attitude of Britain and France towards the Soviets during the Munich crisis pithily and succinctly: “The Soviet offer was in effect ignored,” he wrote. “They were not brought into the scale against Hitler, and were treated with an indifference – not to say disdain – which left a mark in Stalin’s mind. Events took their course as if Soviet Russia did not exist. For this we afterwards paid dearly.”
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 31

[In May 1940] Stalin laughed and said:
“The French government headed by Daladier and the Chamberlain Government in Britain have no intention of getting seriously involved in the war with Hitler. They still hope to be able to incite Hitler to a war against the Soviet Union. By refusing in 1939 to form with us an anti-Hitler bloc, they did not want to hamper Hitler in his aggression against the Soviet Union. Nothing will come of it. They will have to pay through the nose for their short-sighted policy.”
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 171

Then came intervention, the continuing threat of attack by all nations, halted by the Depression, only to be re-opened by Hitlerism. It was Stalin who steered the Soviet Union between Scylla and Charybdis; Western Europe and the US were willing to betray her to fascism, and then had to beg her aid in the Second World War. A lesser man than Stalin would have demanded vengeance for Munich, but he had the wisdom to ask only justice for his fatherland. This Roosevelt granted but Churchill held back. The British Empire proposed first to save itself in Africa and southern Europe, while Hitler smashed the Soviets.
Statement by W.E.B DuBois regarding COMRADE STALIN on March 16, 1953

STALIN’S POLICY TOWARD THE NAZIS PROVED CORRECT BECAUSE THEY STRUCK WESTWARD

Hitler’s book, “Mein Kampf,” and his subsequent speeches had made it clear enough that the Ukraine and the Caucasus were his ultimate objective, and the Russians had long been expecting his onslaught. On that account they had braved ill-repute in Western Europe and in the United States to partition Poland, to garrison the Baltic States, and drive the Finnish frontier further back from Leningrad. They had done what they could to prepare for the wrath to come; but now they went further still to avert, if possible, the danger. They signed a new agreement with Germany, increasing their deliveries of oil and grain, and waited, breathless. The four weeks from March 12, 1940, when Russia signed peace with Finland, to April 9th, when Hitler struck at Denmark and Germany, must have caused in the Kremlin a state of tension only equaled by the dreadful days of 1932, when the Ukraine and North Caucasus were stripped of gasoline, food, and seed-grain to strengthen the Red Army against a Japanese drive towards Lake Baikal. Now again, it seemed to the Russians that the issue hung in the balance, as a decade earlier they had waited to see if Japan would move north or south. Hostile critics of the USSR have declared that this period, the early spring of 1940, marked the depths of Soviet ignominy. The Russians, these critics averred, made a disgraceful pact with Germany; they raped East Poland and the Baltic States and Southern Finland. They instructed the foreign Communist parties all over the world to protest against the Franco-British “imperialist” war; they increased their supplies of raw material to Germany, and grovelled at Hitler’s feet.

…On April 9th Hitler struck at Denmark and Norway, and Stalin knew that the obloquy he had incurred abroad mattered nothing in comparison with what he had gained by Germany's move to the west instead of the east. What a relief that was, what a crown of success to his policy! What a final negative to Chamberlain's hopes of winning immunity for Britain and France and embroiling Germany and Russia!
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 255

STALIN BORROWED MONEY FROM THE FASCISTS

In the spring of 1935, while Anthony Eden, Pierre Laval, and Edward Benes were visiting Moscow, Stalin scored what he considered his greatest triumph. The Reichsbank granted a long-term loan of 200 million gold marks to the Soviet government.
Krivitsky, Walter G. I was Stalin's Agent, London: H. Hamilton, 1939, p. 28

SPANISH GOVT WOULD NOT RECOGNIZE THE SOVIET GOVT

The Spanish Republic, after five years of existence, still refused to recognize the Soviet government and had no diplomatic relations with Moscow.
Krivitsky, Walter G. I was Stalin's Agent, London: H. Hamilton, 1939, p. 90

STALIN CONTENDED THE CP MUST WORK FIRST TO AID THE WORLD PROLETARIAT

The destruction of the USSR would indeed have been followed by devastating attacks on the workers, the unions and political parties, in the capitalist world. His [Stalin] position is in essence, then, that a Communist Party, whether in a socialist or capitalist country, must work first to advance the interests of the world proletariat and that a central concern in these interests is the preservation of its developing socialist section.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 92

Some Latin poet has said that a thing well begun is half done. As against this, one may assert, with no less justice, that a thing which is only half done is not done at all. A succession of great proletarian adventures through the ages has shown us that whenever and in so far as the proletariat does not take everything into its own hands, it takes nothing.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 36

… the failure to understand the elementary principle of internationalism which lays it down that the victory of socialism in a single country is not an end in itself, but is a means for developing and supporting the revolution in all countries.
This [failure to understand] is the path of nationalism and degeneration, the path to the complete liquidation of the international policy of the proletariat. For those who are attacked by this sickness look upon our country, not as part of the whole known as "the international revolutionary movement," but as the beginning and the end of this movement; they think that the interests of all other countries should be sacrificed to the interests of our country. Support the liberation movement in China? Why? Won't that…be risky? Won't it embroil us with other countries? Would not be better for us to create "spheres of influence" in China, acting in concert with other "advanced" powers, and snatch a bit of China for our own

benefit? A useful step, and no risks to run…. Support the liberation movement in Germany? Is it worth the risk? Would it not be better to come to terms with the Entente concerning the Treaty of Versailles, and get something for ourselves by way of compensation? Keep up friendly relations with Persia, Turkey, Afghanistan? Is the game worth the candle? Would it to not be better to re-establish “spheres of influence” with one or the other of the Great Powers? And so on so forth.
Here we have a new type of nationalist “frame of mind,” one which tries to liquidate the foreign policy of the October Revolution, and which cultivates the elements of degeneration….
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 280

But overthrowing the power of the bourgeoisie and establishing the power of the proletariat in a single country does not yet guarantee the complete victory of socialism. After consolidating its power and leading the peasantry after it, the proletariat of the victorious country can and must build up socialist society. But does that mean that in this way the proletariat will secure a complete and final victory for socialism, i.e., does it mean that with the forces of a single country it can finally consolidate socialism and fully guarantee that country against intervention, which means against restoration? Certainly not. That requires victory for the revolution in at least several countries. It is therefore the essential task of the victorious revolution in one country to develop and support the revolution in others. So the revolution in a victorious country ought not to consider itself a self-contained unit, but as an auxiliary and a means of hastening the victory of the proletariat in other countries.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 282

[Molotov stated]: As for the world revolution–we never did forget our obligation to the world proletariat. But unlike the Trotskyists who kept shouting about world revolution–we made one. Made one, and created a worldwide socialist camp. We didn’t keep shouting about industrialization like the Trotskyists, but we did it. In just the same way, they talk about collectivization, but it was Stalin who brought the peasants into the kolkhoz.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 253

Stalin and his associates had a pragmatic interest in ending their international isolation; they looked for opportunities for revolutionary self-assertion….
There was in fact much congruence between policy at home and policy abroad: at the beginning of the 1930s it was extremely radical in both cases. Communist parties across Europe were encouraged to go on the political attack against their governments. Ultra-leftist campaigns were approved. The Comintern, which had tended towards caution in Germany after the failure of revolution to occur there and had eliminated leftist leaders who sympathized with Trotsky, started to campaign against those whom it accused of “rightism’.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 382-383

MOST OF THE POLISH PEOPLE SUPPORTED THE SOCIALIZATION OF POLAND

Thus, despite vacillation on the part of certain elements in the population, the majority–and especially the working class–in the end overwhelmingly decided to engage in the socialist reconstruction of the Polish state….
I didn't hear a single report or even a single rumor about armed resistance among the Polish population. If trouble had broken out, I certainly would have known about it. Comrades Beirut and Gomulka would have informed Stalin about it in my presence. Even if they hadn't informed him–even if they'd tried to keep secret and outbreak of some kind–we still would have found out.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 197-198

On September 17 1939, following the escape of the Polish government into Romania, the Red Army marched into the territory Poland stole in 1920. The Red Army was welcomed as liberators by the local population, who were only too happy to see the rule of the Polish gentry broken. Even the Polish soldiers themselves welcomed the Red Army, which met virtually no resistance. The territory that was stolen from Ukraine and Byelorussia was restored to them and became part of the USSR. The territory of Lithuania was restored to it, including its capital, Vilnius.
Mukhin, Y.I., Katyn Detective,1995

STALIN SAYS COMINTERN LEADERS ARE NOT DIRECTING THE WORLD'S COMMUNIST PARTIES

The assertion that the American Communists work under "orders from Moscow" is absolutely untrue. There are no Communists in the world who would agree to work "under orders" from outside against their own convictions and will and contrary to the requirements of the situation. Even if there were such Communists they would not be worth a cent. Communists are bold and courageous, they are fighting against a host of enemies. The value of a Communist, among other things, lies in that he is able to defend his convictions. Therefore, it is strange to speak of American Communists as not having their own convictions and being capable only of working according to "orders" from outside. The only part of the labor leaders' assertion that has any truth in it at all is that the American Communists are affiliated to an international Communist organization and from time to time consult with the central body of this organization on one question or another. But what is there bad in this? Are the American labor leaders opposed to an international workers' center? It is true they are not affiliated to Amsterdam; not because they are opposed to an international workers' center as such, however, but because they regard Amsterdam as being too radical. Why may the capitalists organize internationally and the working class, or part of it, not have its international organization?

Is it not clear that Green and his friends in the American Federation of Labor slander the American Communists when they slavishly repeat the capitalist legends about "orders from Moscow"? Some people believe that the members of the Communist International in Moscow do nothing else but sit and write instructions to all countries. As there are more than 60 countries affiliated to the Comintern, one can imagine the position of the members of the Comintern who never sleep or eat, in fact do nothing but sit day and night and write instructions to all countries.

Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 326

At the turn of the decade [from the 20's to the 30's]Stalin's mastery of the Comintern was still superficial. Almost anyone who spent those years in the Communist party can relate from experience the bewilderment and the reluctance with which cadres and rankers alike began to conform to the new orthodoxy consecrated in Moscow.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 28

WHY THE NAZIS AGREED TO TRADE WITH THE SU

At that time I had already asked myself this question: Why had the Germans agreed to supply us their most modern military systems when the Wehrmacht was already planning to attack the Soviet Union? There must have been a number of reasons for this. First of all, in line with his broad disinformation campaign, Hitler wanted to convince Stalin that he had totally rejected the goal of "eliminating Bolshevism," which he had proclaimed in Mein Kampf, and that he had shifted Germany's policy toward co-operation with the Soviet Union. Secondly, underestimating Soviet scientific and technological potential, Berlin's strategic planners did not believe that the Soviet Union was capable of mass-producing sophisticated weapons systems even when supplied with blueprints, and that the many items sent to the USSR would in the end make little or no difference. In any case–so they must have reasoned–even if the USSR did manage to get some types of modern armaments into production, the Wehrmacht would have time enough to defeat the Soviet Union before it began turning out those weapons on a massive scale. Thirdly, due to the naval blockade imposed by Great Britain, Germany was desperately short of strategic role materials, and the Soviet negotiators, particularly the people's commissar for foreign trade, Mikoyan, demanded the latest technology, including military hardware, in exchange for Soviet supplies. At that juncture Hitler could not afford any complications in his relations with the Soviet Union, and with the nonaggression pact and the Treaty on Friendship and the Border, he was not only able to avoid a possible war on two fronts but also to circumvent the British blockade.
Documents of the period indicate that the German High Command objected to the delivery of military supplies to the Soviet Union. Grossadmiral Rader was the most outspoken critic of Hitler's decision to supply the USSR. But the Fuhrer ignored the protests of his commanders, considering the Soviet shipments too important to be interrupted. He thought he was justified in his position, particularly since the Soviet side scrupulously complied with its commitments.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin's Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 76

SU USED NAZIS TECHNOLOGY PLANS SOLD TO THEM TO IMPROVE THEIR EQUIPMENT

Nevertheless, Soviet experts were able to study the very weapons we were to confront in June 1941. They used that knowledge to design new types of weapons systems, and this helped them to develop tanks, artillery pieces, and aircraft that by the end of 1942 were superior to what the Germans were using.

Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin's Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 77

HITLER DECEIVED BY LETTING SOVIET AGENTS SEE SECRET NAZI FACILITIES

In early April 1940, Tevosyan, whom I was accompanying, visited a German submarine base in Kiel . I was surprised that the Germans seemed to have no secrets from the Soviet people's commissar. He could see whatever he wanted to see. This game of openness was part of Hitler's disinformation campaign, part of his efforts to convince Stalin that Germany had no intention of going to war with the Soviet Union in any foreseeable future. There is no question that Tevosyan's report on his tour of the German military facilities, filed through the USSR Embassy in Berlin, had an influence on Stalin's assessment of Hitler's plans.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin's Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 101

POLES UNDERGOING DEKULAKIZATION WERE TREATED WELL BY RUSSIANS

We should take note of the good treatment, on the whole, that the Poles who arrived got from local residents. Having themselves gone through dekulakization and exile, the majority of Russians helped the newcomers adjust to their new environment. Mixed marriages between exiled Poles and local residents were convincing evidence of the lack of ethnic animosity.
Siegelbaum and Sokolov. Stalinism As a Way of Life. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, c2000, p. 265

SU AND GERMANY WORKED TOGETHER ON MILITARY MATTERS IN THE 1920'S

The import of German industrial goods assisted Russia in her recovery in the '20s. The Politburo authorized Trotsky and Tukhachevsky to enlist German military skill, the skill of unemployed officers and technicians, in the training of the Red Army. As a quid pro quo the Russians permitted German military technicians to continue on Russian soil experiments which they could not carry out in Germany under the Versailles Treaty. In these arrangements Stalin made no change. They continued by force of inertia for some time after Hitler had seized power.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 409

Broadly speaking, Russia's task was to consist in promoting revolutionary anti-militarism abroad.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 411

…Tukhachevsky and other Soviet military leaders had played a leading role in implementing the agreements reached by the Soviet and German governments after they signed a Soviet-German peace treaty in the Italian town of Rapallo in 1922. An important aspect of these agreements was the establishment of co-operation between the high command of the

Red Army and the leadership of the Reichswehr, the German armed forces, which were limited according to the Versailles Treaty to having no more than 100,000 troops. The German pilots, as well as artillery and tank specialists, were then able to enroll in military schools created in the Soviet Union to study the mastery of modern armaments which Germany was forbidden to own by the Versailles Treaty. Thus, Germany was given the chance to prepare new officer cadres, also banned by the Versailles Treaty, which the Soviet government refused to recognize from the moment it was signed. In turn, the Soviet officers and generals studied problems of strategy and tactics in the Academy of the German General Staff. Later on, the cooperation was also extended into the area of armaments. In exchange for permission to build German military plants on the territory of the USSR, the Reichswehr presented the Soviet side with military patents, and the Soviet Union ordered strategic materials and complex equipment from German industry.
The Soviet-German military ties were more beneficial to the Soviet Union than to Germany.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 416

In the period of Rapallo when Russia and Germany, both outlawed by the rest of Europe, were drawing closer together, it was natural that the General Staffs of the two countries should be instructed to confer together. On the advent of Hitler, with his menacing program, the Russian generals were told to stop and did not do so.
Pares, Bernard. Russia. Washington, New York: Infantry Journal, Penguin books, 1944, p. 203

NO EVIDENCE STALIN ENCOURAGED GERMAN COMMUNISTS TO SURRENDER TO NAZIS

[Footnote]: Some of Stalin's Communist opponents (Wollenberg, Krivitsky, and others) claimed that Stalin had deliberately led the German Communists to surrender to nazism in order to save the policy of Rapallo. This version has, in our view, not been supported by convincing evidence.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 414

SU SHOWS IT IS READY TO STAND BEHIND ITS TREATY COMMITMENTS

In the middle of the crisis Stalin ordered Litvinov to tell the Czechs that Russia was ready to go to war in Czechoslovakia's defense, provided the French, too, carried out their obligation. The Poles were warned that if they invaded Czechoslovakia they would be guilty of an act hostile to Russia. As France, committing a breach of faith, did not carry out her obligation, Russia had no need to keep to hers; but she committed no breach of faith. The Poles invaded Czechoslovakia and were told by Moscow that they had not, after all, been guilty of any act hostile to Russia…. If Stalin is to be judged by his conduct at the time, there's nothing with which he can be reproached. To the last he demonstrated his readiness to fight, somewhat in the style of that brave soldier whom only an ill-timed cease-fire prevented from accomplishing a great feat of arms–only that this time the fire had not even been opened.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 427

STALIN PERMITS THE POLISH BOUNDARY TO BE SHIFTED EASTWARD TO INCLUDE POLES

He [Stalin] was surprised by the rapidity with which Polish armed resistance collapsed. When, on September 5, Ribbentrop began to press the Russians to march into their share of a Poland, Stalin was not yet ready to issue the marching orders. He was now given over to scruples and second thoughts. He would not openly lend a hand in defeating Poland, and he refused to budge before Poland's collapse was complete beyond doubt. His second thoughts concerned the fixed demarcation line which left part of ethnical Poland on the Russian side. This he was in no mood now to annex, for that would be too flagrant a violation of the professed principles of Bolshevik policy. He now preferred to shift the demarcation line farther east, from the Vistula to the Bug, so that only lands with a predominantly Ukrainian and Byelorussian population should be left on the Russian side. The reunion of those lands with the Soviet Ukraine and Byelorussia could be politically justified. It would permit the Red Army to cross the frontier not as a conqueror of Poland but as the liberator of the Ukrainians and the Byelorussians, the 'blood brethren' as he now called them, having caught a germ of racialism from his Nazi partners.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 441

LEAGUE OF NATIONS EXPELS THE SU BUT NOT JAPAN OR GERMANY

…On Dec. 14, 1939, Russia was expelled from the League of Nations, which had always been so indulgent towards the Third Reich and Fascist Italy.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 443

He [Stalin at Yalta] reminded his guests of a rankling Russian grievance: in 1939, during the first Russo-Finnish war, the League of Nations pilloried Russia and expelled her from its midst –the same League that had never lifted a finger against Hitler and never done anything against any act of aggression…. No, Russia would not allow herself to be so treated in the future.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 525

Practically the whole of public opinion in the West was shocked by the Russian attack on Finland… [Yet] It was, indeed, extraordinary how they [the French and British governments] hastened to get the League of Nations to expel the Russian "aggressor," even though neither Japan had been expelled for having invaded Manchuria, nor Mussolini's Italy for her blatant aggression against Ethiopia.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co.,1971, p. 45

SU WARNS AGGRESSIVE POLAND NOT TO TAKE NORTHERN PART OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

The Poles, however, were a very different case. They were already lining up with Germany to demand territory from the Czechs, and were moving their own troops up to the border with the northern Czech region of Teshen, or Cieszyn as they knew it, which was rich in iron and coal and which had a minority Polish population. Litvinov was quick to warn the Poles that if they attempted to take Teshen by force the Soviet Union would consider her non-aggression

pact with Poland as being annulled, and would then be free to take appropriate action in support of the Czechs. Haughty as ever, the Poles chose to ignore the Soviet threat, and continued with their claims.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 28

When Germany marched into the Sudatenland in 1938, Poland followed suit, annexing parts of Czechoslovakia for itself.
Mukhin, Y.I., Katyn Detective,1995

And Poland's leaders had shortsightedly swallowed Hitler's bait and grabbed a chunk of dismembered Czechoslovakia.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 440

HEAVY GERMAN/SOVIET TRADE WAS CUT DOWN WHEN FASCISTS TOOK OVER

Trade is a natural barometer of relations between countries, and the figures for trade between the Soviet Union and Germany are particularly revealing. Throughout most of the 20s, Germany had been the Soviet Union's chief ally, and trade between them had flourished. In 1928, Germany was taking almost 29 percent of total Soviet exports, including a far higher proportion of their manganese ore, timber, oil, flax, and furs. In the other direction, Germany was supplying a similar percentage of total Soviet imports, mainly in machinery, which was most important to Germany since there were at that time few other markets open. By the time Hitler came to power, Germany was supplying an amazing 46.5% of the Soviet Union's total imports. But that was the high water mark, and as the Nazis increased their grip on Germany, so the tide of trade fell dramatically. Within two years, Germany's share of Soviet imports had dropped to a mere nine percent, and even though new agreements were made things did not improve as the '30s progressed. In spite of Germany's almost unlimited need for the raw materials which the Soviet Union could supply, German imports during 1938 barely totaled 50 million Reichmarks, where a few years before they had been counted in hundreds of millions. And they were still dropping: for the first quarter of 1939 there would be only 6 million Reichmarks worth.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 47

SU FOLLOWED A CONSISTENT ANTI-NAZI LINE FROM THE START

The second half of March, 1939, passed in a confused frenzy as the various nations involved struggled to come to terms with the situation. Only the Soviet Union appeared to follow a consistent line from the start, when Stalin seized the opportunity offered by Chamberlain's volte-face and replied to the British approach with what his ambassador in London, Maisky, described as phenomenal speed.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 65

STALIN GENTLY REPLACED LITVINOV WITH MOLOTOV

Two days later [after May day 1939] Litvinov's fears proved correct. After another fruitless meeting with Sir William Seeds in the morning, he kept an appointment with Stalin in the late

afternoon. Stalin told him, quite gently, that he was being replaced as Foreign Commissar by Molotov, the Chairman of the Council People's commissar's – in other words the Prime Minister – of the USSR.
"It's all over," Litvinov recorded in his diary that night. "I have been fired like a maid caught stealing… without so much as a day's notice."
In fact, Litvinov was let down remarkably gently. Stalin and Molotov told him the Politburo was not blaming him for anything, but felt it was time for a change. He would be found a new job worthy of his talents and experience – as indeed he was, being retained as an adviser to the Foreign Commissariat, where he also helped train a new generation of diplomats before being sent to Washington, as ambassador to the USA, in 1941. Some time earlier, Stalin had told him, "Whatever may happen, Papasha, I will not let you down."… Stalin was good as his word.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 74

[In late January 1939] I had been called to the Secretariat of the Central Committee to be told that henceforth all instructions to Merekalov, Astakhov, and Babarin would be sent directly from the Secretary-General's office…. It would appear they have already decided to remove me.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 292

[March 11, 1939] He [Molotov] told me my villa had already been allotted to… I am to be offered another…farther from Moscow…an honorable banishment…. I am preparing for the move… I don't know what arrangements to make for the children.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 297

I visited my new villa…. It's a good way out… A wooden house with a cock on the roof….
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 299

AFTER SIGNING THE RUSSO-NAZI PACT STALIN DID NOT CARE IF WAR BROKE OUT IN WEST

All this suited Stalin's purposes admirably, for everything could be achieved without any action on his part. Now that the pact had been signed, he no longer had any interest in preventing a war – indeed, in Marxist-Leninist terms a war between capitalists and fascists was something devoutly to be desired.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 299

SOVIET SOLDIERS TREAT POLISH PEOPLE FAR BETTER THAN NAZIS

When the Polish government had called on all Poles, civilians as well as those in the armed forces, women as well as men, to fight the German invaders with every means they could devise – women had been urged to destroy tanks by pouring petrol over them and setting them alight, for instance – Hitler's seized the excuse to order total war. Every village, whether it contained military units or not, was seen as a legitimate target for attack. Everything that moved on the roads, refugee columns as well as soldiers, was mercilessly machine-gunned by fighter aircraft, or dive-bombed by the wailing Stukas.

In comparison, Soviet troops behaved impeccably during the first few days of the Soviet occupation. Everything they obtained from the local population was paid for on the spot. There was no looting, little brutality, and very little killing, except in odd spots of resistance. Some of the resistance, it must be said, came from Ukrainian nationalists who had until then been happily killing Poles and Germans as part of their struggle for a totally independent Ukraine.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 338

Some Polish units, especially those of the border guards, put up a spirited resistance to the Soviet advance, but eventually most realized the position was hopeless, and submitted with a grim resignation. In at least one instance, a Polish unit which found itself trapped in a wood with Germans on one side and Soviets on the other, took a vote on which way to go.. The result was an overwhelming majority in favor of surrendering to the Red Army, in the belief that they would stand a better chance of surviving in Soviet hands.
Their belief was generally justified, though it did not take into account the incredible hardships involved in survival for any prisoners in the Soviet system.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 339

STALIN DID NOT SEIZE UKRAINE & BYELORUSSIA UNTIL POLAND'S GOVT FELL

On Oct. 27, 1939, Vilna was handed over to the Lithuanians. By then, Soviet troops were already moving into their new garrisons in all three Baltic states, but there was no attempt to take over any of the countries. That was not Stalin's way.
In Stalin's book, any move made by the Soviet Union had to have the appearance and the excuse of strict legality – even if he had to write the laws specifically for that purpose. That was why he had refused to move into western Byelorussia or the western Ukraine until the Polish government had ceased to exist. That was why in both those territories "democratic elections" had been held with such unseemly haste: he would have preferred a long time to prepare the ground, giving the Byelorussians and Ukrainians time to appeal to the Soviet Union for help and thus justifying the occupation, but the speed of Hitler's Blitzkrieg in Poland had prevented this. In the Baltic states, however, he could afford to take a little time.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 368

On several occasions messages from Berlin, forwarded by the Ambassador Schulenburg, invited the Soviet armies to enter the eastern portion of Poland, which was reserved to them by agreements duly signed. But on two occasions, at Stalin's orders, Molotov evoked technical reasons for postponing the entry of the Red Army upon a neighboring territory.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 246

SU AND GERMANY HAD A LOT OF EXCHANGES IN THE 1920'S

[In the 1920s] excellent relations with Germany had developed in the realm of traditional diplomacy; at the same time, the German Communist Party gained support, while relations on the third level (economic) continued to develop and strengthen. Economic relations were not limited to trade; they also included the all-around technical aid that Germany accorded to the Soviet Union. More than 2,000 German engineers and technicians arrived in the Soviet

Union after the signing of the Rapallo Treaty. They actively assisted in renewing Soviet industry. German-Soviet military co-operation was provided for in a secret clause of the Rapallo treaty.
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 211

In mid-1929 the Soviet Union had technical agreements with 27 German firms and 15 American firms. By the end of 1929, 40 American firms were co-operating with the Soviet Union.
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 212

BALTIC STATES ADVANCED UNDER THE SOVIETS AFTER WWII

During the first five years after the war, extensive industrialization of the Baltic countries was carried out, based on restructuring the old and creating a new power system. Three years after the end of the war industrial development had already surpassed prewar levels.
The volume of industrial production in Estonia, especially in the chemical and engineering industries, had grown by 1950 to over 3.4 times its prewar levels. Also by 1950 the number of blue-collar and white-collar workers in the Baltic countries had increased by 40 percent since 1940. In Latvia industrial production in 1950 was three times the prewar level; for the same period in Lithuania it was twice the prewar level.
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 470

The Baltic republics have the highest living standards in the entire country, and are among the most industrialized and most rapidly industrializing, while their health care and educational institutions are inferior to none within the Union….
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 296

SPANISH CP AND SOVIET GOVT WANT A BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY NOT THE DIC OF THE PROL.

The Spanish Communist Party, as paradoxical as this might seem at first glance, held a position similar to the liberals and did everything possible to prevent the further development of the revolution. Its leaders stated that they must strive not for the social revolution and the seizure of power by the workers, but for the defense of bourgeois democracy. Given conditions in which “the country was in a transitional state that was capable either of developing in the direction of Socialism or of reverting to an ordinary capitalist republic,” they stubbornly defended a nonrevolutionary course. Such a line was dictated by Moscow, under whose orders the Communist press propagated the following slogans: “At present nothing matters except winning the war; without victory in the war all else is meaningless. Therefore this is not the moment to talk of pressing forward with the revolution…. At this stage we are not fighting for the dictatorship of the proletariat, we are fighting for parliamentary democracy. Whoever tries to turn the civil war into a socialist revolution is playing into the hands of the fascists and is in effect, if not in intention, a traitor.”
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 350

In Trotsky’s opinion, victory in the war with Franco could be guaranteed only by the growing over of the Spanish Revolution from the bourgeois-democratic into the socialist revolution.

Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 353

Yet, at the same time, the the Comintern declared that the Spanish revolution, in view of the country's backwardness, must keep within "bourgeois democratic" limits, and that "proletarian dictatorship was not on the order of the day." It is easy to recognize there the Stalinist canon developed as antithesis to Trotsky's Permanent Revolution and applied in China in 1925-27. This Canon was to underlie Stalinist policy in Spain through all its phases. At a later stage, in 1936-38, it was invoked to justify the communist coalition with bourgeois republican parties in the Popular Front, the "moderate" policy of the Communist party and its repressive action against P.O.U.M., the Trotskyists, and the radical Anarcho-Syndicalists…. Trotsky asserted that the Spanish revolution would have to pass, as the Russian Revolution had done, from the bourgeois into the socialist phase, if it was not to be defeated.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 160

In December 1936 he [Stalin], along with Molotov and Voroshilov, warned the new Spanish Prime Minister, the left-wing Socialist Caballero, to avoid any radical social policies and thus win the middle-class to his side. He should spare no effort, the letter went on, "to prevent the enemies of Spain from presenting it as a Communist republic."
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 426

Gopner translated. As she tells it, the highlights of Stalin's discussion on 20 March 1937 on the nature of the revolution in Spain were as follows:
a) The people and the world must be told the truth–the Spanish people are in no condition now to bring about a proletarian revolution–the internal and especially the international situation do not favor it. (Things were different in Russia in 1917 –[geographic] expanses, wartime, squabbles among the capitalist countries, in the bourgeoisie, and so forth.) In Spain, the proclamation of the Soviets– to unite all capitalist states and defeat fascism.
b) On the global scale, Spain is now the vanguard. The vanguard is always inclined to run ahead of events–and herein lies a great danger. Victory in Spain will loosen fascism's hold in Italy and Germany.
c) Communist and Socialist parties must join forces–they now share the same basic aims–(a democratic republic). Such a union will strengthen the Popular Front and have a great effect on the anarchists.
d) Caballero has demonstrated his resolute character and his will to fight against fascism. Caballero must be preserved as head of the government. It would be better to leave commanding to someone else.
e) The General staff is unreliable. There has always been betrayal on the eve of an offensive by Republican units. The Republican army wins its offensives, when the general staff has no knowledge of them! The battle on the Guadalajara front makes that perfectly clear!
f) Madrid must under no circumstances be surrendered. The fall of Madrid would be followed by recognition of Franco by England, would cause complete demoralization among the Republicans, and would lead to a final defeat.
Dimitrov, Georgi, The Diary of Georgi Dimitrov, 1933-1949. Ed. Ivo Banac. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 60

BESEIGED CZECHS LIMITED FREEDOM IN THE SUDENLAND SO THE SU SHOULD LIMIT AS WELL

(Sinclair's comments only)
I believe that the people of Czechoslovakia are sincere democrats, and that their government is honestly committed to the principal of government by popular consent; but as I write these words, the Czech armies are mobilized on the borders of Germany and Austria, expecting attack, and I am sure that democracy is greatly limited in the Sudeten districts, and that a secret police is active. I do not think it reasonable to expect more in Russia under the same conditions.
Sinclair and Lyons. Terror in Russia?: Two Views. New York : Rand School Press, 1938, p. 59

TROTSKY WRONGLY BLAMES STALIN & ZINOVIEV FOR THE FAILED 1923 GERMAN REVOLUTION

But the 1923 German revolution failed. From October it was clear that we were too late and had poorly calculated the timing and that the revolutionary wave had reached its apogee and commenced to recede, although the work of organization and propaganda foresaw at least two or three months more. Soon, the revolutionary wave commenced to recede so rapidly that the Politburo had to face the fact that there was virtually no chance for a coup d'etat and that it must be set forward to a more favorable time. Trotsky delivered a plethora of criticisms after the fact, pointed at Zinoviev and the Comintern for having waited so long and missing the boat. Zinoviev and Stalin, on the other hand, got out of it by accusing Trotsky of overestimating the acuteness of the German revolutionary situation, and, in the final analysis, it was they who were right.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 49

RUSSO-GERMAN PACT IS JUSTIFIED BECAUSE OF THE MUNICH SELL-OUT

The Nazi-Soviet pact, concluded in August 1939, can, on this account, be regarded as the logical conclusion of the Munich crisis.
Overy, R. J. Russia's War: Blood Upon the Snow. New York: TV Books, c1997, p. 62

This pact [the 1939 Russo-German pact] aroused the highest "moral indignation" in the West; it was a "stab in the back," a Russian betrayal of "collective security" etc. etc.–all these indignant people conveniently forgetting that Munich was their stab in the back to Russia and just as blatant a betrayal of "collective security" as Munich had been. Moreover, at Munich France had cynically betrayed Czechoslovakia, a country with which she had a firm military alliance. By signing their pact with Nazi Germany, the Russians did not at that time "betray" or throw to the wolves any country.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co.,1971, p. 44

COMINTERN DEMANDS NO UNITING WITH THE SOCIAL-FASCISTS

In accordance with this "general line," the Comintern also changed its attitude towards the Social Democratic parties. In a truly revolutionary situation, it was said, those parties could

only side with counter-revolution; and so no ground was left for communists to seek cooperation or partial agreements with them. As the bourgeoisie was striving to save its rule with the help of fascism, as the era of parliamentary government and democratic liberties was coming to a close, and as parliamentary democracy itself was being transformed “from the inside” into fascism, the Social Democratic parties too were becoming “social-fascist”–” socialist in words and fascist in deeds.” Because they concealed their “true nature” under the paraphernalia of democracy and socialism, the Social Democrats were an even greater menace than plain fascism. It was therefore on “social fascism” as “the main enemy” that communists ought to concentrate their fire. Similarly, the left Social Democrats, often speaking a language almost indistinguishable from that of communism, were even more dangerous than the right wing “social-fascists” and should be combated even more vigorously. If, hitherto, communists were required to form united fronts with the Social Democrats from “above and below,” with leaders and rank-and-file alike, the Comintern now declared a rigorous ban on any such tactics. “Only from below” could the united front still be practiced– communists were permitted to co-operate only with those of the Social Democratic rank and file who were “ready to break with their own leaders.” To favor any contact “from above” was to aid and abet “social-fascism.”
These notions and prescriptions were to govern the policies of all Communist parties for the next five or six years, almost up to the time of the Popular Front, throughout the fateful years of the Great Slump, the rise of Nazism, the collapse of the monarchy in Spain, and other events in which the conduct of the Communist parties was of crucial importance.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 39-40

TROTSKY CONTENDED STALIN’S INVASION OF FINLAND WAS JUSTIFIED

All the issues under debate were brought to a head before the end of the year 1939, when Stalin ordered his armies to attack Finland. Trotsky in his commentaries castigated Stalin’s “stupid and incompetent” conduct of the Finnish war, which had outraged the world and exposed the Red Army to humiliating defeats. He nevertheless insisted that what Stalin was trying to do in Finland was to secure an exposed flank of the Soviet Union against a probable attack from Hitler. This was a legitimate endeavor; and any Soviet government, acting in the circumstances in which Stalin acted (circumstances which were, however, partly of Stalin’s making), might well be compelled to protect its frontiers at Finland’s expense. The strategic interests of the workers’ state must take precedence over Finland’s right to self-determination. As Stalin’s invasion of Finland was met in the Allied countries by a campaign for “switching the war,” and for armed intervention in favor of Finland, Trotsky called all the more emphatically for the “defense of the Soviet Union.” This brought an outcry from his erstwhile disciples: “Has Trotsky become Stalin’s apologist?! Does he want us to become Stalin’s stooges?!”
… True, even in the heat of the most furious polemics, he had always reiterated that, despite everything, he and his followers would defend unconditionally the USSR against all foreign enemies. But quite a few of his followers had treated these declarations as merely his facon de parler; and they were dismayed to find that he meant what he had said. They charged him with inconsistency, duplicity, even betrayal.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 473

In terms of the new Trotskyism which they had culled from The Revolution Betrayed, Burnham & Shachtman had used fairly strong arguments; and both now claimed to defend Trotskyism against Trotsky himself. “Then I am not a Trotskyist,” the master replied paraphrasing Marx…. After all he had suffered at Stalin’s hands, nothing distressed him more than to see the judgment of his own disciples clouded by Stalinophobia; and to his last breath he pleaded with them “against hysteria” and for “objective Marxist thinking.”
The American Trotskyists had split into a “majority” which, led by James Cannon, accepted Trotsky’s view, and a “minority” which followed Burnham & Shachtman.
Deutscher, Isaac. The Prophet Outcast. London, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963, p. 475

GERMAN COMMUNISTS WANT TO UNITE WITH SOCIAL-DEMS AGAINST NAZIS BUT ARE REJECTED

When Hindenburg’s first term as president expired, the Communists proposed to the Social Democrats to put up a nonparty anti-militarist such as the writer Heinrich Mann, warning that Hindenburg could not be relied on to keep Hitler out of power. However, the SPD, like the other parties of the Weimar coalition, preferred Hindenburg. When the Communists put up their own candidate, as they had done in 1924, they were again accused of helping reaction: in 1924 because they refused to vote for Hindenburg’s opponent, and in 1932 because they refused to vote for Hindenburg. Hindenburg won the election over Hitler–and made him chancellor a few months later.
Blumenfeld, Hans. Life Begins at 65. Montreal, Canada: Harvest House, c1987, p. 146

True to form, the Social Democrat leaders refused the Communist party’s proposal to form an 11th-hour coalition against Nazism. As in many other countries past and present, so in Germany [in the early 1930s], the Social Democrats would sooner ally themselves with the reactionary Right than make common cause with the Reds.
Parenti, Michael. Blackshirts and Reds, San Francisco: City Light Books, 1997, p. 5

SU WAS THE ONLY COUNTRY AGAINST NAZISM AND FASCISM

But my strongest reason for identifying with communism and the Soviet Union was the fact that it was the only force defending mankind against fascism and war. The “West” praised Mussolini, favored Franco, and was at best ambivalent toward Hitler. In the Soviet Union there was never any doubt who the enemy was. There was instruction in sharpshooting available to everyone; I also took it. The target was a steel helmet with a swastika.
Blumenfeld, Hans. Life Begins at 65. Montreal, Canada: Harvest House, c1987, p. 174

SU DID NOT MOVE INTO POLAND IN 1939 UNTIL AGREEMENT WITH GERMANY

To German dismay, Stalin at first refused to sanction the movement of the Red Army into the territory agreed as falling within the Soviet sphere of interest. The reason was that the USSR and Japan remained at war in the Far East, and the military risk of deploying forces in eastern Poland was too great until the two countries agreed to make peace on 15 September. The Red Army moved into Polish territory two days later.

Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 402

CAPITALIST REPRESSION AND EXPLOITATION

In pursuit of counterrevolution and in the name of freedom, US forces or US-supported surrogate forces slaughtered 2 million North Koreans in a three-year war; 3 million Vietnamese; over 500,000 in aerial wars over Laos and Cambodia; over 1,500,000 million in Angola; over one million in Mozambique; over 500,000 in Afghanistan; 500,000 to one million in Indonesia; 200,000 in East Timor; 100,000 in Nicaragua (combining the Somoza and Reagan eras); over 100,000 in Guatemala (plus an additional 40,000 disappeared); over 700,000 in Iraq; over 60,000 in El Salvador; 30,000 in the “dirty war” of Argentina (though the government admits to only 9000); 35,000 in Taiwan, when the Kuomintang military arrived from China; 20,000 in Chile; and many thousands in Haiti, Panama, Grenada, Brazil, South Africa, Western Sahara, Zaire, Turkey, and dozens of other countries, in what amounts to a free-market world holocaust.
Parenti, Michael. Blackshirts and Reds, San Francisco: City Light Books, 1997, p. 25

FINLAND WAS AIDED BY ENGLAND AND FRANCE

The anti-Soviet policies dominated in these countries [England and France]. In France a Ukrainian legion was created with defectors from the Soviet Union and national combat units of Caucasians in the army of the French general Weygand. When Finland started the war against the Soviet Union in December 1939 France and Great Britain took position on Finland’s side. Great Britain sent 144 war planes, 114 heavy guns and hundreds of thousands of grenades and air bombs. France sent 179 war planes, 472 guns, 5,100 machine guns and approximately one million grenades of different kinds. Simultaneously these countries made up plans to send in an army of 150,000 men to fight on the Finnish side against the Soviet Union.
Sousa, Mario. The Class Struggle During the Thirties in the Soviet Union, 2001.

…The standard myth popularized by U.S. and British apologists attributes the Soviet victory in WW2 to the availability of limitless human hordes used as cannon fodder, and vast stocks of U.S. donated arms. This exhausted the enemy. Russian winters also get a big play in these fairy tales–as if the weather had been warmer for the communists than for Nazis.
T. A. “Stalin’s Successes, Humanity’s Gains,” Communist, Progressive Labor, Brooklyn, New York, p. 58-59

Contrary to the rehashed lies of vulgar western anti-communists wo pretend that the Soviet people mysteriously rose up all of a sudden in 1941 despite their leaders, history shows that these leaders had meticulously planned for war since the 1930’s. They tried to avoid war, but they also prepared to fight to win if war was imposed on them.
Production for war formed a key element of the plan. Defense appropriations rose from 395 million rubles in 1924 to 34 billion in 1938. The Red Army’s motor component (the number of mechanical horsepower per soldier) rose from 2.6 in 1929 to 13.8 by the end of 1938 Soviet tractor plants were constructed to be easily convertible into tank plants. Starting from scratch, by 1935-36, the USSR already boasted 74 aircraft factories, of which the most

important group was situated well beyond the reach of enemy bombers. Therefore, Soviet tank and aircraft production had been guaranteed 6 years before the invasion.
T. A. “Stalin’s Successes, Humanity’s Gains,” Communist, Progressive Labor, Brooklyn, New York, p. 62.

The conclusion is inescapable. The Soviet government was not afraid to arm its people. It was not afraid to teach its people military science. It welcomed these developments and considered them necessary. It had full confidence in the majority of the population, and this attitude was reciprocated. Such a relationship between government and people is absolutely inconsistent with the absurd premise that Stalin ruled like a “despot” and that his power emanated from intimidation of the masses.
T. A. “Stalin’s Successes, Humanity’s Gains,” Communist, Progressive Labor, Brooklyn, New York, p. 63.

How many workers and peasants would have starved to death, how many would have fallen prey to disease and all the ravages of the old system had the Five Year Plans (for which collectivization was the key) not been implemented? How many millions would have fallen victim to Hitler’s genocide had the Soviet Union failed to organize both its industry and its agriculture for the coming war? The issue can be judged only from this perspective.
T. A. “Stalin’s Successes, Humanity’s Gains,” Communist, Progressive Labor, Brooklyn, New York, p. 66.

STALIN HAD GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE THE ALLIES WERE TRICKING HIM INTO ATTACKING

Warnings from Britain and America that the Germans would attack were worse than useless, given their desperate desire for war between Germany and Russia. Stalin assumed that their efforts to make trouble between him and Hitler took the form not only of information supplied through official channels, but also through covert disinformation. On one report from a Czech agent of Soviet intelligence, forecasting a German attack on Russia, Stalin noted, ‘This informant is an English provocateur. Find out who is making this provocation and punish him.’ It was reasonable to suspect that the British had planted disinformation on such agents, or even on Richard Sorge, a German who was a Soviet spy in Japan, and who warned of a German attack. And, despite various forecasts of invasion on particular dates in the spring of 1941, weeks passed without action and the time remaining for a summer campaign diminished. As events were to demonstrate, Hitler needed as much time as possible, if he were to take Moscow before winter set in. Stalin was justified in thinking that the delay through May and much of June meant that he was in the clear for another year. Even if Hitler had been contemplating a drive to the east, his decision to invade the Balkans and even Crete, with the resulting loss of time and also of German paratroops, should have persuaded him to call off the Russian campaign….
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 237

FINLAND SHOULD GIVE UP LAND BECAUSE IT IS TOO WEAK TO DEFEND ITSELF

Weeks before the Russo-Finnish War broke out, the Leningrad journal Krasny Flot (Red Fleet) spelled out the reasons why it was necessary to agree on mutual Russo-Finnish assistance in time of war. The journal, obviously reflecting official opinion at a very high level, cited the geographical position of Finland, the insecurity of her communications on the Baltic Sea, her economic weakness and "the absence of any menace to her frontiers from the east'–meaning from Russia. All this, it said, pointed to the necessity of Finland's 'rallying' to the side of Russia. 'Only by way of mutual assistance with the USSR can a country like Finland withstand hostile aviation, which could deal untold damage to her national economy.'

On 12 November 1939, commenting on Finnish naval capabilities in the event of a 'third nation' entering the picture, the journal said that the Finnish fleet was extremely weak and capable of undertaking only very limited defensive measures. Moreover, the Finnish armed coastal vessels were very lightly armed and slow, and in conditions where maneuvering was difficult, especially close to rocks, they would be easy targets for a strong enemy.
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 56

RUSSO-GERMAN PACT DID NOT MAKE THEM FRIENDS OR CREATE TRUST

Some writers persist in believing that Stalin trusted Hitler and the non-aggression pact, that 'living corpse that poisoned the air', as one Russian writer dubbed Stalin's August 1939 treaty with Germany. A few experts quote novelist Solzhenitsyn as saying that, 'Stalin trusted nobody but Hitler!', but the evidence for this is tenuous. While the Hitler-Stalin Pact was in force, there was more acrimony than gestures of goodwill. Stalin, although a fellow dictator, kept aloof from Hitler; he exchanged but one or two perfunctory birthday greetings and messages with him. He declined at least one invitation to visit Berlin with the excuse that he disliked 'unfamiliar settings'.
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 71

2nd World War

SOVIET MILITARY BUDGET GREW DRASTICALLY TO CONFRONT HITLER

Probably the best indication to the layman of the Red Army's growth since the rise of Hitler is the fact the money allotted to it in the Soviet budget grew nearly 40 fold. From 1.5 billion rubles in 1933 it grew to 57 billion in 1940.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 95

Of course he [Stalin] and his entourage always kept in mind the possibility of war with the capitalist countries, and in the late 30s this meant specifically Germany and Japan. Preparations for such a war were made by creating a modern defense industry, military aviation, an up-to-date navy, civil-defense training for the whole population, and so on. In 1939-1941 the army increased by 2.5 times, many troops and supplies were transferred to

the western districts, war production increased, and the number of military schools grew. Especially after the war with Finland, a great deal of work was done toward retraining the Army. The development of new weapons was speeded up. More than a 100,000 men were put to work on the fortification of the new western borders. Airfields were modernized, ordnance depots and ammunition dumps set up, and military exercises for troops and commanders carried out.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 735

Zhukov also wrote:
“The period between 1939 and the middle of 1941 was marked on the whole by trans-formations that within two or three years would have given the Soviet people a brilliant army.”
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 736

In 1940, the Soviet government spent 56 billion rubles on defense, more than twice as much as in 1938, and over 25 percent of all industrial investment. As a result, the defense industry developed at three times the rate of all other industries. During the time between the signing of the pact and the Nazi invasion, the value of the Soviet Union’s material resources was nearly doubled, an impressive achievement, even allowing for the low starting figure.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 482

BRITISH AIDED HITLER

British diplomacy granted to Hitler Germany everything that it had refused for more than a decade to the German republic: the remilitarization of the Rhineland, the Nazi — terrorized plebiscite in the Saar, German rearmament and naval expansion…. British finance, which had strangled the struggling German democracy with demands for impossible war reparations, supported Hitler’s regime with heavy investments and loans. It was no secret to any intelligent world citizen that the British Tories made these concessions to Hitler because they saw in him their “strong–arm gangster” who would eventually fight the Soviets, which important sections of British finance capital have always seen as their greatest foe.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 147

If any doubt remained as to the motives of the British and French foreign offices, it was removed at the Munich conference. Munich — with its cynical sell out of Czechoslovakia — was the trump card of the Tory ruling cllass in its game of driving Germany toward the east. The British Prime Minister chamberlain posed as “appeasing” Hitler, while actually egging him on. Chamberlain suggested that the Sudetenland might be given to Hitler before anyone in Germany had dared to express such a desire.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 148

Almost as soon as the Nazi troops marched into the Czech territory, it was discovered that representatives of London finance had agreed with German industrialists some weeks earlier about the financing of the great Enterprises thus seized.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 149

SU INVADED BY THE BIGGEST ARMY EVER

Already almost all the nations of Europe had gone down like ninepins.
The decision of Hitler…to turn eastward after the conquest of Europe, will probably go on permanent record as the greatest blunder in military history….
Two hundred and sixty divisions from Germany and her allies, Romania, Italy, Hungary, Spain, and Finland, swept eastward. There is nothing in the history of warfare with which to make comparison of the striking power of these forces against a single country.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 220

One hundred seventy-nine German divisions, 22 Rumanian divisions, 14 Finnish divisions, 13 Hungarian divisions, 10 Italian divisions, one Slovak division, and one Spanish division [Totaling 240 divisions-Editor], a total of well over 3 million troops, the best armed and most experienced in the world, attacked along a 2000 mile front, aiming their spearhead directly at Leningrad, Moscow, and Stalingrad.
Franklin, Bruce, Ed. The Essential Stalin; Major Theoretical Writings. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p. 31

On 25 April 1941 the German army contained 296 divisions overall with about 40 further divisions in the process of formation.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 233

STALIN WAS ONLY SURPRISED AS TO THE EXACT TIME OF THE INVASION

Was Stalin taken by surprise with the turn of events? In the broader sense, no. All his actions from the day Hitler rose to power provide a complete proof of this. But there still remained in the situation an element of surprise in the sense that it was not possible to know the precise moment at which the blow would fall.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 221

German attacks on Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland had indeed been preceded by open claims and loud threats. Stalin apparently thought that Hitler would act according to precedent. Because he did not see the usual danger signals he refused to admit the imminent danger.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 455

Stalin received the correct information that “Barbarossa” would start on June 22 for instance – but he was also given other dates ranging from April 6 right through May and up to June 15 – and as each one proved wrong, it became less likely that he would accept the true version for what it was. Werner Wachter, a senior official at the Propaganda Ministry, later explained Goebbels’s technique in admirably simple language. The preparations for “Barbarossa,” he said, were accompanied by so many rumors, “all of which were equally credible, that in the end there wasn’t a bugger left who had any idea of what was really going on.”
Certainly, that comment seems to have been true for Stalin and his intelligence chiefs as the hour for the attack drew steadily closer.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 600

SU INVADED BY MANY COUNTRIES IN WWII

The assault was launched not by Germany but by all of fascist Europe.
By every rational calculation of war potential, the Soviet Union was doomed to swift and complete defeat, regardless of what British or American policy might be. Defeat would've meant not only the enslavement of the Soviet peoples but the ultimate conquest of Britain and China and the reduction of America to helplessness before the unchallenged masters of Eurasia and Africa.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 419

Franco whose fascist "Blue Legion" was fighting the Red Army.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 455

CHURCHILL SUPPORTS SU AGAINST NAZIS

Churchill said, "at four o'clock this morning Hitler attacked and invaded Russia…. No one has been a more consistent opponent of communism than I have for the last 25 years. But all this fades away before the spectacle which is now unfolding…. Any man or state who fights against nazism will have our aid. Any man or state who marches with Hitler is our foe."
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 422

An "off the record" story illustrates Churchill's attitude. One of his friends said, "Winston, how can you support the Bolsheviks, you who led British intervention against Lenin and once admitted that you had spent 100 million British pounds to aid the 'White' armies of Kolchak and Denikin?"
The premier replied curtly, "If seven devils rose from hell to fight against that man Hitler, I'd shake them all by the hand and give each a bottle of brandy and a box of my best cigars."
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 264

In June 22, 1941, Churchill had said: 'No one has been a more persistent opponent of communism than I have been for the last 25 years. I will unsay no word that I have spoken about it, but all this fades away before the spectacle which is now unfolding.'
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 505

LINDBERGH SUPPORTS NAZIS AGAINST SU

Lindbergh said, I would a hundred times rather see my country ally herself with England, or even with Germany with all her faults, than with the cruelty, the Godlessness and the barbarism that exists in Soviet Russia.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 424

MACARTHUR PROFUSELY PRAISES THE RED ARMY'S DEFENSE AND COUNTERATTACK

Douglas MacArthur's anniversary tribute of February 23, 1942: "The hopes of civilization rest on the worthy banners of the courageous Russian army. During my lifetime I have

participated in a number of wars and have witnessed others, as well as studying in great detail campaigns of outstanding leaders of the past. In none have I observed such effective resistance to the heaviest blows of a hitherto undefeated enemy, followed by a smashing counter attack which is driving the enemy back to his own land. The scale and grandeur of the effort mark it as the greatest military achievement in all history."
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 432

[As the Red Army fought the Wehrmacht in early 1942 MacArthur sent the following telegram to the Soviet leadership].
"The world situation at the present time indicates that the hopes of civilization rest on the worthy banners of the courageous Russian army. During my lifetime I have participated in a number of wars and have witnessed others, as well as studying in great detail the campaigns of outstanding leaders of the past. In none have I observed such effective resistance to the heaviest blows of a hitherto undefeated enemy, followed by a smashing counterattack which is driving the enemy back to his own land. The scale and grandeur of this effort marks it as the greatest military achievement in all history."
Sherwood, Robert E. Roosevelt and Hopkins. New York: Harper, 1948, p. 497

LEADERS COMPLIMENT THE RED ARMY

It is the Russian army said Churchill on August second 1944 that has done the main work of tearing the guts out of the German Army.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 493

The German Generals' impressions of the Red Army were interesting, and often illuminating. The best appreciation in a concise form came from General Kleist: "The [Soviet] men were first-rate fighters from the start, and we owed our success simply to superior training. They became first-rate soldiers with experience. They fought most toughly, had amazing endurance, and could carry on without most of the things other armies regarded as necessities. The Staff were quick to learn from their early defeats, and soon became highly efficient."
I asked German General Rundstedt what he considered were the strong and weak points of the Red Army, as he found it in 1941. His reply was: "The Russian heavy tanks were a surprise in quality and reliability from the outset. But the Russians proved to have less artillery than had been expected, and their air force did not offer serious opposition in that first campaign."
Talking more specifically of the Russian weapons Kleist said: "Their equipment was very good even in 1941, especially the tanks. Their artillery was excellent, and also most of the infantry weapons–their rifles were more modern than ours, and had a more rapid rate of fire. Their T-34 tank was the finest in the world." In my talks with Manteuffel, he emphasized that the Russians maintained their advantage in tank design and that in the "Stalin" tank, which appeared in 1944, they had what he considered the best tank that was seen in battle, anywhere, up to the end of the war.
Hart, Liddell. The German Generals Talk. New York: W. T. Morrow, 1948, p. 220-221

As regards the general characteristics of the Russian soldier, Dittmar gave me an illuminating sidelight when I asked him what he considered was the Russians' chief asset. "I

would put first, what might be called the soulless indifference of the troops–it was something more than fatalism. They were not quite so insensitive when things went badly for them, but normally it was difficult to make any impression on them in the way that would happen with troops of other nations. During my period of command on the Finnish front there was only one instance where Russian troops actually surrendered to my own.
Dittmar added: “On Hitler’s specific orders, an attempt was later made in the German Army to inculcate the same mental attitude that prevailed in the Red Army. We tried to copy the Russians in this respect, while the Russians copied us, more successfully, in tactics.
Hart, Liddell. The German Generals Talk. New York: W. Morrow, 1948, p. 223-224

Blumentritt stated, “It was in this war, however, that we first learnt to realize what ‘ Russia’ really means. The opening battle in June, 1941, revealed to us for the first time the new Soviet Army. Our casualties were up to 50 percent. The 0GPU and a women’s battalion defended the old citadel at Brest-Litovsk for a week, fighting to the last, in spite of bombardment with our heaviest guns and from the air. Our troops soon learnt to know what fighting the Russians meant. The Fuhrer and most of our highest chiefs didn’t know. That caused a lot of trouble.
“The Red Army of 1941-45 was far harder than the Tsar’s Army, for they were fighting fanatically for an idea. That increased their doggedness, and in turn made our own troops hard, for in the East the maxim held good–‘You or I.’
Hart, Liddell. The German Generals Talk. New York: W. Morrow, 1948, p. 225

During the month of July 1941 the course of contemporary history was to be decided. Under the staggering blows of the Wehrmacht, already drawing upon the human and economic potential of the whole of Europe, the Red Army constantly retreated. The whole structure of the Soviet edifice was shaken by the terrible blows. A few fissures were showing in the western part of the country, where defections were taking place. However, despite the defeats, the heavy losses, and the withdrawal from thousands of miles of the front–despite the overwhelming effect on the country’s economy, as a whole the young State–and it was not 30 years old–was standing firm. Like certain metals, whose molecular structure becomes closer, and whose coefficient of resistance increases under the vibrations of a violent hammering, Soviet Russia was forging itself. There was no weakening of the military command or the government of the country; the industrial reorganization continued. Contrary to the enemy’s expectation, instead of sinking into anarchy the peoples of the USSR remained united under a central authority. They persevered in the organized effort which enabled the USSR to sustain a modern, technical war, and without interruption to increase its military potential.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 301

HITLER WAS NO FOOL

Because whether you like him or not, Hitler is far from a fool and never made a mistake until June 22, 1941.
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1941, p. 181

Hitler wasn’t a fool. On the contrary, he was a capable man.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 361

KREMLIN PREPARED FOR WAR FOR MANY YEARS

I know, as I said before, that the Kremlin has been preparing for this war for full seven years; that it has starved its people of consumer goods in order to equip the red army and build new munition and armament plants.
Duranty, Walter. The Kremlin and the People. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1941, p. 215

CHUEV: For the day of the attack, for the hour of the attack–that's what we weren't prepared for.
MOLOTOV: 0h, but no one could have been ready for the hour of the attack, even God itself! We'd been expecting the attack and we had a main goal–not to give Hitler a pretext for it. He would have said, "Soviet troops are assembling at the border. They are forcing me to take action!"
Of course that was a slip up, a shortcoming. And of course there were other slip-ups. You just try to find a way to avoid mistakes on such a question. But if you focus on them, it casts a shadow on the main point, on what decided the matter. Stalin was still irreplaceable. I am a critic of Stalin; on certain questions I did not agree with him, and I think he made some major, fundamental mistakes. But no one talks about these mistakes; instead they keep criticizing things on which Stalin was right….
In essence we were largely ready for war. The five-year plans, the industrial capacity we had created–that's what helped us to endure, otherwise we wouldn't have won out. The growth of our military industry in the years before the war could not have been greater!
The people went through a colossal strain before the war.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 25

MOLOTOV: We even abolished the seven-hour working day two years before the war! We abolished the right of workers to move from one enterprise to another in search of better conditions, even though many of them lived poorly and were looking for better places to live…. We built no apartment houses, but there was great construction of factories, the creation of new army units armed with tanks, aircraft….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 26

Stalin thus stimulated production in Soviet industry and agriculture because he was the first of world statesman to perceive that sooner or later Hitler's Nazi Germany would make a bid for world dominion. Stalin saw that from the outset, from 1935, when Chamberlain, and Bonnet in France, and even the United States, had small idea of Hitler's wild ambition. From then onwards Stalin swung Russia towards what I might call "preparedness," in the American sense. Deliberately he reduced the production of consumer goods, which the Russian people so greatly needed, in favor of factories to produce the material of war, and located those factories in areas east of Moscow, far from hostile attack, in the Urals and mid-Siberia and along the east Siberian coast.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 175

Russian factories and collective farms worked furiously in the fall and winter of 1940-41, aware that the breathing-space which Stalin's agreement with Hitler had won for them in 1939 was nearly at an end. At this critical moment the Soviet state gained strength from its

arbitrary system of centralization. It was able to drive its workers and peasants to the limit of their effort because the idea of greater reward for greater service had been adopted, because they had the incentive of personal profit in addition to the no less powerful incentive of patriotic service. By this time they all knew, the whole Soviet Union knew, that Germany was their enemy and that a clash with Germany could not long be averted.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 259

The scheme of evacuation had been carefully prepared, not only of people, animals, and foodstuffs from the countryside, but of machines, even whole factories, from the towns and cities. At Christmas, 1941, the Germans boasted that they had occupied the territory in which one-half of the heavy industry of the USSR was situated…. But Goebbels omitted to state how much machinery and tools were moved eastwards from the factories of the Donetz Basin, the Ukraine, White Russia, and Leningrad by the workers who had handled them, and how much more which could not be moved was deliberately demolished, like the great Dnieper dam and power stations, by the men and women who had built them.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 266

The record shows that the tribute was deserved. Had Stalin not won the fight for industrialization and defeated the Trotskyists and Bukharinites, the USSR would have become a Nazi province. Had he not had the foresight to build a metallurgical industry in the Urals, the Red Armies could not have been supplied with arms. Had he not industrialized the economy and introduced mechanized farming, he would have had neither a base for producing arms nor a mass of soldiers trained in the operation of machinery. Had he not signed a nonaggression treaty with Germany, the USSR might have been attacked 22 months sooner. Had he not moved the Soviet armies into Poland, the German attack would have begun even closer to Moscow. Had he not subdued General Mannerheim's Finland, Leningrad would have fallen. Had he not ordered the transfer of 1,400 factories from the west to the east, the most massive movement of its kind in history, Russian industry would have received a possibly fatal blow. Had he not built up the army and equipped it with modern arms, it would have been destroyed on the frontiers.
He did not, of course, do these things alone. They were Party decisions and Party actions, and behind the Party throughout was the power, courage, and intelligence of the working class. But Stalin stood at all times as the central, individual directing force, his magnificent courage and calm foresight inspiring the whole nation. When some panic began in Moscow in October 1941 he handled it firmly.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 107

… our Red Army, Red Navy, Red Air Fleet and the Chemical and Air Defense Society must be increased and strengthened to the utmost. The whole of our people must be kept in a state of mobilization and preparedness in the face of the danger of military attack, so that no "accident" and no tricks on the part of our external enemies may take us by surprise….
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 163

For years [this was stated in 1937], the Russian leaders have based all their actions on the belief that they will soon be involved in war. They apparently started to build up a larger gold reserve in order to strengthen their military position.
Littlepage, John D. In Search of Soviet Gold. New York: Harcourt, Brace, c1938, p. 271

The 18th Party Conference of February 1941 was devoted almost entirely to defense matters…. Stalin proposed that in 1941 industrial output should increase by 17-18 percent. That did not seem unrealistic. In 1940, for instance, defense output had increased by 27 percent compared to 1939…. The people knew a war was coming and that they would have to perform the impossible. By the time of Hitler's invasion, 2700 airplanes of a new type and 4300 tanks, nearly half of them a new model, had been built.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 374

A month before the German attack, Stalin, speaking to a close circle, said, 'The conflict is inevitable, perhaps in May next year.' By the early summer of 1941, acknowledging the explosiveness of the situation, he approved the premature release of military cadets, and young officers and political workers were posted, mostly without leave, straight to units which were below full strength. After much hesitation, Stalin also decided to call up about 800,000 reservists, bringing up to strength 21 divisions in the frontier military districts….
On 19 June 1941 troops were ordered to begin camouflaging aerodromes, transport depots, bases and fuel dumps, and to disperse aircraft around airfields. The order came hopelessly late, and even then Stalin was reluctant in case 'all these measures provoke the German forces'.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 393

Despite all his miscalculations, Stalin was not unprepared to meet the emergency. He had solidly armed his country and reorganized its military forces. His practical mind had not been wedded to any one-sided strategic dogma. He had not lulled the Red Army into a false sense of security behind any Russian variety of the Maginot Line, that static defense system that had been the undoing of the French army in 1940. He could rely on Russia's vast spaces and severe climate. No body of men could now dispute his leadership. He had achieved absolute unity of command, the dream of the modern strategist.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 461

What conclusions, then, follow from the facts sighted? How is one to assess what was done before the war, what we intended to do in the near future and what we did not have time to do or were unable to do in strengthening our country's defensive capacity? How is one to make that appraisal today after everything has been gone through, critically interpreting the past and at the same time putting oneself once more on the threshold of the Great Patriotic War?
I have thought long over this and here is the conclusion to which I came.
It seems to me that the country's defense was managed correctly in its basic and principal features and orientations. For many years everything possible or almost everything was done in the economic and social aspects. As to the period between 1939 and the middle of 1941, the people and Party exerted particular effort to strengthen defense.
… The fact that in spite of enormous difficulties and losses during the four years of the war, Soviet industry turned out a colossal amount of armaments –almost 490,000 guns and mortars, over 102,000 tanks and self-propelled guns, over 137,000 military aircraft–shows that the foundations of the economy from the military, the defense standpoint, were laid correctly and firmly.
Following once more in my mind's eye the development of the Soviet Armed Forces all the way from the days of the Civil War, I should say that here too we followed the right road in the main. There was constant improvement along the right lines in Soviet military doctrine,

the principles of educating and training the troops, the weapons of the army and navy, the training of commanding cadres and the structure and organization of the armed forces. The morale and fighting spirit of the troops and their political consciousness and maturity were always exceptionally high.
Of course, if it were possible to go over the whole road once more there are some things it would be better not to do. But today I cannot name a single major trend in the development of our armed forces that should have been abolished, abandoned, and disclaimed. The period between 1939 and the middle of 1941 was marked on the whole by transformations which in two or three years would have given the Soviet people a brilliant army, perhaps the best in the world.
During the period the dangerous military situation was developing we army leaders probably did not do enough to convince Stalin that war with Germany was inevitable in the very near future and that the urgent measures provided for in the operational and mobilization plans must be implemented.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 226

Other elements of the Soviet military effort were less affected by the purges. The training schools increased their intake of new officer trainees. The technological threshold still moved slowly forward. The system of fortifications begun in the 1920s along the whole western frontier–the Stalin Line–continued to be constructed and extended. Most important of all, the modernization and expansion of the Soviet heavy industrial base continued, and with it the large proportion allocated to military production. Without the economic transformation, the Red Army would have been a feeble force in 1941, relying on a vast base of peasant manpower. The industrial changes of the 1930s provided the planners, the scientists, engineers, and skilled labor necessary to cope with the demands of total mobilization made after the German invasion in 1941. Whatever the weaknesses exposed by the modernization drive, it is inconceivable that the Soviet Union could have withstood the German attack without it.
Overy, R. J. Russia's War: Blood Upon the Snow. New York: TV Books, c1997, p. 51

Of course considerable preparations were made. For over a decade priority had been given to heavy industry, and the Soviet armed forces had first call on it. The Red Army was enlarged by two and a half times between 1939 and 1941, war production was increased, troops and supplies transferred to the west, a 100,000 men put to work on the fortifications.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 705

In his speech in the Reichstag on 7 March 1936 Hitler said: Nor do we doubt that Herriott. of France reported his information truly. Now, according to this information it is established in the first place that the Russian Army has a peace strength of 1,350,000 men, and secondly, that its war strength and reserves amount to 17,500,000 men. Thirdly, we are informed that it has the largest tank force in the world, and, fourthly that it has the largest air force in the world. This most powerful military factor has been described as excellent in regard to mobility and leadership and ready for action at any time.
HITLER'S SPEECHES by Norman Baynes, 1942, VOLUME 2, Page 1290

What confirmed me in my decision to attack [the Soviet Union] without delay was the information brought by a German mission lately returned from Russia, that a single Russian factory was producing by itself more tanks that all our factories together.

Hitler, Adolph. Hitler's Table Talk, 1941-1944. Trans. by Cameron & Stevens. New York: Enigma Books, 2000, p. 182

The more we see of conditions in Russia, the more thankful we must be that we struck in time. In another 10 years there would have sprung up in Russia a mass of industrial centers, inaccessible to attack, which would have produced armaments on an inexhaustible scale, while the rest of Europe would have degenerated into a defenseless plaything of Soviet policy.
Hitler, Adolph. Hitler's Table Talk, 1941-1944. Trans. by Cameron & Stevens. New York: Enigma Books, 2000, p. 586

The legend of the might of Germany's mechanized army, backed by a highly industrialized society and run with ruthless Teutonic efficiency, has been with us for so long that it is difficult to realize how poor were the German preparations for the Russian campaign. The German army invaded Russia with 3,200 tanks and the monthly output of 80 to 100 was too low even to make good the wastage. Although this rate later went up rapidly, it did not reach its peak until August 1944, when it was already too late, and even then was only a quarter of the Russian output. The Germans had sufficient fuel for only a fraction of their transport to be motorized. The rest was moved by horses! The average German infantry division had about 1,500 horse-drawn vehicles and only about 600 motor-drawn ones, compared with some 3,000 in a British or American infantry division. The German soldier had no winter clothing, and had to make do by wearing large cotton combat overalls over his uniform and stuffing the spaces in between with crumpled newspapers or, since newsprint was scarce, with German propaganda leaflets.
The Russians, on the other hand, began the war with 20,000 tanks, more than were possessed by the rest of the world put together, and they produced no fewer than 100,000 during the war. They, too, used horses, but their motorized transport was adapted for winter conditions, their winter uniforms were white and, being quilted, provided excellent protection against the cold, and they possessed an adaptability to the environment that the Germans lacked. "Give a Russian an axe and a knife and in a few hours he will do anything, run up a sledge, a stretcher, a little igloo… make a stove out of a couple of old oil cans," a German medical officer wrote. "Our men just stand about miserably burning precious petrol to keep warm."
Knightley, Phillip. The First Casualty. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975, p. 252

It would be unfair to accuse Stalin of neglecting the country's defense. In 1940 new regulations lengthened the working day and week. By 1941 the army was more than double the size it had been in 1939. In a number of cases capable people were put in charge of vital departments.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; the Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 531

It seems to me that the country's defense was managed correctly as regards its basic and principal features and orientations. For many years, everything or almost everything possible was done in the economic and social fields. As to the period from 1939 to the middle of 1941, the people and the Party applied special efforts to strengthen the country's defenses….
Of course, if it were possible to go over that whole road once again, there are some things it would have been better not to do and some things that would have to be straightened out.

But today I cannot name a single major trend in the development of our armed forces that should have been written off, jettisoned, or repealed. The period between 1939 and the middle of 1941 was marked on the whole by transformations which gave the Soviet Union a brilliant army, and that readied it well for defense.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 270

Soviet economic might was so successfully dedicated to the war effort that in the last six months of 1942 it reached a level of production which the Germans attained only across the entire year. The numbers were remarkable. In that half-year the USSR acquired 15,000 aircraft and 13,000 tanks.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 421

At least four marshals–and many generals–deny Stalin's alleged failure to prepare for the German invasion. In June 1941 Marshal Bagramyan says a 'titanic' effort had been made to prepare for the coming war. Marshal Vasilevsky points to a 'whole number of very important measures' taken to counter the menace of aggression. Marshal Zhukov goes farther, saying, 'every effort' and 'every means' was used to bolster the country's defenses between 1939 and 1941. Marshal Rokossovsky says that the non-aggression pact with Hitler 'gave us the time we needed so much to build up our defenses'….
Stalin's generals are virtually unanimous in pointing to Russia's accelerated pre-war industrial and military growth as the sine qua non for victory over Nazi Germany. This build-up started between the two world wars when the West had in effect quarantined the Soviet state.
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 189

Djilas, a Yugoslav writer and activist who met Stalin several times during the war, says that, prior to the Nazi-Soviet War, Stalin spared nothing to achieve military preparedness; and the speed with which he carried out the transformation of the top army command in the midst of the war confirmed Stalin's adaptability and willingness to open careers to men of talent. Djilas an uncompromising critic of Stalin, says that the sweeping military purges had less effect than is commonly believed.
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 190

STALIN WAS A GOOD WWII SUPREME COMMANDER

Stalin as supreme commander of the Russian forces in the Second World War would be a theme for a special work. His great gift of military organization showed itself here again. Without any question, streams of energy proceeded from him throughout the war, and that energy halted the Germans before Leningrad and Moscow. They had to seek the road to victory in another direction– toward the Volga. Strategically they fell into exactly the same situation as the counter-revolutionary generals of the civil war. As then, Stalingrad had once more to become the battlefield on which the outcome of the war would be decided. Stalin had already won one victory there, at the outset of his career; once already he had

prevented the enemy from crossing the Volga. The strategic problem was familiar to him. For the second time in his life he achieved his strategic triumphs on the same spot.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 365

“Hitler fooled us,” he [Stalin] said, in a calm but somewhat harsh voice. “I didn’t think he was going to attack now.”
He was silent. The launch still floated beside us, and Captain Karazov still stood at attention.
“We did all we could to avoid war,” Stalin said. “We did all we could to avoid the ruin it causes. But now we no longer have any choice. We have to accept the battle, for life or for death; and we can only win if the whole people rises as one man against the Germans.”
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 169

After dinner, before taking his leave, Rokossovsky shook my uncle’s hand, and said, “You have thanked us for what we did. Let me say that without your constant support, the victory would have been impossible. I will never forget the phone call you put through to me at my command post that night in November when the Germans were entering Istra and threatening to encircle Moscow. After I put down the phone, I ordered an attack and our troops re-occupied Istra.”
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 179

Stalin knew there was no hope of bringing the war to an early end but he had to bolster the morale of his people. The second battle of Moscow had begun, and Soviet Intelligence reported that the Fuehrer had given his Generals a fortnight in which to take the city.
Soon the Germans took Khimky, the small port on the Moscow-Volga-Canal, four miles from Moscow, and connected by trolley-bus to the city, and at this point Stalin personally took command of the defense operations. He urged the Soviet troops at all costs, to hold out for a few days to enable reinforcements, maneuvering their positions, to complete their reconcentration. To give his Generals and troops new strength, Stalin applied the right psychology, and frequently telephoned the field headquarters of his different Generals.
“Hello, here is Stalin, make your report,” he would say. After listening to their reports, he would urge encouragingly: “Hold out. We shall be coming to your assistance in three to four hours time. You will have your reinforcements”!
And the over-tired defenders of Moscow, near to collapse, held-out, and the Soviet counter-offensive was opened.
Then came a communique Signed by Marshals Timoshenko and Zhukov which announced the “crushing defeat of the Wehrmacht before Moscow.”
Fishman and Hutton. The Private Life of Josif Stalin. London: W. H. Allen, 1962, p. 144

In all, the State Committee for Defense adopted some 10,000 resolutions on military and economic matters during the war. Those resolutions were carried out accurately and with enthusiasm….
Stalin himself was strong-willed and no coward. It was only once I saw him somewhat depressed. That was at the dawn of June 22, 1941, when his belief that the war could be avoided, was shattered.
After June 22, 1941, and throughout the war Stalin firmly governed the country, led the armed struggle and international affairs together with the Central Committee and the Soviet Government.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 268

I can only repeat that Stalin devoted a good deal of attention to problems of armament and material. He frequently met with chief aircraft, artillery, and tank designers whom he would question in great detail about the progress achieved in designing the various types of equipment in our country and abroad. To give him his due, it must be said that he was fairly well versed in the characteristics of the basic types of armament.
Is it true that Stalin really was an outstanding military thinker, a major contributor to the development of the Armed Forces and an expert in tactical and strategic principles?
From the military standpoint I have studied Stalin most thoroughly, for I entered the war together with him and together with him I ended it.
Stalin mastered the technique of the organization of front operations and operations by groups of fronts and guided them with skill, thoroughly understanding complicated strategic questions. He displayed his ability as Commander-in-Chief beginning with Stalingrad.
In guiding the armed struggle as a whole, Stalin was assisted by his natural intelligence and profound intuition. He had a knack of grasping the main link in the strategic situation so as to organize opposition to the enemy and conduct a major offensive operation. He was certainly a worthy Supreme Commander.
Here Stalin's merit lies in the fact that he correctly appraised the advice offered by the military experts and then in summarized form–in instructions, directives, and regulations–immediately circulated them among the troops for practical guidance.
As regards the material and technical organization of operations, the build-up of strategic reserves, the organization of production of material and troop supplies, Stalin did prove himself to be an outstanding organizer. And it would be unfair if we, the Soviet people, failed to pay tribute to him for it.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 284-285

The Second Front dawdled, but Stalin pressed unfalteringly ahead. He risked the utter ruin of socialism in order to smash the dictatorships of Hitler and Mussolini. After Stalingrad the Western World did not know whether to weep or applaud. The cost of victory to the Soviet Union was frightful. To this day the outside world has no dream of the hurt, the loss and the sacrifices. For his calm, stern leadership here, if nowhere else, arises the deep worship of Stalin by the people of all the Russias.
Statement by W.E.B DuBois regarding COMRADE STALIN on March 16, 1953

The modern Stalin was instantly recognizable. Harriman, who saw a great deal of Stalin during the war as Roosevelt's emissary and then ambassador, was deeply impressed by him: "his high intelligence, that fantastic grasp of detail, his shrewdness… I found him better informed than Roosevelt, more realistic and Churchill… the most effective of the war leaders."… At Tehran the British Chief of the General Staff, General Brooke, thought that Stalin's grasp of strategy was the fruit of "a military brain of the highest caliber." At Tehran Stalin did not, in Brooke's view, put a foot wrong.
Overy, R. J. Russia's War: Blood Upon the Snow. New York: TV Books, c1997, p. 348

For his part, Harriman rated Stalin 'better informed than Roosevelt, more realistic than Churchill, in some ways the most effective of the war leaders'.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 252

Stalin possessed, all western observers in the Hitler war agreed, excellent strategic judgment.
Snow, Charles Percy. Variety of Men. New York: Scribner, 1966, p. 258

He [Stalin] spent whole days, and often nights as well, at headquarters. Zhukov wrote: “In discussion he made a powerful impression…. His ability to summarize an idea precisely, his native intelligence, is unusual memory…. his staggering capacity for work, his ability to grasp the essential point instantly, enabled him to study and digest quantities of material which would have been too much for any ordinary person…. I can say without hesitation that he was master of the basic principles of the organization of front-line operations and the deployment of front-line forces…. He controlled them completely and had a good understanding of major strategic problems. He was a worthy Supreme Commander.”
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 486

He [Stalin] was never a general let alone a military genius but, according to Zhukov, who knew better than anyone, this “outstanding organizer…displayed his ability as Supremo starting with Stalingrad.” He “mastered the technique of organizing for operations…and guided them with skill, thoroughly understanding complicated strategic questions,” always displaying his “natural intelligence…professional intuition” and a “tenacious memory.” He was “many-sided and gifted” but had “no knowledge of all the details.” Mikoyan was probably right when he summed up in his practical way that Stalin “knew as much about military matters as a statesman should–but no more.”
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 439

Like most people with whom I associated, I connected the turnabout in the course of the war with Stalin, and stories of him as a human being encouraged the magnification of his charisma. Therefore, though I had begun the war with doubts about the “wisdom” of Stalin’s leadership, I ended it believing that we had been very lucky, that without Stalin’s genius, victory would have taken much longer to achieve and would have entailed far greater losses, had it come at all.
Grigorenko, Petro G. Memoirs. New York: Norton, c1982, p. 139

Could Russia have won without Stalin? Was Stalin indispensable to the Soviet war effort? An expert on Russia, Dr. Bialer, has written: ‘It seems doubtful that the Soviet system could have survived an extraordinary internal shock, such as the disappearance of Stalin, while at the same time facing the unprecedented external bowl of the German invasion.’
Another expert, America’s wartime Ambassador to Moscow, Harriman, says: ‘We became convinced that, regardless of Stalin’s awful brutality and his reign of terror, he was a great war leader.’ (Replying to a question I [the author] put to him on his visit to Moscow in May 1975, Harriman called Stalin ‘one of the most effective war leaders in history’.) Harriman is categorical: ‘Without Stalin, they never would have held.’
Giving full support to Harriman, but going a step further is Joseph McCabe, who has been described by eminent historians as ‘one of our deeper thinkers’ and ‘one of the most learned men’ of the 20th century. McCabe has recorded that when Hitler’s armies fell upon Russia in 1941 Stalin became the West’s leader in the gravest crisis through which the world has passed since the fall of Rome.
Axell, Albert. Stalin’s War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 195

And Stalin, as a commander-in-chief, had no equal either among our allies or among our enemies. To the present moment [1982] , Europe is the way Stalin left it. Even now the knots tied in the Far and Middle East remained untied.
Grigorenko, Petro G. Memoirs. New York: Norton, c1982, p. 212

The criticism of Stalin as a military leader in Khrushchev's report at the closed session of the 20th Party Congress is on the level of small-town gossip. The one serious criticism of Stalin it contained was that he did not call a halt to the operation near Kharkhov when a threat to our flanks arose, and this criticism misses the point. In the case of Kharkhov, Stalin acted as the serious military leader. During the moment of crisis, persistence was what was most required. Stalin's conduct, his unwillingness to come to the telephone, was geared toward calming his nervous subordinates, and it underlined the fact that he was convinced of the operation's success. Khrushchev acted like a child. He was frightened by the prospect of being encircled and he failed, along with his commander, to provide any protection for his threatened flanks….
(Such is the truth. I can and I do hate Stalin with all the fibers of my soul.)
Grigorenko, Petro G. Memoirs. New York: Norton, c1982, p. 212

Stalin was convinced that in the war against the Soviet Union the Nazis would first try to seize the Ukraine and the Donets Coal Basin in order to deprive the country of its most important economic regions and lay hands on the Ukraine grain, Donets coal and, later, Caucasian oil. During the discussion of the operational plan in the spring of 1941, Stalin said: "Nazi Germany will not be able to wage a major lengthy war without those vital resources."
…Stalin was the greatest authority for all of us, and it never occurred to anybody to question his opinion and assessment of the situation. Yet his conjecture as to the main strike of the Nazi invader proved incorrect.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 250

During the war, Stalin had five official posts. He was Supreme Commander-in-Chief, General Secretary of the Party's Central Committee, Chairman of the USSR Council of People's Commissars, Chairman of the State Defense Committee, and People's Commissar for Defense. He worked on a tight schedule, 15 to 16 hours a day.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 349

Stalin made a great personal contribution to the victory over Nazi Germany and its allies. His prestige was exceedingly high, and his appointment as Supreme Commander was wholeheartedly acclaimed by the people and the troops.
Mikhail Sholokhov was quite right in saying in an interview to Komsomolskaya Pravda during the celebrations of the 25th anniversary of the Victory that "it is wrong to belittle Stalin, to make him look a fool. First, it is dishonest, and second, it is bad for the country, for the Soviet people. And not because victors are never judged, but above all because such 'denouncements' are contrary to the truth."
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 363

I am often asked whether Stalin was really an outstanding military thinker and a major contributor to the development of the armed forces, whether he was really an expert in tactical and strategic principles.
I can say that Stalin was conversant with the basic principles of organizing operations of Fronts and groups of Fronts, and that he supervised them knowledgeably. Certainly, he was familiar with major strategic principles. Stalin's ability as Supreme Commander was especially marked after the Battle of Stalingrad.
The widespread tale that the Supreme Commander studied the situation and adopted decisions when toying with a globe is untrue. Nor did he pour over tactical maps. He did not need to. But he had a good eye when dealing with operational situation maps.
Stalin owed this to his natural intelligence, his experience as a political leader, his intuition and broad knowledge. He could find the main link in a strategic situation which he seized upon in organizing actions against the enemy, and thus assured the success of the offensive operation. It is beyond question that he was a splendid Supreme Commander-in-Chief.
Stalin is said to have offered fundamental innovations in military science–elaborating methods of artillery offensives, of winning air supremacy, of encircling the enemy, splitting surrounded groups into parts and wiping them out one by one, etc.
This is untrue. These paramount aspects of warcraft were mastered in battles with the enemy. They were the fruit of deep reflections and summed up the experience of a large number of military leaders and troop commanders.
The credit that is due here to Stalin is for assimilating the advice of military experts in his stride, filling it out and elaborating upon it in a summarized form–in instructions, directives, and recommendations which were immediately circulated as guides among the troops.
Besides, in the matter of backing operations, building up strategic reserves, organizing arms production and, in general, the production of everything needed in the war, the Supreme Commander proved himself an outstanding organizer. And it would be most unfair if we failed to pay tribute to him for this.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 367-368

I would like additionally to say a few words about Stalin as Supreme High Commander. I would hope that my service position during the war, my constant, almost daily contact with Stalin and, finally, my participation in sessions of the Politburo and the State Defense Committee which examined all the fundamental issues concerning the war, give me the right to say a few words on this topic. In doing so I shall not discuss his Party, political and state activity in wartime, inasmuch as I do not consider myself sufficiently competent to do so….
Was it right for Stalin to be in charge of the Supreme High Command? After all he was not a professional military man?
There can be no doubt that it was right.
At that terribly difficult time the best solution, bearing in mind the enormous Leninist experience from the Civil War period, was to combine in one person the functions of Party, state, economic and military leadership. We had only one way ou___"t: to turn the country immediately into a military camp, to make the rear and the front an integral whole, to harness all our efforts to the task of defeating the Nazi invaders. And when Stalin as Party General Secretary, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and Chairman of the State Defense Committee also became the Supreme High Commander and the People's Defense Commissar, there opened up more favorable opportunities for a successful fight for victory.

This combining of Party, state. and military leadership functions in the figure of Stalin did not mean that he alone decided every issue during the war….
It is my profound conviction that Stalin, especially in the latter part of the war, was the strongest and most remarkable figure of the strategic command. He successfully supervised the fronts and all the war efforts of the country on the basis of the Party line and he was able to have considerable influence on the leading political and military figures of the Allies in the war. It was interesting to work with him, but at the same time extremely taxing, particularly in the initial period of the war. He has remained in my memory as a stern and resolute war leader, but not without a certain personal charm….
Stalin possessed not only an immense natural intelligence,but also amazingly wide knowledge. I was able to observe his ability to think analytically during these sessions of the Party Politburo, the State Defense Committee and during my permanent work in the GHQ. He would attentively listen to speakers, unhurriedly pacing up and down with hunched shoulders, sometimes asking questions and making comments. And when the discussion was over he would formulate his conclusions precisely and sum things up. His conclusions would be brief, but profound in content .
I have already noted that during the first few months of the war Stalin's inadequate operational and strategic training was apparent. He rarely asked the advice of the General Staff officers or front commanders. Even the top Operations Department men in the General Staff were not always invited to work on the most important GHQ operations directives. At that time decisions were normally taken by him alone and not always with complete success….
The big turning point for Stalin as Supreme High Commander came in September 1942 when the situation became very grave and there was a special need for flexible and skilled leadership in regard to military operations. It was at that time that he began to change his attitude to the General Staff personnel and front commanders, being obliged constantly to rely on the collective experience of his generals. "Why the devil didn't you say so!
From then on, before he took a decision on any important war issue, Stalin would take advice and discuss it together with his deputy, the top General Staff personnel, heads of chief departments of the People's Defense Commissariat and front commanders, as well as people's commissars in charge of the defense industry….
The process of Stalin's growth as a general came to maturity. I have already written that in the first few months of the war he sometimes tended to use Soviet troops in a direct frontal attack on the enemy. After the Stalingrad and especially the Kursk battles he rose to the heights of strategic leadership. From then on Stalin would think in terms of modern warfare, had a good grasp of all questions relating to the preparation for and execution of operations. He would now demand that military action be carried out in a creative way, with full account of military science, so that all actions were decisive and flexible, designed to split up and encircle the enemy. In his military thinking he markedly displayed a tendency to concentrate men and material, to diversified deployment of all possible ways of commencing operations and their conduct. Stalin began to show an excellent grasp of military strategy, which came fairly easily to him since he was a past master at the art of political strategy, and of operational art as well….
I think that Stalin displayed all the basic qualities of a Soviet general during the strategic offensive of the Soviet Armed Forces. He skillfully supervised actions of the Fronts .
Stalin paid a great deal of attention to creating an efficient style of work in the GHQ. If we look at the style from autumn 1942, we see it as distinguished by reliance on collective experience in drawing up operational and strategic plans, a high degree of exactingness,

resourcefulness, constant contact with the troops, and a precise knowledge of the situation at the Fronts….
Stalin as Supreme High Commander was extremely exacting to all and sundry; a quality that was justified, especially in wartime. He never forgave carelessness in work or failure to finish the job properly, even if this happened with a highly indispensable worker without a previous blemish on his record….
As Supreme High Commander, Stalin was in most cases extremely demanding but just. His directives and commands showed front commanders their mistakes and shortcomings, taught them how to deal with all manner of military operations skillfully….
I deliberately leave untouched the expressions used by Stalin so as to give the reader the usual flavor of Stalin's talk. He normally spoke succinctly, pithily, and bluntly….
Vasilevskii, Aleksandr M. A Lifelong Cause. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1981, p. 447-451

It would be quite wrong, however, to look at Stalin from only one point of view. I have to say that he was an extremely difficult man to deal with, liable to fly off the handle and unpredictable. It was hard to get on with him and he took a long time to get used to .
If Stalin was ever unhappy about something, and the war, especially at the beginning, certainly gave plenty of causes, he could give a dressing down unjustly. However, he changed noticeably during the war. He began to be more restrained and calm in his attitude to us officers of the General Staff and main departments of the People's Defense Commissariat and front commanders, even when something was going wrong at the front. It became much easier to deal with him. It is clear that the war, its twists and turns, failures and successes had an effect on Stalin's character….
Joseph Stalin has certainly gone down in military history. His undoubted service is that it was under his direct guidance as Supreme High Commander that the Soviet Armed Forces withstood the defensive campaigns and carried out all the offensive operations so splendidly. Yet he, to the best of my judgment, never spoke of his own contribution. At any rate, I never happened to hear him do so. The title of Hero of the Soviet Union and rank of Generalissimus were awarded to him by written representation to the Party Central Committee Politburo from front commanders. In fact, he had fewer military orders than did the commanders of fronts and armies. He told people plainly and honestly about the miscalculations made during the war when he spoke at a reception in the Kremlin in honor of Red Army commanders on 24 May 1945: .
Vasilevskii, Aleksandr M. A Lifelong Cause. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1981, p. 452

This nationalist revival and Stalin's strong leadership, were extremely significant in the eventual victory of Russia over Germany.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 163

"The only really military man in the family was my father," says Svetlana. "He really had this talent. He really liked it, and the best performance he gave in his life was as organizer of the Red Army during the Second World War. He did what he was born for."
…The fact that our country managed to get through the war was to Stalin's huge merit. And then the economy was restored, and atomic weaponry was created, which to this day has maintained the peace.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 170

According to Zhukov, Stalin ‘mastered questions of the organization of front operations [there being about a dozen large sectors, or “fronts”, at any given moment] and groups of fronts’, a point sustained by chief-of-staff Vasilevsky. Lest this be dismissed as mere post-Khrushchev propaganda aimed at rehabilitating Stalin’s image as a war leader, consider that General Alan Brooke, who encountered Stalin in 1943, judged him ‘a military brain of the very highest order’. And Brooke was arguably the keenest British military mind of the war, a professional who held in contempt politicians who dabbled in strategy, and also the one western general whom Stalin accused to his face of being unfriendly to Russia.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 242

After British Field Marshal Lord Alanbrooke met Stalin he commented: ‘Never once in any of his statements did Stalin make any strategic error, nor did he ever fail to appreciate all the implications of a situation with a quick and unerring eye.’
Axell, Albert. Stalin’s War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 165

Like many Russian generals, Krivoshein respected Stalin as Commander-in-Chief, calling him a ‘worthy commander’. He said that he agreed with British Field Marshal Alanbrooke’s estimate of Stalin as a man with a ‘military brain of the finest order’. But Krivoshein added a proviso. ‘Stalin’, he said, ‘had very good assistants in the armed forces, and they managed to tell him which way was the right way. But Stalin was able to use his formidable strength to manage military affairs and achieve victory–which was no small achievement.’
Axell, Albert. Stalin’s War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 55

Author: Admiral, how do you assess Stalin’s role in the war?
Admiral Gorshkov: Stalin’s good point was that he could choose very talented military leaders. Stalin was of course also an outstanding political, state and military leader. This is not only my opinion, but that of Churchill and Lord Beaverbrook and many other prominent foreign personalities. Stalin had a broad understanding of military matters. And he was able to find solutions and make decisions in the most difficult situations.
Author: So, you would say that Stalin was the Supreme Commander not just in name?
Gorshkov: Yes.
Axell, Albert. Stalin’s War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 124

Author: Actually, many persons in the West do not give Stalin credit for his role in the defeat of Hitler’s Germany; and there are books by experts, and an encyclopedia or two, that say that Stalin ‘interfered’ with his commanders in the field….
Admiral Gorshkov and General Pavlovsky: That is not correct.
Axell, Albert. Stalin’s War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 124

At the conclusion of his memoirs, Marshal Vasilevsky asks: ‘Was it right for Stalin to be in charge of the Supreme High Command? After all, he was not a professional military man.’ And Vasilevsky’s answer: ‘There can be no doubt that it was right.’
…The stocky Marshal, who had frequent, almost daily contact with Stalin throughout the war, held some of the highest posts in the Armed Forces: Chief of Operations of the General

Staff; Chief of the General Staff; Deputy Defense Minister. In the summer of 1945 he was appointed Commander-in-Chief of Soviet Forces in the Far East in the war against Japan…. Looking back on the war Vasilevsky mentions 'Stalin's growth as a general', although he does not fail to mention miscalculations by the Supreme Commander in the early months of the invasion. He points out that after a year or two Stalin 'successfully supervised the Fronts and all the war efforts of the country'.
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 180

When Marshal Konev was asked his impression of Stalin by the Yugoslav writer and political activist, Djilas (the year was 1944), he replied: 'Stalin is universally gifted. He was brilliantly able to see the war as a whole, and this made possible his successful direction.'
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 181

A perusal of memoirs, speeches and articles leads one to conclude that there is virtual consensus among Russia's wartime generals and admirals that Stalin was a military leader of extraordinary insight, that he was an exceptional Commander-in-Chief. This is apparent in the recollections of many Marshals, including Meretskov, Vasilevsky, and Bagramyan. According to these men there was nothing synthetic about Stalin's name as Marshal and Generalissimo.
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 181

In his book, Reminiscences and Reflections, Zhukov sums up his views about Stalin:
'I am often asked whether Stalin was really an outstanding military thinker and a major contributor to the development of the armed forces, whether he was really an expert in tactical and strategic principles. I can say that Stalin was conversant with the basic principles of organizing the operations of Fronts and groups of Fronts, and that he supervised them knowledgeably. Certainly he was familiar with major strategic principles. His ability as Supreme Commander was especially marked after the Battle of Stalingrad.' He adds that Stalin had 'rich intuition and ability to find the main point in a strategic situation', which is high praise indeed from a soldier of Zhukov's stature.
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 182

EACH ALLY TRIES TO GET THE OTHER TO DO THE HARD WORK

The situation of the Soviet Union after the outbreak of war was perfectly clear. The relations between allies in a coalition war show certain fixed characteristics. Each ally tries more or less to carry on the war at the cost of the other allies.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 366

STALIN CONTENDS ALLIES WANT SU BLED WHITE AND THEY AVOID SECOND FRONT

Stalin became convinced that the Anglo-Saxon Powers were pursuing a policy of prolonging the war, so that not only should Germany be brought low, but the Soviet Union should be so bled white that after the war it would be a weak country. This Stalin repeatedly and plainly declared, and again and again he pressed for the creation of the 'Second Front'. It was this front above all that began to poison the relations between the allies.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 367

Until the middle of 1944 this question [the second front] occupied center-stage in his [Stalin] diplomatic efforts. True, as the wind of victory filled his sails, he became less insistent, and indeed the front in western Europe was only opened when it had become obvious that the Soviet Union was capable of destroying Nazi Germany on her own.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 485

Stalin's tactics, of rudeness punctuated by warmth, were sometimes counter-productive. But his general strategy was sound…. And though Churchill at least was alienated by Stalin's offensive attitude, even he was still susceptible to the feeling that Stalin had a genuine grievance while the Soviet Union was bearing the brunt of the war.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 253

According to Eisenhower, they could not open a second front in 1942-43 allegedly because they were unprepared for such a large-scale combined strategic operation. That was certainly far from the truth, for they could have opened a second front in 1943. They deliberately waited till our troops would inflict greater damage on Germany's military force.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 681

Stalin made it painfully clear that the Soviet government took no interest in the TORCH operation [code-name for the North African landings]. He spoke caustically of the failure of the Western Allies to deliver the promised supplies to the Soviet Union. He spoke of the tremendous sacrifices that were being made to hold 280 German divisions on the Eastern Front.
Sherwood, Robert E. Roosevelt and Hopkins. New York: Harper, 1948, p. 620

Roosevelt, whose judgment of affairs was objective, and who was not unfavorably prejudiced against the Soviet leader, nor against the Russians as a whole, recognized the reasonable nature of Stalin's demands [for a second front]. But he replied that the British operations against Rommel in Africa already constituted, in a certain measure, a second front, and they were holding up the crack German formations. Stalin did not accept this explanation, which seemed to him a mere excuse or evasion. Rommel's African Corps consisted of two armored divisions and one division of light infantry. Such a front was not a center of fixation; it was merely a slight diversion.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 323

The plan for an assault across the Channel was finally agreed upon with the British in April 1942, but even after that Churchill repeatedly attempted to persuade Roosevelt to undertake a landing across the Mediterranean. According to Eisenhower, they could not open a second front in 1942-1943 allegedly because they were not prepared for this major combined strategic operation. That was certainly far from the truth. They could have opened a second

front in 1943, but they wittingly did not hurry to do so, waiting for our troops to inflict greater damage on Germany's armed forces, and, consequently, to become more exhausted.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2, Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 457

STALIN FELT STALINGRAD VICTORY MEANT SU COULD WIN ALONE

In particular, the battle of Stalingrad had brought the decisive turning-point in the whole world war. From that moment on the German armies streamed homewards. The second front in Europe came only after the Battle of Stalingrad. It was natural for Stalin to think that the allies had landed in Europe only because of his victory, in order to forestall him, and that he could have been victorious alone, without the second front. From that moment he was convinced that the Soviet Union alone had conquered the strongest military Power in all history, the Third Reich, and without really effective aid from the Allies, who now were merely reaping the fruit of that victory.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 369

STALIN KNEW NAZI ATTACK WOULD RESULT IN MAJOR LAND LOST AT FIRST

Stalin and the Soviet general staff were aware that the first shock of the Nazi attack would certainly result in considerable territorial loss.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 121

ALLIES SENT THE SU ALMOST NOTHING IN EARLY STAGE OF WWII

…Hopkins said, "Inevitably not everything the Roosevelt administration has done has pleased Moscow. But we've got things straightened out now, surely? We've supplied you with warplanes and trucks and ships, and quite a bit of food, too.
It would have been tactless to argue with him; but the truth was that during the first year after Hitler's attack, at the worst time for the Soviet Union, the U.S.A. sent us practically nothing. Only later, when it was clear that the USSR could stand its ground, and on its own, did the deliveries gradually begin to flow.
Gromyko, Andrei. Memoirs. New York: Doubleday, c1989. p. 43

[Footnote]: A few words must be said here to explain the material aspects of the Russian superiority. Throughout the war Russia was confronted with German Armies roughly twice as numerous and strong as those that had defeated her in the First World War. The Russian achievement was made possible primarily by the rapid industrialization of the eastern provinces, much of which took place in the course of the war on a basis prepared in peace. The industrial output of the provinces that escaped German occupation was normally about 40 percent of the total Soviet output. It was doubled between 1942 and 1945. The production of the armament factories in the East went up by 500-600 per cent. On the average, 30,000 tanks and fighting vehicles and nearly 40,000 planes were turned out every year between 1943 and 1945–almost none of these had been manufactured in Russia in the First World War. The annual output of artillery guns was now 120,000, compared with less than 4000 in 1914-17. The Russian army was supplied with nearly 450,000 home-produced

machine-guns annually–only about 9000 had been produced under the Tsar. Five million rifles and Tommy guns, five times as many as in the First World War, were produced every year.
The Red Army fought its way from the Volga to the Elbe mainly with home-produced weapons. The weapons which the western powers supplied were a useful and in some cases a vital addition. But the lorries which carried the Russian divisions into Germany were mostly of American, Canadian, and British make–more than 400,000 lorries were supplied to Russia under Lend-Lease. So were most of the boots in which the infantry proper slogged its way to Berlin, through the mud and snow and sand of the eastern European plain. Much of the army's clothing and of its tinned food were supplied under Lend-Lease. One might sum up broadly that the fire-power of the Red Army was home produced, whereas the element of its mobility was largely imported.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 512

What role did the military and economic assistance of our Allies play in 1941 and 1942? Great exaggerations are widely current in Western literature.
Assistance in accordance with the Lend-Lease Act widely publicized by the Allies was coming to our country in much smaller quantities than promised. There can be no denial that the supplies of gun-powder, high octane petrol, some grades of steel, motor vehicles, and food-stuffs were of certain help. But their proportion was insignificant against the overall requirements of our country within the framework of the agreed volume of supplies. As regards tanks and aircraft supplied to us by the British and American Governments, let us be frank: they were not popular with our tank-men and pilots especially the tanks which worked on petrol and burned like tender.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 391-392

STALIN SHOWS COURAGE AND BRAVERY IN EARLY DAYS OF THE INVASION

Stalin stayed in Moscow. On November 7, 1941, while German guns roared in the suburbs and Hitler announced Moscow already taken, Stalin reviewed the troops in Red Square.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 98

In his memoirs, Khrushchev portrays Stalin's panic and confusion in the first days of the war and later. I saw no such behavior. Stalin did not isolate himself in his dacha until June 30th, 1941. The Kremlin diary shows he was regularly receiving visitors and monitoring the deteriorating situation. From the very beginning of the war, Stalin received Beria & Merkulov [cohead of the Soviet security service] in the Kremlin two or three times a day. They usually returned to NKVD headquarters late at night, or sometimes called in their orders directly from the Kremlin. It appeared to me that the administrative mechanism of command and control was functioning without interruption. In fact, Eitingon and I maintained a deep belief in our ultimate victory because of the calm, clear, businesslike issuance of these orders.
On Nov. 6, 1941, I received an invitation to attend the October Revolution anniversary gathering in the Mayakovsky subway station. Traditionally, these celebrations were held in the Bolshoi Theatre, but this time, for security reasons, it was arranged on the subway platform.

… Stalin spoke for about 30 minutes. I was deeply moved, because his confidence and self-assurance symbolized our ability to resist the Germans.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 134

This excerpt from Izvestia, #6, 1990 confirms Sudoplatov's contention that Stalin, contrary to Khrushchev's claims in his memoirs, was not immobilized by panic after the German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22nd, 1941, but rather received a steady stream of visitors at his Kremlin study.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 433

It is worth recording Dimitrov's attitude toward Stalin. He, too, spoke of him with admiration and respect, but without any conspicuous flattery or reverence….
He recounted: "When the Germans were outside Moscow, a general uncertainty and confusion ensued. The Soviet government had withdrawn to Kuibyshev. But Stalin remained in Moscow. I was with him at the time, in the Kremlin. They were taking out archives from the Kremlin. I proposed to Stalin that the Comintern direct a proclamation to the German soldiers. He agreed, though he felt no good would come of it. Soon after, I too had to leave Moscow. Stalin did not leave; he was determined to defend it. And at that most dramatic moment he held a parade in Red Square on the anniversary of the October Revolution. The divisions before him were leaving for the front. One cannot express how great a moral significance was exerted when the people learned that Stalin was sitting in Moscow and when they heard his words. It restored their faith and raised their confidence, and it was worth more than a good-sized army."
Djilas, Milovan. Conversations with Stalin. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962, p. 37

Moscow was bombed by German aviation. Panic began to seize the city's population. The Nazis were only 80 kilometres away. Part of the administration was evacuated. But Stalin decided to remain in Moscow. The battles became more and more fierce and, in early November, the Nazi offensive was stopped. After consulting with Zhukov, Stalin took the decision to organize the traditional November 7 military parade on Red Square. It was a formidable challenge to the Nazi troops camped at the gates of Moscow. Stalin made a speech, which was broadcast to the entire country.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 247 [p. 224 on the NET]

[In September 1941] The situation at the front is bad…. If it becomes necessary to abandon Moscow we can't be sure that [the leadership will stand firm–implied]…. In the Instantsia they are not quite sure either that [Stalin will stand firm–implied]…. Stalin stands for war to the end…. While with others…Brest-Litovsk is in the air.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 307

We must get the peasant going and instill in him the hatred of the enemy…. What a brilliant order of Stalin's to the Army…. "A fighter should not die without leaving the corpse of a German interventionist by his side. Kill him with a machine-gun, or rifle, a bayonet…. If you're wounded, sink your teeth into his throat and strangle him as you would a wild beast".
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 309

The main blow was aimed directly at the capital, Moscow, whose outskirts were reached by late fall. Almost all the government offices had been evacuated to the east. But Stalin remained in the capital, where he assumed personal command of the war. On Dec. 2, 1941, the Nazis were stopped in the suburbs of Moscow. In December 6, Stalin ordered the first major counterattack to occur in World War II.
Franklin, Bruce, Ed. The Essential Stalin; Major Theoretical Writings. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p. 31

As to Stalin's nerves, or lack of them, his generals make no criticisms. Rather, Marshal Zhukov told a war correspondent that Stalin had 'nerves of steel'. The correspondent, author Ehrenburg, wrote that the Marshal repeated these words to him several times when they met at a command post near the front line early in the war.
Even General Vlasov who had a great grievance against Stalin and, therefore, cause for resentment, told the Germans upon his capture that Stalin had strong nerves. Speaking to Dr. Goebbels, the Nazi Minister of Propaganda, he said that in the autumn of 1941, when the city of Moscow was threatened by advancing German armies, every one in the Kremlin had lost his nerve but only Stalin insisted on continued resistance to the German invaders.
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 168

This is what Kraskyn, Stalin's confidant and the Press Department's senior war correspondent, wrote regarding the outbreak of the German-Russo war:
… "Stalin remained at Sochi until the end of the month. The direct telephone line which connected his villa with the Kremlin was in constant use with Molotov at the other end. Stalin never showed bad temper, remained calm, and determined."
Fishman and Hutton. The Private Life of Josif Stalin. London: W. H. Allen, 1962, p. 139

The Wehrmacht's first offensive was launched against Moscow for Hitler well knew the city had always been a symbol to the Russians, and that if his troops could conquer this political and spiritual center, it would be a milestone on the road to the defeat of the Soviet Union. Stalin realized this too. He attended all meetings of the Committee of the Defense of the City, and addressed his people regularly, but despite superhuman efforts by the Red fighting forces and the Soviet population, the Nazi armies advanced inexorably towards Moscow. Stalin was forced to order the evacuation of women and children from the Red capital. He issued an Order of the Day, declaring that Moscow would be defended to the last, and at the same time, a state of siege was proclaimed.
The next day, the Soviet Government and Diplomatic Corps established themselves in Kuibyshev in the middle Volga. Certain Government Departments had been transferred to Kazan and Sverdlovsk. Stalin, Molotov, and other members of the " Inner Circle," remained in Moscow.
Fishman and Hutton. The Private Life of Josif Stalin. London: W. H. Allen, 1962, p. 143

Stalin was affable and had the common touch. He showed courage, particularly during the war. During the war, he preferred to work at the dacha rather than in the Kremlin, even though there were no air-raid shelters at the dacha. During an air attack, he would sometimes watch the planes from the roof of the building. According to Rybin, Stalin did not panic in mid-October 1941 when German forward units had reached the suburbs of Moscow. While Beria gave orders to senior party officials for the evacuation of Moscow on the evening

of October 15 and although Malenkov and Kaganovich also recommended the move to Kuibyshev, Stalin, in a Kremlin meeting on Oct. 16, announced that he had decided to stay in Moscow.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 148

There were riots in Moscow at the time, and shops were pillaged. According to Rybin, Stalin deliberately showed himself in various parts of the city and talked to people to give a boost to morale. Molotov was sent for three days to Kuibyshev to supervise the transfer of the foreign ministry, but he also confirmed in conversation with Rybin that Stalin had no intention of leaving the capital…. When information was received that an unexploded mine or shell had landed not far from the dacha, Stalin joined the search party–yet another demonstration of personal courage.
…On a visit to Oryol in 1946, he walked the streets accompanied by hundreds of citizens. When they thanked him for having defeated the Germans, he replied modestly: "The people defeated the Germans, not I."
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 149

I am often asked about Stalin's role in the battle Moscow.
Stalin was in Moscow, in control of the troops and weapons, preparing the enemy's defeat. He must be given credit for the enormous work in organizing necessary strategic, material, and technical resources which he did as head of the State Committee for Defense with the help of the executive staff of the People's Commissariats. With strictness and exactingness Stalin achieved the near-impossible.
When I am asked what event in the war impressed me most, I always say: the Battle of Moscow.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 361

For a long time now, there are stories, lies, outright falsifications that the war scared Stalin out of his wits. In view of these lies, let me tell of an incident. On May 5, at a meeting in the Kremlin, one of the scared officers said that the Central Committee armored train is ready and hidden. Stalin really let him have it:…
What kind of nonsense! What kind of safety armored train, when the enemy is inside the borders of the Soviet Union!
You can draw your own conclusion from this statement….
At the beginning of the war with the German attack on the USSR, this news was conveyed to Stalin by Marshall Zhukov. Already at 3 a.m., Stalin came into his office at the Kremlin. After that came in Zhukov and Timoshenko. Stalin regularly walked on the streets of Moscow, even during the flights of German aircraft. But he understood that people must see him amongst themselves, that the leader is with them, that he is in the capital of Moscow, and is heading its defense. Even more effective, he visited command posts on Gorky Street, Zemlianov Valley, Smolensky Square. For the sentries and army personnel, this had a tremendous effect.
Sometimes at the beginning of the war, at about 4 o'clock in the morning, Stalin was on Kaluzhki Square. Underneath, you could hear the crunch of broken glass. Around us, there were wooden homes, ambulances were racing to and fro, taking the dead and tending the wounded civilians and soldiers, right in Moscow. We were surrounded by crying women with children in their arms. Looking at them with tears in his eyes, Stalin told Vlasik:
We must evacuate the children deep into the interior of the country.

All of them stared to ask as to when will the Red Army stop the German Fascists! Stalin tried to console them with these well-known words:
There will be, there will be a holiday and dancing on this street of ours!
After being bombed by German planes, we went into Gorky Street. A woman with a flashlight came up to Stalin and scolded him:
Is it permissible for you to wander on the street, comrade Stalin, during such dangerous times? An enemy could easily drop a bomb on you!
Stalin only opened up his arms. Of course, the lady was correct. He was with us near Kubinka when over 400 planes were in the air, bombing while our fighters tried to shoot them down. After successfully repulsing the enemy, Stalin asked for the names of our pilots who did such an outstanding job. He met Victor Talakhin who did an outstanding job of shooting down German planes.
The enemy knew exactly where Stalin had his Dacha. Stalin risked his life together with all of us. Stalin always looked at the tremendous dogfights over the Dacha, when the Germans desperately tried to kill Stalin and his entourage, knowing in advance that they were there. They dropped bombs near the Dacha, some exploded, others did not, and we had to diffuse them, knowing full well that if they went off, everyone around the perimeter of the Dacha would be killed.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 28-30

On Oct. 15, Beria with Shcherbakov called the meeting of the NKVD and secretaries of the districts of Moscow. Beria deceitfully announced:
German tanks are already in Oditsovo. Contact with the front is broken. According to the decisions of the Central General Command, we must mine all large factories, industries and other important structures. Leave 500 members in every district to defend Moscow, evacuate older people and children. Give out all the reserves of products to the people, in order that the enemy would not get them.
Our surroundings at the Dacha were mined, and the news was told to us, from where, we do not know, that Stalin has left and went to Kalinin front or someplace else, no one knows where.
Where was Stalin at this time? Chauffeur to Stalin, Mitriukhin, states emphatically that from the Kremlin, Stalin wanted to go to the Dacha to meet his Politbureau. Rumniatsev started to tell him that there is no water there, there is no heat, there are mines, but Stalin gave the order to open the Kremlin gates and go. Orlov kept the gates closed. Stalin gave another order:
At this moment, I want you to take out all the mines, do you understand!
Orlov had to open the gates and light a fire at the Dacha. Stalin set to work, preparing the agenda for the meeting, while sappers were digging up the mines….
Going through Moscow on October 16th, Stalin saw people with bread, flour, sausages, macaroni–all goods belonging to the state reserves. He never said a word to these people, but in the Kremlin, he quickly called a meeting, and asked:
Who allowed this anarchy to take place in Moscow?
All were quiet. Beria even closed his eyes. Sharukhin very briefly told what happened. Stalin commanded Shcherbakov to go on the radio, to tell the people that we are going to be victorious, to make sure that a normal state of affairs came back to the city… to open up all the stores and to get normalcy going again. Then he called to see Zhukov, Artemiev, Shaposhnikov, Voznesensky, Kuztsov, and Kalinin. From Molotov, he demanded that all

foreign Diplomatic Corps be evacuated to Kuibyshev. At last, the commandant of the Kremlin arrived, General Spiridonov. Stalin asked him:
What is your suggestion? Beria is demanding the evacuation of all to Kuibyshev.
Better to go to the Urals or Siberia. It is safer.
Stalin did not say anything… kept quiet but you could see that he did not like the hidden "panic" created by Beria and some others.
… At midnight when in the Dacha there gathered the whole Politburo, he called in to this high-level meeting, the landlady of the Dacha, Istomina, and asked:
Valentina Vasilevna, are you preparing to leave Moscow?
Comrade Stalin, Moscow is our mother, our home. It should be defended, she forthrightly told the gathered Politburo.
Do you hear how Muscovites talk? With sarcasm in his voice, Stalin looked around at all those present.
Everyone kept quiet. In the morning on his way to the Kremlin, talking with the chauffeur Krivchenkov about defending Moscow, Stalin forthrightly said:
I always was and will always remain with the Russian people in Moscow. We shall defend it to the death!
… In the most critical of times, while the enemy was at the gates of Moscow, Stalin remained calm, collected, and inspired courage in all of us.
… Regarding the "special train" for Stalin, it was shunted to another section of the city where there was an enormous storage of building materials.
There were two bombs dropped by German aircraft on this train… somehow they were told where this train was hidden.
The commandant of the Dacha, Soloviev, under a command from Beria, started to evacuate Stalin's furniture and other possessions and load them on this train. When Stalin found out, he was livid:
Where did my furniture and papers go to?
We are getting ready, comrade Stalin, to evacuate to Kuibyshev.
No! No evacuation. Do you hear? We are remaining in Moscow until final victory!
Suslov, on Oct. 16, came to see if everything was going as planned, heard what Stalin told him:
Stalin now gave me such a going over, that you must get this train out of sight and return all the furniture and other things from the train back to the Dacha!
As we can see, all sorts of people, even those who wanted desperately, for their own reasons, to have Stalin leave, have told one and the same thing–his decision, his categorical decision was to remain in Moscow….
I want to convince the reader of the falsehood about Stalin's "cowardliness." Here are some examples. Even though the territory of the Dacha "Semenovskoye" was heavily mined all around and had anti-aircraft emplacements, Stalin always came here. The NKVD warned Stalin that one of the bombs dropped had not exploded.
… Then two enemy aircraft were circling over the Dacha. Aircraft gunners opened fire. Bullets, shells were falling on the ground like hail and Stalin was asked to go inside… but he stood there with the other defenders, urging them on. Finally, Stalin said: Vlasik, do not worry. Our bombs and those of others will not fall near us.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 30-35

When the German Army marched to the outskirts of Moscow in 1941, Stalin and Shtemenko bunkered together two levels below ground in the Kirovskaya subway station; the rest of the General Staff stayed in a command post one level below ground in the Byelorussian metro station.
Deriabin, Peter. Inside Stalin's Kremlin. Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, c1998, p. 105

Let us go back to those days and get their impressions… not from the military commanders' point of view, but from the Moscow Soviet Chairman, Vasili Pronin, who was chairman from April 1939 to 1945. [In the following] he was interviewed by the editor of the Military-Historical Journal, Captain Ishenko.

QUESTION: You met Stalin often in your position as Head of Moscow Soviet. How do you look at all the anti-Stalin hysteria that we have heard in the last 40 years?

ANSWER: This is a very hard question. In my work, of course, I met Stalin often. As the publicists, historians, and present leaders write and speak about Stalin, there is nothing real in their writings, nothing actual or truthful.
Stalin was no fool or sick. He was a tough leader during very tough times and there were enemies within and outside our borders…. Stalin was smart and a very learned man. He went into any given problem very methodically. In 1939-1940, this is the way we worked. There was intensive work to fortify the defenses of Moscow. Stalin visited all the regions of Moscow every day, looking over the fortifications, giving advice, finding fault with things that were not done and should have been done according to the master defense plan for Moscow. Every little thing interested him. He observed the smallest discrepancies. I accompanied him often.
…we start to visit the defenses and building of emplacements and other structures. We discussed the plans and what could be done either to improve or take certain steps to speed it up. People, seeing Stalin, converged. I remember at a stop, on Lenin Prospect, Stalin told the people: "Comrades, this is not a meeting–we came here to look at the construction." Vlasik, perspiring as he ran here and there to see that no one tried to attack Stalin… there were no other guards guarding Stalin, who freely met, talked, shook hands with people. Stalin was interested in everything, knew everything and was on top of things regarding the defenses of Moscow.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 21-23

QUESTION: In your capacity as a member of the General Central Command, were there any disagreements regarding the defense of Moscow or its evacuation?

ANSWER: [Moscow Soviet Chairman, Vasili Pronin, who was chairman from April 1939 to 1945 says], No, there was unity. When on the night of October 19, 1941 we were asked to come to the General Staff Command, only one question was on the agenda: Are we going to defend Moscow? At first, as was the custom, all the General Staff and Moscow secretaries met in the Kremlin: Beria, Malenkov, Molotov and others.

QUESTION: Any from the Military High Command?

ANSWER: There was only one– General Artemiev. Marshal Zhukov was at the front.

QUESTION: It seems that to defend or not to defend Moscow was left to the Government body–civilians!

ANSWER: It looked like it. When we were all gathered in the hall, ready to go to the office of Stalin, Beria said that he would try to convince everyone to evacuate Moscow. He was for evacuating Moscow, giving it up to the Germans and establishing the headquarters of defense on the Volga River. Malenkov was agreeing with Beria, Molotov was very agitated and against this. Others present kept mum. I remember the words of Beria as follows: “Well, with what are we going to defend Moscow? We have nothing with which to defend ourselves. They will break us apart and will shoot us all like partridges!”
Then we went to Stalin’s office. There were 10 of us. Stalin was pacing in his office as always, with a pipe in his mouth. When we were all seated, he asked the question: “Will we be defending Moscow?”
All of us kept quiet. He waited a couple of minutes and again, repeated the same question. Again, all of us were silent.
“Well, if all of you are silent, I’m going to ask each one individually.”
The first one he asked was Molotov. Molotov said: “We’re going to defend Moscow!” He asked each one personally. All of them, including Beria and Malenkov, said that we should defend Moscow!
He turned to me and said: “Pronin, write this down.”
I took the paper and pencil and Stalin dictated. With this, we informed all citizens… then he told me to get this message to the GHQ and on the radio. He then picked up the telephone, got in touch with the front lines and then from his small book where he had all the divisions, commanders, sections of armies, all marked… he dictated commands as Commander-in-Chief to immediately deploy their divisions around Moscow. Someone from the Ural districts stated that he has not enough railway cars to bring his army to Moscow. Stalin stated emphatically: “You shall have the cars….”
So, you see, Stalin never thought of leaving Moscow.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 30-32

QUESTION: There is talk now that Stalin himself wanted to leave Moscow if the situation worse.

ANSWER: [Moscow Soviet Chairman, Vasili Pronin, who was chairman from April 1939 to 1945 says], I heard such talk, but these lies are spread by people who themselves ran away with tails between their legs at that time. They are doing this to make themselves look good before their children and grandchildren. I and my friend Kuznetsov and Poskrebyshev looked into this matter, perused archives and diaries of all different sources, but absolutely NOTHING whatsoever was found to say that Stalin wanted to run away. The opposite was true–he was the pillar of steadfastness and patriotism.
Furthermore, I was one of the leaders of PVO and I read that Stalin was seen running to and fro on some railway station, trying to get out of Moscow. An absolute lie! At that time, days on end German planes were over Moscow and if Stalin’s train would have been going out of Moscow, our fighter planes would have been there to give him cover. Our command NEVER once got the order from Stalin that the High Command was planning to leave Moscow.

Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 34-35

On 2 October 1941 the Germans launched their first offensive against Moscow….
Stalin remained on the spot throughout the battle, attending all the meetings of the Committees for the Defense of the City, the chairman of which was the Moscow Secretary of the Party, Alexander Shcherbakov.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 308

The victory in the Battle of Moscow brought about a fundamental change in Stalin's position. Externally, however, his attitude was the same as ever. During the past months he had maintained, before the representatives of Great Britain and the United States, an attitude of calm assurance, despite the tragic uncertainty of the situation. Another man would have found it extremely difficult to play the part of the unperturbed ruler; but for Stalin it was no effort to control his nerves, and to meet his visitors with an untroubled countenance. He is kneaded of a special clay, which never ceases to radiate a certain impression of strength and confidence. But he knew that the greatest trials were still to come, and wanted to prove that in any situation there were for him no ups and downs but only a reasoned and obstinate steadfastness.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 312

Stalin said, "Are you sure we'll be able to hold Moscow? It hurts me to ask you this. Answer me truthfully, as a communist."
I said, "We'll definitely hold Moscow. But we'll need at least two more armies and another 200 tanks."
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 35

A question about 22nd June, 1941.
Was Stalin confused? It is said that he did not meet anyone?
No. It is all lies. We were with him. At night while Molotov was meeting Schulenberg we were there at Stalin's place. He immediately handed over the responsibilities. I was given – Transport, and Mikoyan – Supplies. And transport was ready! To carry 15-20 million people, the factories… it was not a joke. Stalin was working all the while. Of course, he was surprised. He had thought that he would be able to avert the invasion for some more time as the crisis in Anglo-American relations would deepen. I do not think that this was a miscalculation. It was impossible to provoke us. Perhaps Stalin was over-careful. At that time there was no alternative. At first I thought that perhaps Stalin's idea at the start of the war was to overcome the crisis diplomatically. Molotov said 'No'. This was war and nothing could have been done.
Hitler was not able to out-smart Stalin. Despite all logic Hitler did not end the war with the British but attacked us. Hitler acted as an imperialist.
THUS SPAKE KAGANOVICH by Feliks Chuyev, 1992

[Footnote]: None of the three main sources for the opinion that Stalin abdicated leadership at the opening of the war were in Moscow at the time, and none reveal how they learned of this alleged abdication. They are Khrushchev, Maisky, and Grechko.

Similarly unconvincing is the assertion in Khrushchev Remembers that ‘I’d seen him when he had been paralyzed by his fear of Hitler.’ In fact Khrushchev, who was in Kiev, did not see Stalin at all in the early part of the war. In his speech of 1956 he contradicts this accusation by instead claiming that Stalin’s fault early in the war was interference with military operations, hardly the same as paralysis.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 369

Khrushchev also said that Stalin on hearing of the invasion acted like a “rabbit in front of a boa constrictor). But a man who was arrested at least six times by Tsarist police between 1902 and 1913, and who escaped five times–as Stalin did, mostly from Siberian and Arctic prison camps–is not likely to act the coward in moments of danger….
Many experts have written that Stalin disappeared for a few days after invasion day, and it is difficult to be accurate as to his whereabouts during the opening days of the invasion. A few years ago his appointments book was found, and several pages detailing visitors to Stalin’s Kremlin study are reproduced in Sudoplatov’s Special Tasks, the Memoirs of an Unwanted Witness–a Soviet Spymaster. And the Stalin biographer Radzinsky, on a visit to London in April 1996, disclosed that he had gained access to the ‘presidential archives’ in the Kremlin and found the journal listing Stalin’s visitors for June 1941. He said this showed that Stalin had not, as previously thought, disappeared for a week or more after the invasion, but rather had received a steady stream of visitors….
That the country was not leaderless at this time is shown by the fact that a number of vital decisions were taken during the first week of the invasion and these had to be approved at the highest level.
Axell, Albert. Stalin’s War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 167

Marshal Zhukov mentions a telephone call from Stalin on the 26th, the fourth day of the invasion, summoning him to Moscow. ‘In the evening of 26 June I landed at Moscow and went to Stalin’s office directly from the airport.’ Zhukov makes no mention of an incapacitated Stalin.
Axell, Albert. Stalin’s War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 168

STALIN FORESAW VICTORY AFTER NAZI ATTACK WHILE HIS ENEMIES FORESAW DEFEAT

Fundamentally Stalin’s idea about the future of the Soviets differed only in one point–but this a decisive one–from that of his enemies: both parties foresaw the German attack, but Stalin believed in victory, Trotsky and his followers in defeat. Stalin evaluated the Russian and German forces in the right, the others in the wrong way.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam’s sons, 1942, p. 110

A chief reason why during 1941-42 he was constantly demanding offensive action, although it often involved terrible casualties, was that in these disastrous months, when Russia seemed near to collapse, he subordinated military considerations to the need to uphold the pride and fighting spirit of the nation. He was unsure of the morale of the Red Army and of the Russian people. Attempts to direct and control an orderly withdrawal of forces and the

evacuation of the civilian population would have led, he feared, to panic-stricken flight, as had happened to the tsarist army in 1916-17. The great panic which had swept through Moscow in October 1941 as the Germans approached, was the kind of failure in morale which might have spread throughout Russia, leading to complete collapse….
But at every stage he had fought to halt them, as he had halted them before Moscow. He had demanded attack and had inspired his commanders with his own spirit of aggression and will to victory. It was indeed his implacable will which more than any other factor held the nation from collapse in the tragic days of 1941-42.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 421

STALIN SAVED ENGLAND FROM BEING ATTACKED BY THE NAZIS

The great benefit accruing to the world and allied victory from Stalin's pact, has been divulged by Hitler himself. Later in their speeches of June 23, 1941, Hitler and Ribbentrop set forth that it was Stalin who prevented an attack on England in the fall of 1940: the wicked Russians, cried Hitler in his familiar sniveling manner, had occupied Bessarabia and thus set the Balkans in motion against Germany. Yes, Hitler himself confessed in his declaration of war that he did not dare attack England in the rear if he had to confront an armed Russia. This sentence would be sufficient to justify every opponent of Hitler–in other words, the majority mankind–in giving thanks to Stalin.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 230

RED ARMY INTELLIGENCE WAS READY FOR NAZI ATTACK

Hitler attacked without any notice whatsoever to the Soviet government; but the Red Army intelligence were aware of Hitler's mobilization and were prepared for any possibility.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 497

I don't deny–in fact, I can confirm–that our intelligence should have been better. Nonetheless, the basic elements of Hitler's plan to attack the Soviet Union were well-known. As the saying goes, sparrows were chirping about it at every crossroad. Hitler and the Nazis were yelling at the top of their voices about how they wanted to rid the world of Communists and communism.
Schecter, Jerrold. Trans & Ed. Khrushchev Remembers: the Glasnost Tapes. Boston: Little, Brown, c1990, p. 50

CHUEV: Some people, Marshall Golovanov in particular, argue that the war caught the general staff asleep.
MOLOTOV: They were not asleep. But they had a directive ordering that the first reports not be trusted, that they must be verified. Time was lost.
CHUEV: But that's a failing of Stalin's.
MOLOTOV: You may think so, of course. He was in a difficult situation because he didn't want the war.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 23

All this, and more, was faithfully reported to Moscow, but without any apparent effect. Admittedly, on June 5, sixty-six year old old Kalinin, the President of the USSR, made a

speech at the Military Academy in Moscow in the course of which he said: “The Germans are preparing to attack us, but we are ready. The sooner they come, the better: we will wring their necks.”
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 614

SU INTELLIGENCE REPORTS ON POTENTIAL NAZI ATTACK WERE INADEQUATE

Although our intelligence disclosed Hitler’s intentions to attack the Soviet Union, the reports were to a certain extent contradictory. They didn’t contain assessments of the potential of the German tank force and air force units or their capability of breaking the defense lines of the Red Army units deployed on our borders. No one in the intelligence service examined the real balance of forces on the Soviet-German frontiers. Thus the strength of Hitler’s strike came as a surprise to our military commanders, including Marshall Zhukov, the Red Army chief of staff at the time, who admits in his memoirs that we did not foresee an enemy able to unleash large scale offensive operations by mass tank formations simultaneously in several directions.
What was overlooked in the intelligence information was the qualitative force of the German blitzkrieg tactics. We believed that if war broke out the Germans would first try to seize our Ukrainian regions, which were rich in food supplies and raw materials. We knew from their military strategic games that a prolonged war would demand additional economic resources. This was a big mistake: GRU and NKVD intelligence did not warn the general staff that the aim of the German army in both Poland and France was not to seize the territory but rather to destroy the military might of the opposing army.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 117

The NKVD and GRU should be blamed for underestimating the striking potential of the German armed forces; they were too preoccupied with political intentions and decisions, instead of the Wehrmacht’s tactics.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 122

Intelligence estimates on the timing of the invasion were contradictory. Sorge reported from Tokyo that the invasion was planned for June 1st. Our rezidentura reported from Berlin that the invasion was planned for June 15. Prior to that, on March 11, GRU had reported that the invasion was planned for spring. There was no clear picture, and it was further muddled by ongoing negotiations.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 123

On March 20, 1941, General Golikov, Chief of the Intelligence Division, submitted a report to Stalin containing information of the greatest importance.
This document outlined variants of the possible directions of the blows of the German fascist troops when they attacked the Soviet Union. As it later turned out they accurately summarized the evolution of the Barbarossa plan by the German command, and one of the variants, as a matter of fact, contained the essence of the plan.
However, the conclusions drawn from the information cited in the report actually nullified its importance. At the end of General Golikov’s report it says:

“(1). On the basis of all the statements cited above and possible variants of operations of this spring I consider that the most probable time operations will begin against the USSR is after victory over England or the conclusion of an honorable peace treaty with her.
(2). Rumors and documents to the effect that war against the USSR is inevitable this spring should be regarded as misinformation coming from the English or perhaps even the German intelligence service.”
On May 6, 1941, Adm. Kuznetsov, People’s Commissar for the Navy, sent the following memorandum to Stalin.
“Our naval attache in Berlin, Captain 1st Class Vorontsov, reports that according to a German officer from Hitler’s General Headquarters the Germans are preparing to invade the USSR on May 14 through Finland, the Baltic area, and Romania. Simultaneously big air raids are planned on Moscow and Leningrad and airborne troops are to be landed at border centers….”
The information contained in this document was also exceptionally valuable, but again Admiral Kuznetsov’s conclusions as expressed to the leadership were not in accordance with the facts he cited. He wrote: “I consider that this information is false and was specially sent through this channel so that it would get to our Government and the Germans would see how the USSR would react.”
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 228-229

STALIN SAW WORLD WAR II NAZI ATTACK COMING

Stalin was convinced that it was just a matter of time until the Soviet Union would again be invaded by hostile capitalist powers seeking to dismember and destroy the first Socialist State. Stalin considered it his sacred obligation to see to it that when the time came the attackers would not be able to accomplish this. The fulfillment of this task justified all means.
Scott, John. Behind the Urals, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1942, p. 64

From Molotov’s answers to Stalin’s questions I concluded that his trip [to Germany in November 1940] had strengthened our general conviction that war was inevitable and probably imminent.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 132

Hitler’s film [a cinematic spectacular to frighten adversaries by showing the German capture of Danzig] was sent to us anyway, and we watched it in the Kremlin with Stalin. It was very depressing. We knew very well that we were the next country Hitler planned to turn his army against.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 135

We had dinner. Stalin was in high spirits. He was glad that the Treaty had been signed. He said, “Well, we deceived Hitler for the time being,” or something like that, showing he understood the inevitability of war and that while the Treaty postponed the war, it only gave us some time.
Schecter, Jerrold. Trans & Ed. Khrushchev Remembers: the Glasnost Tapes. Boston: Little, Brown, c1990, p. 53

With Poland, France, Denmark, Holland, Norway, Luxembourg, Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Romania all occupied, now it was the USSR's turn. Stalin understood that war was inevitable.
Schecter, Jerrold. Trans & Ed. Khrushchev Remembers: the Glasnost Tapes. Boston: Little, Brown, c1990, p. 54

I left on Friday, and on Saturday [June 21st] I was in Kiev. By then Stalin himself understood that the war was about to begin. So how can anyone still say it was a surprise attack?
Schecter, Jerrold. Trans & Ed. Khrushchev Remembers: the Glasnost Tapes. Boston: Little, Brown, c1990, p. 56

CHUEV: All the history books say that Stalin miscalculated the beginning of the war.
MOLOTOV: To some extent, but it was impossible not to miscalculate. How could you know when the enemy would attack? We knew we would have to deal with him, but on what day or even what month….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 21

CHUEV: It is known there were 14 dates?
MOLOTOV: We are blamed because we ignored our intelligence. Yes, they warned us. But if we had heeded them, had given Hitler the slightest excuse, he would've attacked us earlier. We knew the war was coming soon, that we were weaker than Germany, that we would have to retreat. The question was, retreat to where–to Smolensk or to Moscow, that's what we discussed before the war.
We knew we would have to retreat, and we needed as much territory as possible. We did everything to postpone the war. And we succeeded– for a year and ten months. We wished it could have been longer, of course. Stalin reckoned before the war that only in 1943 would we be able to meet the Germans as equals.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 22

CHUEV: But there were intelligence reports…
MOLOTOV: What is written about this is contradictory. From my point of view, there couldn't have been another beginning for that war. We delayed it and, in the end, we were caught asleep; it turned out to be unexpected. I think we could not have relied on our intelligence. You have to listen to them, but you also have to verify their information. Intelligence agents could push you into such a dangerous position that you would never get out of it. Provocateurs everywhere are innumerable. That's why you can't trust intelligence without constant and scrupulous checking and re-checking.
Some naive people, philistines, have written in their reminiscences: the intelligence agents spoke out, deserters from the enemy crossed the border…
You couldn't trust such reports. But if you were too distrustful you could easily go to the other extreme.
When I was the Predsovnarkom I spent half a day reading intelligence reports. The only thing missing was the date of the invasion! And if we had trusted these reports [and gone on a war footing] the war could have started much earlier….
On the whole, everyone expected the war would come and it would be difficult, impossible for us to avoid. We delayed it for a year, for a year and a half.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 22

CHUEV: Khrushchev used Churchill's words saying that he had warned Stalin. Stalin said later, "I didn't need any warnings at the time. I knew the war was coming, but I thought I could gain another half a year." That is why Stalin is blamed. He relied upon himself and thought he could delay the war.
MOLOTOV: That's stupid. Stalin couldn't rely upon himself; in this case he had to rely upon the whole country.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 28

CHUEV: Churchill's memoirs. He excoriates you, alleging that you helped Hitler in 1940 during the battle for France…. Also, Stalin and Molotov should have known that in one year they would have to fight Hitler!
MOLOTOV: We knew, we knew it very well.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 414

At the same time, Stalin and Molotov transferred substantial numbers of army units from Siberia in April, May, and early June 1941 to protect our Western borders.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 120

If one excepts the thesis that Stalin had long ago decided that Nazi Germany was his enemy, that he was willing to except all manner of disrepute to maintain peace with Germany while he built up his strength, that in the autumn of 1940 he perceived that Germany could no longer win a quick and easy war in the West and must therefore turn against Russia–a turn which he could no longer avert–his policy in 1941 can be understood without difficulty. He saw that he was the next object of German attack, and from that it followed logically that Britain, and behind Britain America, were henceforth his potential allies, no matter what might have happened before in the days of Munich and Chamberlain. Clear-sighted as he was, Stalin knew that Yugoslavia and Greece could offer small resistance to the Germans; yet nevertheless he ventured to offer Germany virtual defiance in Yugoslavia's behalf, and almost simultaneously began moving Soviet troops westward from Siberia.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 260

Stalin's prewar speeches show that he was under no delusions about Nazi intentions. He knew the attack would come sooner or later and that he was simply buying time in signing the nonaggression treaty.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 126

Malenkov had a file containing a draft decree from the chief administration of political propaganda in the Red Army, which Zaporozhets had given to him in the middle of June. Malenkov had given the draft to Stalin on June 20. It had been in preparation since Stalin's speech to the military graduates on May 5, 1941, when he [Stalin] said that war was inevitable and that we must prepare unconditionally to destroy Fascism.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 406

On 5 May 1941 he [Stalin] addressed the ceremony for graduates of military academies in Moscow. His words, unreported in the press at the time, were combative. Instead of the reassuring words he issued to the media about Germany, he declared:

“War with Germany is inevitable. If Comrade Molotov can manage to postpone the war for two or three months through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, that will be our good fortune, but you yourselves must go off and take measures to raise the combat readiness of our forces.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 407

I [Budu] realize today that he [Stalin] must have foreseen the war as far back as 1935, for the said to me then, ‘I’m sure the Anglo-Saxons are going to have to ask us to help them against Hitler’s Germany one of these days. They’ll never be able to conquer the Reich without us.’
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 210

Stalin knew his business, too, and was not taken in by the ease with which he had got his way. A little later, he was overheard to tell Molotov that by giving him Lithuania with so little argument, Hitler had in effect declared war on the Soviet Union. Stalin understood all too clearly that the only reason Hitler had done so was because he intended to take it back again as soon as the time was right.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 355

Ribbentrop had no doubt that Hitler was sincere, and that he truly believed the understanding with the Soviet Union was permanent. Stalin, however, was less gullible. Although he admired Hitler’s ruthlessness, he had no illusions about his integrity and knew he would turn on the Soviet Union as soon as it suited him.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 359

Zhukov immediately set about speeding up the improvements in the military system which they had already begun, cutting bureaucracy, weeding out incompetent commanders, and generally gearing up for the fight which was so obviously looming on the horizon.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 553

There can be few better examples of Stalin’s twin aims of placating Hitler and preparing his own people than the events surrounding the speech he made at a grand banquet in the Kremlin on May 5, 1941, for several 100 graduates of 16 military academies and nine university military faculties….
…the Pravda report could also refer to the possibility of new concessions and some sort of new deal. But was that what Stalin had really said? Later, during the war, Hilger [a high ranking Nazi] talked to many captured [Russian] officers who had been at the banquet. Their version of what Stalin had said was quite different from that which had been so carefully fed to the Germans through the DNB [German news agency] man. When a high-ranking general had proposed a toast to the peace policy of the Soviet Union, Stalin had replied, “The slogan ‘long live the peace policy of the Soviet Union’ is now outdated. It’s about time to end this old nonsense.” And when someone else toasted the friendship with Germany, Stalin was said to have replied that the Soviet people should stop praising the German army to the skies.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 574

Other sources give Stalin’s speech as following this line much more closely than the leaked version. “Our glorious Red Army,” he is reported as saying, “must be prepared to fight fascist Germany at any moment.” Needless to say, the Soviet government would try “by all means

at its disposal to delay a German attack… at least until the autumn." By then it would be too late for that year. Autumn rains and the onset of winter would reduce the mobility of any invading army. If this strategy succeeded, if Germany could be kept at bay for the whole of 1941, then "almost inevitably" there would be a war in 1942. But that war would be fraught in circumstances much more favorable to the USSR. For one thing, the Red Army would be better trained and equipped. It would be in a position to take the initiative. Indeed, to forestall a German attack, the USSR might have to strike first.
From the Soviet domestic point of view, it did not matter what Stalin actually said. The gist of his speech – that the country was in imminent danger from Germany – was all over Moscow within 24 hours, and Muscovites drew their own conclusions. Their worst fears must have seemed confirmed when they read in Pravda on May 6, along with the brief and ambiguous report of his speech, the much more surprising news that he had replaced Molotov as Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, the Soviet prime minister, thus becoming head of the government as well as the party….
… It was a signal to the Soviet people that the international situation had grown so dangerous that the USSR could no longer be left in the hands of lesser men: only the great Stalin himself could be trusted to lead the country through the treacherous quicksands that lay ahead.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 575

While continuing to placate Hitler with every means at his disposal, Stalin was also concerned to go on warning him, as tactfully as possible, that the Soviet Union would defend herself if attacked. Until mid-May, he did not take too much trouble to hide the steadily increasing build-up of his forces in the west, allowing British, German, and other military attaches to travel through the areas where they were concentrating. The attaches reported seeing train after train heading west loaded with troops, tanks, and mechanized equipment. They also noted that 1000 people a day were being called up for military service in Moscow alone, and that in early May the youngest age-group was called up six months early. Kollontai, the Soviet minister in Sweden, was allowed to say that never in history had more powerful Russian forces been massed in the west – the general consensus in the international intelligence community was that well over 60 percent of the Red Army was already massed in the West, and more were arriving all the time. Another secret that was not too well kept was that factories around Moscow were being transferred to the safety of the lands beyond the Urals.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 581

Whether or not he succeeded in stalling Hitler, Stalin still needed to speed up the preparation of the Soviet people for the coming war. Throughout May, there was a constant series of civil defense exercises throughout the Soviet Union. The leading role in these was taken by and organization called the Osoaviakhim League…. After the summer of 1940 and the fall of France, the League grew in size until it boasted nearly 12 million volunteer members, many of them children. They took part in the numerous black-outs and practice alerts which were held in every large city from Kiev to Alma Ata.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 582

On May 15 and 16, 1941, a particularly large-scale civil defense exercise was staged at Ramenskoye, a town some 20 kilometers east of Moscow. This involved some 20,000 civilians and was based on a scenario which assumed the worst: four groups of enemy

paratroops were said to have been dropped in the area and a number of neighboring villages were supposed to be under artillery bombardment; incendiary bombs were supposed to have been dropped on the surrounding countryside and forest, starting a number of fires; and to cap it all, Ramenskoye itself was assumed to have suffered a gas attack.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 583

In an address to the new graduates of the Soviet military academies on May 5, 1941, Stalin came closest to recognizing the threat. He stated that a German surprise attack could not be ruled out in the immediate future, but that the government would try by diplomatic means to put it off till autumn, too late in the year for the Germans to attack.
Randall, Francis. Stalin's Russia. New York: Free Press,1965, p. 272

Volodya says, "I think that Stalin had no doubt that Hitler would attack the Soviet Union. Stalin's aim was to win time. He saw it as his task to put off the beginning of the war with the giants of the imperialist world so as to wait until the contradictions between them had been aggravated, and win time in this way. The Stalin played the game of giving Hitler no motive for provocation.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 277

STALIN DIRECTED THE DEFENSE OF MOSCOW IN WWII

Stalin personally directed the defense of Moscow and the operations of the Red Army; he inspired men and commanders, and supervised the building of the defense works at the approaches to the Soviet capital.
Alexandrov, G. F. Joseph Stalin; a Short Biography. Moscow: FLPH, 1947, p. 163

ALLIED AID TO THE SU

In addition we received steel and aluminum [from America] from which we made guns, airplanes, and so on. Our own industry was shattered and partly abandoned to the enemy. We also received food products in great quantities. I can't give you the figures because they never been published. They're all locked away in Mikoyan's memory.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 226

It should be pointed out here, although this has nothing to do with the Russian attitude, that it is easy for Americans to overestimate the amount of help given to the Soviet Union through Lend-Lease. The Allied deliveries of tanks, artillery, and aircraft, while needed, were insignificant compared to Russian production. One Soviet tank plant alone produced 35,000 tanks, several times the number supplied by the Allies during the war. Soviet artillery was entirely Russian, and reputed to be the equal of any in the world. Russian made planes played the biggest part on the eastern front, although the Soviets did get 13,000 planes from the United States, about 5% of our total production.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 108

During the entire war the allies sent the USSR…contributions amounted to 12 percent of the armament produced in the USSR for use against the Germans.

Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 411

[The 26th Anniversary of the October Revolution speech delivered at Moscow, Nov. 6, 1943]
If to all this is added the fact that the Allies are regularly supplying us with various munitions and raw materials, it can be said without exaggeration that by all this they considerably facilitated the successes of our summer campaign.
Franklin, Bruce, Ed. The Essential Stalin; Major Theoretical Writings. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p. 403

Western bourgeois political and military historians allege that the Soviet army was able to achieve its superiority in material owing to Anglo-American assistance.
This is far from true.
I do not wish completely to deny its value though as in some degree it did help the Soviet army and our war industry. However, it did not amount to much and hence cannot be considered of much significance.
We gained our material superiority over the enemy thanks to the advantages of Soviet social order and through heroic, tremendous efforts of the Soviet people led by the Party, both at the front and in the rear.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 466

As far the armaments, what I would like to say is that we received under the Lend-Lease Act from the United States and Britain 18.7 thousand aircraft, 10.8 thousand tanks and 9600 artillery pieces. All that comprised 12, 10.4, and 2% respectively of the total amount of armaments that the Soviet army was equipped with during the war. Undoubtedly, that was of definite significance, but really there is no ground for talk about a decisive role.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 684

Nor was Moscow saved by war material from America. Almost none of the eventual $11 billion worth of American Lend-Lease aid to the USSR arrived in time to save Moscow. American assurances of aid may have made Stalin more willing to throw material reserves into the struggle for his capital after October. But all told, Lend-Lease came to only 6% of Russian war material, most of it coming after Stalingrad. The thesis of Russian primitivity is inconsistent with the theory that Russia was saved by importing huge amounts of American goods along thousands of miles of railway.
The war material with which the Red Army saved Moscow and the bulk of the USSR was produced at home. The USSR produced 16,000 airplanes in 1941, 10,000 of them after the invasion. The production of munitions almost tripled in the second half of 1941–in spite of all the German victories and the chaotic dislocations involved in removing much Soviet industry eastward out of the Germans' reach. In 1942, when two-thirds of European Russia was occupied, the USSR produced 23,000 tanks (of better quality) to the Germans' 9300; 25,000 airplanes to the Germans' 14,700; and 34,000 heavy guns to the Germans' 12,000.
Randall, Francis. Stalin's Russia. New York: Free Press,1965, p. 281

By the time Lend-Lease began to arrive in large quantities, the Russians had already won the battle of Stalingrad. The heavy armaments shipped under Lend-Lease did not amount to more than 10 or 15% of what the Russians were themselves producing. And when one considers that the Second World War cost the United States $400 billion, of which only $11

million worth went to Russia as Lend-Lease one realizes that, by American standards of expenditure, this help to Russia was not an overwhelmingly large item.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co.,1971, p. 115

Western bourgeois political and military historians are trying to prove that the Red Army only achieved its superiority in material thanks to the material assistance rendered by the USA and Britain.
I do not wish to deny this completely and make out that this aid did not exist. It did help the Red Army and the war industry to a certain extent, but, all the same, it should not be regarded as more significant than it actually was.
Our material superiority over the enemy was gained thanks to the advantages of the Soviet social system, the heroic struggle of the Soviet people, guided by the party, at the front as well as in the rear.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 196-197

Nevertheless, for years after the war bourgeois historiography has asserted that it was the Allied deliveries of armaments, materials, and foodstuffs that had played a decisive role for our victory over the enemy.
As for the armaments, what I would like to say is that we received under Lend-Lease from the United States and Britain about 18,000 aircraft and over 11,000 tanks. That comprised of a mere 4% of the total amount of armaments that the Soviet people produced to equip its army during the war. Consequently, there is no ground for talk about the decisive role of the deliveries under Lend-Lease.
As for the tanks and aircraft supplied to us by the British and US governments, they, to be frank, did not display a high fighting qualities; especially tanks which, running on petrol, would burn like torches.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 460

STALIN DEMANDS POLITICAL COMMISSARS BE ATTACHED TO MILITARY UNITS

Voroshilov recalls that Stalin was very insistent on political work in the Army, believing that soldiers would fight well only if they knew what they were fighting for…. He demanded that the most able Communists be attached to regiments as political commissars, and once sent a telegram to Lenin reading, “Military Commissars should be the soul of military action, giving a lead to the experts.” Apparently the method worked, for troops that had been retreating in confusion before Stalin took charge, were, soon after, on the offensive and winning victories.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 49

STALIN MADE HARD MILITARY DECISIONS

I once talked with a Red Army Colonel who, during the civil war, had, with great difficulty, collected food for some of the hungry cities along the Volga. It had only been prepared for

shipment when Stalin's lieutenants confiscated it for the front. The Colonel went to Tsaritsyn to protest. He found Stalin in a hotel room, pacing up and down like a caged animal. The Colonel, pointing out the desperate plight of the city populations, demanded release of the food. Stalin brushed every argument aside: "It can't be helped, if we lose those cities it is only an incident. We will recapture them, but if our Army doesn't have food the Revolution is lost!"
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 49

In Hungary the fighting was also severe. Budapest was taken on February 15. The Russians then swept northward into Austria and on April 13 occupied Vienna. While preparing for the advance into Austria, however, Tolbukhin commanding the third Ukrainian Front, had realized that the enemy Army Group South was preparing an offensive against his front. He was particularly disturbed by reports that the Sixth SS Panzer Army had been transferred from the west to strengthen the offensive.
On March 6 the Germans attacked with "exceptional ferocity." Tolbukhin asked permission to withdraw his front to the east of the Danube if necessary. He was, according to Shtemenko, in poor health and in any case not as ruthless and determined as the other Marshals. Shtemenko was in Stalin's office when Tolbukhin telephoned. Stalin thought for a minute about his request, and then, speaking calmly, he said: "Comrade Tolbukhin! If you're thinking of extending the war by five or six months, then please do withdraw your troops behind the Danube. It will, of course, be quieter there. But I doubt whether that is your intention. Therefore you must defend the right bank and stay there yourself with your headquarters. I am sure that the troops will do their duty and fulfill their difficult task. All that is necessary is that they should be commanded properly." Tolbukhin stood his ground, crushed the enemy offensive, and advanced to Vienna.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 415

WWII PRISONERS OF WAR WERE TREATED HUMANELY

"In Siberia now," a Russian friend of mine returned from there told me, "whole industries are operated by German prisoners, including foreman and skilled technicians. Some of them make higher pay than Soviet workers. Our workers are beginning to complain about it."
Free Germans confirmed this. They also said that a German factory worker got the same bread allowance, in accordance with work performed, as a Russian. Ordinary German prisoners near the front to whom I spoke said that they got 400 grams–.88 pounds–of daily bread, which is what a Russian housewife or a dependent gets. Those I saw in Kiev were evidently rationed cigarettes; some smoked Russian papirosi as they worked.
"But after a man has qualified for factory work," one Free German said, "he can earn as much as 1200 grams (2.6 pounds) of bread a day. It is true, this is more than many first-class Russian workers make. The German has to exceed his norm [basic production unit] in order to earn that much, but I know of a number who are doing it."
The energetic Stakhanovite Fritz could win extra allowances of certain foods, better quarters, clothing, and special privileges. Excellent workers were promised eventual freedom–the right to go home. It was stated that some of them became "real enthusiasts." And top workers were almost invariably the quickest students at the political lectures delivered to them by Free German indoctrinators.

Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 93

First, they didn't think Stalin intended to force ten to twenty million Germans to spend their lives on Russian rock piles. They didn't think he planned to condemn the entire German people to slave labor. They said that this is the "Ehrenburg line"–Ilya Ehrenburg was the most fanatical and prolific of the Soviet eye-for-eye school of publicists–and asserted that it was not the party line.
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 99

I found all those considerations quite reasonable. The problem of the POWs, for instance, was ripe for solution. Over 10 years had gone by since they had been captured [in World War II]. Recently, I had had occasion to meet many of them. In the village of Pavshino, outside Moscow, shops had been set up for the German POWs, who had practiced a variety of trades in their previous civilian lives: they had been tailors, carpenters, plumbers, and so on. People on the staff of a number of magazines got special coupons they could use to order all sorts of things in those shops. Some people bought plumbing items or woodwork or even whole sets of furniture for their living rooms or their kitchens. I had a few suits made to order and the quality was exceptional. During the fitting sessions, my tailor and I spoke German and even became friends.
On the whole, the life of the POWs wasn't too bad. They could practice their trades and seemed to be doing it with inspiration. Their village of small cottages was kept in excellent condition; it had a community center, sports grounds, flower beds, and yellow sandstrewn paths planted with young trees on both sides. Compared to the inhuman conditions of the Soviet POWs who had been captured by Germany, they lived in paradise. Nevertheless, after the long years of captivity, they were terribly homesick–which was indeed understandable.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin's Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 360

FASCISTS WERE REJECTED BY THE UKRAINIANS

The real reason for the Germans failure apparently was that in the beginning they were confident they would be in the Ukraine forever and they didn't care what the people thought. In this period their greed and arrogance were excessive. They took the best land for German settlers and robbed other farms of their best cattle, their machinery, and their surplus and reserves.
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 201

EVERYTHING WAS DONE TO DELAY OR PREVENT WAR COMING

CHUEV: They write now that Stalin trusted Hitler, that Hitler deceived him with the pact of 1939, lulled his vigilance. Stalin trusted him….
MOLOTOV: Such a naive Stalin. No. Stalin saw through it all. Stalin trusted Hitler? He didn't trust all his own people! And there were reasons for that. Hitler fooled Stalin? As a result of such deception Hitler had to poison himself, and Stalin became the head of half the world! We had to delay Germany's aggression, that's why we tried to deal with them on an economic level–export-import.

No one trusted Hitler, but Stalin was so credulous!… He wanted to delay the war for at least another half a year, or longer. Everyone wanted this delay, everyone who was close to the concerns of the time.
A mistake was made, but of minor importance, I would say, because we were afraid to get ourselves drawn into the war to give the Germans a pretext for attack. That's how everything got started, I assure you.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 23

MOLOTOV: To me, these were not our mistakes but our weaknesses. Weaknesses because I think psychologically it was almost impossible for us to be completely ready for war. We felt we were not yet ready, so it was quite natural for us to overdo it…. I personally don't see any mistakes in that. In order to delay the war everything was done to avoid giving the Germans a pretext to start it.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 24

"You [Zhukov and Timoshenko] propose carrying out mobilizations, alerting the troops, and moving them to the western borders?" He [Stalin] wailed. "That means war! Do you understand that or not?"
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 615

Since the war's end, the press would come out with the version that we had had knowledge of Plan Barbarossa before the war broke out, and that we knew the direction of the main strikes, the deployment frontage of the German troops, their strength and equipment. In so doing, the press referred to well-known Soviet intelligence agents–Richard Sorge, for one, and many others in Switzerland, Britain, and a number of other countries, who are said to have provided this information. Yet, the press complained, our political and military leadership had not gone into the substance of the reports and had, indeed, rejected them.
I take full responsibility for saying that this is pure fiction. As far as I know, neither the Soviet Government, nor the People's Commissariat for Defence, nor the General Staff had any such information.
On June 13, Timoshenko phoned Stalin in my presence and asked permission to alert the troops of the border districts, and to deploy the first echelons according to the cover plans.
"We will think it over," Stalin replied.
The next day we visited Stalin and informed him of the general anxiety and the necessity of alerting the troops.
"You propose carrying out a mobilization, alerting the troops and moving them to the western borders? But that means war! Don't you two understand that?"
On June 21, in the evening, Lieutenant-General Purkayev, Chief of Staff of the Kiev Military District, telephoned to inform me that a German sergeant-major had come to our frontier guards and said that German troops were moving to jumping-off areas and that the attack would begin in the morning of June 22.
I at once informed the Defense Commissar and Stalin of what Lieutenant-General Purkayev had reported. Stalin said to come to the Kremlin with the People's Commissar.
Taking with me a draft of the directive for the troops I went to the Kremlin along with the Commissar and Lieutenant-General Vatutin. On the way we agreed that at all cost we must get permission to alert the troops.
Stalin was alone when he received us. He was plainly worried.
"The German generals may have sent this turncoat to provoke a conflict," he said.

“No,” Timoshenko replied. “We think he is telling the truth.”
At that moment members of the Politburo came in.
“What are we to do?” Stalin asked.
No one answered.
“A directive must immediately be given to alert all troops in the border districts,” Timoshenko said….
“Read it!” Stalin replied.
I read the draft directive.
Stalin said: “It’s too early to issue such a directive–perhaps the question can still be settled peacefully. We must give a short directive stating that an attack may begin with provocative actions by the German forces. The troops of the border districts must not fall for any provocation, and avoid complications.”
Vatutin and I went into the next room and quickly drew up a draft of the directive to be sent by the People’s Commissar.
We then returned to the office and asked for permission to read the directive.
Stalin listened to it then read it over again making amendments, and finally gave it to the People’s Commissar to sign.
At about midnight Commander of the Kiev District Kirponos reported over the high-frequency telephone from his command post at Ternopol that another German soldier had appeared in our lines besides the turncoat previously mentioned by General Purkayev. He was from the 222nd Infantry Regiment of the 74th infantry Division. Having swum the river, he presented himself to our border guards, and told them the German troops were going to mount an offensive at 4 A. M. Kirponos was ordered to speed up transmission of the alert directive to all units….
Various stories were circulated after Stalin’s death that on the night of June 21-22 some commanders and their staffs were either peacefully asleep or making merry without a suspicion that anything was amiss. This is not true. The last night of peace was quite different. As I have already said, on our return from the Kremlin, the Commissar for Defense and I spoke over the high-frequency telephone with District commanders Kuznetsov, Pavlov, Kirponos, and their chiefs of staff, and all of them were at their command posts….
The Defense Commissar said I should phone Stalin. I started calling. No one answered. I kept calling. Finally, I heard the sleep-laden voice of the general on duty at the security section. I asked him to call Stalin to the phone.
“What? Now?, and Stalin is asleep.”
“Wake him at once. The Germans are bombing our towns!”
About three minutes later Stalin picked up the receiver.
I reported the situation and requested permission to start retaliatory action. Stalin was silent. I heard the sound of his breathing.
“Did you hear me?”
Silence again.
At last Stalin asked:
“Where Is the Defense Commissar?”
“Talking with the Kiev District on the high-frequency phone.”
“You and him come to the Kremlin. Tell Poskrebyshev to summon all Politburo members.”
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 274-281

It is fair to ask why Stalin, knowing of the clear indications that Germany was ready to make war on us, still withheld his consent for the troops in the border military districts to stand alert well in advance….
The state of alert in a border area is in itself an extreme development not to be viewed as an ordinary occurence in the life of the country and its international relations. Some people, however, overlook the circumstance and believe that the earlier the armed forces were put on the alert the better it would have been for us….
Without dwelling on the extreme points I shall just indicate that the premature alert of the troops may be just as dangerous as the delay in giving it. Quite often there is still a long distance from hostile policies of a neighbor-country to a real war. But let us discuss the case where Stalin was obviously late with the decision for the army and the country to go over to the war footing…
Here my opinion is that although we were not quite ready for war yet, which I have already spoken about, when the time for it had really come we should have had the nerve to step over the threshold. Stalin did not venture to do so, acting, of course, with the best of intentions….
The political and state leaders in the country saw war coming and exerted maximum efforts to delay the Soviet Union's entry into it. This was a sensible and realistic policy. Its implementation required above all a skillful conduct of diplomatic relations with the capitalist countries, especially with the aggressors. The USSR resolutely campaigned to strengthen peace and security and, in relation to Germany, had carried out its treaty obligations to the letter, avoiding any action that the Nazi leaders could use to exacerbate the situation or to make a military provocation….
Stalin was unable to make that decision at the right time, and that remains his most serious political mistake….
What caused this experienced and far-sided statesman to make such a gross error? Above all it was because Soviet intelligence agencies, as Zhukov justly notes in his memoirs, failed to evaluate fully and objectively the information they were receiving on the war preparations of Nazi Germany and report it frankly to Stalin. I shall not touch upon every aspect of the situation; it is basically well-known. I shall only mention the fact that the isolation of the intelligence agency from the General Staff apparently played a part here. The head of intelligence, being also Deputy Defense Commissar, preferred to make his reports directly to Stalin without conferring with the Chief of General Staff. If Zhukov had been conversant with all the vital intelligence information, knowing his position and character, I am sure he could have made more precise conclusions from it and put them to Stalin in a more authoritative way; he would surely have shaken Stalin's conviction that we could further delay the start of the war and that Germany would not venture to fight on two fronts,the West and the East….
We must also bear in mind that Stalin, in trying to defer the outbreak of war, overestimated the possibilities of diplomacy in resolving the issue. Had he felt doubtful about the wisdom of this policy he would have agreed to every possible measure for mobilization, since he was a man of firm resolve and decision.
Vasilevskii, Aleksandr M. A Lifelong Cause. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1981, p. 83-85

SU SHOULD HAVE KNOWN JUNE WAS THE BEST MONTH FOR AN ATTACK

MOLOTOV: …We should have kept in mind that the best time for an attack on Russia was June…. It wasn't fully taken into consideration in any quarter, to my mind.
CHUEV: That was a mistake.
MOLOTOV: Yes, a mistake. But one June had already passed. June of 1940 had passed, and that suggested that June 1941 would pass, too. This was a miscalculation, I suppose.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 27

…we [Molotov and Khruschov] had different outlooks. He desperately wanted to build his reputation, primarily by means of releasing inmates from the camps. I particularly disagreed with him, of course, when he began to rehabilitate avowed enemies…. The main drawback is that he was not a revolutionary, that was the core of the problem. From my point of view, his attempts to besmirch everything connected with the name of Stalin shows that he was not a revolutionary, though I would not go so far as to say he was a counter-revolutionary. While Stalin was a revolutionary, Khrushchev proceeded from an alien ideology.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 368

LACK OF BEING SUFFICIENTLY READY FOR NAZI ATTACK WAS NOT DECISIVE

MOLOTOV" But already in May we had been under colossal pressure with no chance to let off steam. Even if a higher alert had been ordered in June, there would still have been need for a respite. Why was Zhdanov in Sochi, why were officers on leave, why was Pavlov at the theater? My God! Of course, we might have done without these niceties; just the same, they were not decisive!
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 28

CHUEV: But anyway, objectively, it turned out that Hitler outwitted you.
MOLOTOV: No. No, I don't agree with this. Yes, he had his own calculations. There couldn't have been a better time chosen for the attack. But to demand a greater effort from us than in May… there was the danger of a breakdown. Everything was stretched, stretched to the limit, and there wasn't all that much to eat. A mistake in timing is an unjust accusation, quite wrong. There was a miscalculation of some sort, certainly. But this was more a misfortune than a mistake or a fault.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 28

SOURCES SAYING AN ATTACK WAS COMING COULD NOT BE TRUSTED

CHUEV: But Churchill didn't have anything against us at that period….
MOLOTOV: Yes, but could Churchill be trusted in this matter? He was interested in pushing us into a conflict with the Germans as quickly as possible, how could it be otherwise?
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 28

There was no shortage of genuine and often accurate warnings of Hitler's intentions – some historical analysts have since identified and documented at least 84. With all the rumors and German-inspired "noise" and disinformation, it must have seemed to Stalin that the whole world was crying wolf as messages flooded in from friend and foe alike. They came, indeed,

from all quarters: from Soviet spy rings in Western Europe and Japan; from Soviet embassies and consulates in many different countries; from naval and military field intelligence; from the Poles, Czechs, Yugoslavs, Swedes, Americans, and British; even from Germans.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 602

As for Churchill, he made a comic error with one of his predictions. He had warned Stalin of a possible German attack in May 1941, but in that month the Germans attacked the British on the island of Crete instead. The Boss could ask with his quiet smile why British intelligence, which showed such concern for the Soviet Union, was unable to help itself. The answer, as he saw it, was easy: Britain was losing too much blood in an unequal fight, and Churchill wanted to push Stalin into the war at any price. He could not, then, believe Churchill. Nor could he believe his own agent Sorge. Sorge had refused to return to the Soviet Union. How could the Boss believe a defector?…
When Hitler began his Balkan campaign early in 1941, Stalin had reason to feel reassured. The Yugoslavs capitulated in April, and Hitler moved against Greece. Hitler's objective now seemed clear to the Boss: once he had seized Greece he would be able to destroy the British in Egypt and take Suez. Churchill, incidentally, was thinking along the same lines when he pleaded with the United States to come into the war….
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 450

All in all, Stalin was entitled to conclude that Churchill was determined to draw the United States into the war by supplication, and Russia by false information.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 451

STALIN WAS PREPARED FOR THE ATTACK WHEN IT CAME

CHUEV: But if you had ordered the army…
MOLOTOV: That's what a provocation is.
CHUEV: Why would it be a provocation? Better to let them attack the unarmed? To give military men leave?…
MOLOTOV: We were not unarmed, we were on alert. And no one would work for a year without a vacation. To my mind it was impossible to insure against a surprise attack in our condition….
Stalin is portrayed as vain and willful, as though everything would be as he wished…. This is wrong and slanderous. But as to the surprise that unfortunately happened, it couldn't have happened differently….
No one could have done more than Stalin in that situation–not only during the war but before the war and after it.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 29

MOLOTOV: But if Stalin is to blame for everything, then he built socialism alone and won the war alone. Even Lenin didn't rule alone, and Stalin wasn't the only one in the Politburo. Everyone bore responsibility. Of course, Stalin's situation then wasn't easy. It's not true that we didn't know. After all, Kirponos and Kuznetsov put their troops on alert but Pavlov didn't…. The military men, as always, turned out to be helpless.

But military men blame everything on Stalin–that he hobbled initiative, that they had to wait for his orders.
Everyone wants to pass responsibility to someone else….
I read the beginning of Berezhkov's book…. I've read only the first hundred pages, and I've noticed two things with which I cannot agree. One is that Stalin thought that Hitler wouldn't attack the USSR that year. How could he put such words into Stalin's mouth, especially now when you can accuse him of anything? And he cannot defend himself, and no one can do it for him. All the more, "Stalin believed, Stalin thought…" as if anyone knew exactly what Stalin thought of the war! … in my opinion there are no grounds to assert that Stalin believed the war wouldn't come that year. No one can say that about another person. That's the first thing.
Second, he mentions a TASS report. A week or so before the war it was announced in a TASS bulletin that the Germans were taking no actions against us, that we were maintaining normal relations. It was, I think, Stalin's idea. Berezhkov reproaches Stalin, saying there was no ground for such a report. This was a diplomatic game. A game, of course. And it didn't work. Not every attempt yields good results, but the attempt itself was not a bad idea. Berezhkov writes that it was patently naive. It wasn't naivete but a diplomatic move, a political move. In this case it didn't work, but there was nothing unacceptable or impermissible about it. And it wasn't stupid but, so to speak, an attempt to clear up the situation…. But Berezhkov describes it as an obviously wrong move, as naive. There was nothing naive about it. It was a highly responsible action. The move was aimed at depriving the Germans of any excuse for an attack. If we had moved our troops out just a bit, Hitler would have declared, "You see, over there they have moved their troops forward! Here are the photographs, here are the activities!" They say we had insufficient troop strength at the border, but had we started moving troops to the border, we would have given Hitler an excuse! Meanwhile, we were preparing at full speed.
We had no other way out. So I consider it vile to reproach us for this. The TASS bulletin was necessary as a last resort.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 30-31

CHUEV: In a way, Stalin distinguished Hitler from the German military, believing that the war might begin as a result of their provocations, but that Hitler himself wouldn't have broken the pact. I don't think Stalin believed that.
MOLOTOV: I don't think so either. These are very wild speculations aimed to cast doubt upon Stalin. He wasn't a naive person, he wasn't such a good-natured simpleton….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 32

Under the German threat, Stalin was swinging towards nationalism, trying to build, and succeeding to build, a strong power to meet the invasion which he foresaw.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 176

It is a moot point to what extent the USSR and the Red Army were surprised by Hitler's sudden attack. Powerful Red forces had undoubtedly been concentrated in the western regions of the USSR, along a vast arc from the Black Sea to Lake Ladoga, north of Leningrad, and for some months there had been a steady westward flow of troops and military supplies from Siberia into European Russia…. The invaders held the advantage of initiative and broke through the defense by greater weight of manpower and material. Their advance was rapid, especially across the open plains of the Southern Ukraine, but never

from the outset was there any rout or debacle of the Russians, such as had occurred in Poland or France.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 265

At the time I could not detect in Khrushchev any disapproval of Stalin or Molotov. Whenever there was talk of Stalin, he spoke of him with respect and stressed their closeness. He recounted how, on the eve of the German attack, Stalin had phoned him from Moscow warning him to be on the alert, for he had information that the Germans might begin operations the next day– June 22. I offer this as a fact, and not in order to refute Khrushchev's charges against Stalin concerning the unexpectedness of the German attack.
Djilas, Milovan. Conversations with Stalin. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962, p. 123

Despite continuing to hold, with Molotov, to the myth that Hitler would stick to the Pact and avoid fighting on two fronts, Stalin set about intensifying the country's defenses. The potential was there. The country now had one of the mightiest industrial bases in the world, however low its quality, and it was managed by strong commissars such as Tevosyan, Malyshev, Shakhurin, Likhachev, Ustinov and Vannikov.
Industrial leaders had been found who could work together with the party organizations to achieve the impossible at critical moments, to produce military hardware at fantastically short notice. Stalin knew all his commissars and many factory managers personally and frequently called them in for consultation.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 373

… in early June he [Stalin] ordered the reinforcement of the Southwestern sector with a further 25 divisions.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 398

The shock was deep but not long-lasting. Before it struck, he [Stalin] had attempted to do something, issued some orders and tried to inspire the government agencies to show energy. On June 23, during a discussion on the creation of a Chief of Staff Headquarters, he surprised everyone by suddenly interrupting the debate to propose: 'An Institute of permanent advisers to be created in association with Headquarters….
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 410

MOLOTOV DENIES ASKING GERMANS WHY SU DESERVED TO BE ATTACKED

CHUEV: I don't know whether it's true or not, but who can I ask but you? Allegedly you said to the Ambassador, "How did we deserve this?"
MOLOTOV: That's an invented story if you got it from Werth's book. He wasn't there, so how was he to know? That's pure fabrication. I surely couldn't have said such a stupid thing. Nonsense. Absurd. Who could he have gotten it from?
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 37

STALIN DID NOT FALL APART AFTER THE ATTACK BUT WAS VERY DEPRESSED

CHUEV: It is written that Stalin lost his head and lost the ability to speak in the first days of the war.
MOLOTOV: I wouldn't say he lost his head. He suffered, but he didn't show any signs of this. Undoubtedly he had his rough moments. It's nonsense to say he didn't suffer. But he is not portrayed as he really was. They show him as a repenting sinner! Well, that's absurd, of course. As usual, he worked day and night and never lost his head or his gift of speech…. Stalin said, "We blew it." This referred to all of us. I remember it well; he simply said, "We blew it." Yes, we blew it. Such a troubled state Stalin was in then.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 39

THE MAIN ISSUE AT POTSDAM WAS REPARATIONS

The main question at Potsdam was about reparations….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 53

We took reparations after the war, but these were trifles. Our state was huge. And these reparations were of old, obsolete equipment. But there was no other way out. Even if it offered only minor alleviation, it had to be used.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 60

Although the reparations the Soviet Union was demanding from the satellites were only a small fraction of the damage they had caused her, there were still some who thought her "grasping."
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co.,1971, p. 138

In particular, he [Stalin] demanded reparations to the value of $20 billion from Germany. This was controversial, but the Western leaders conceded it to Stalin. More hotly debated was the treatment of Poland.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 465

STALIN AND MOLOTOV SAID FRANCE SHOULD GET ITS LAND FROM US-BRIT AREA

Then, when the allies suggested giving a zone to France, we said, "Give it to them from your share–they didn't take part in the fighting." Well, they allotted it, but our zone remained untouched.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 55

When Churchill and Roosevelt proposed that France be given a share in the control of Germany he [Stalin] objected, because ' France had opened the gates to the enemy'. It was his stock argument that the place any nation was to be allowed to keep in peace should be proportionate to the strength it had shown and the sacrifices it had borne in war. That the principal favored Russia more than any other nation goes without saying, for no other nation had borne sacrifices comparable to hers.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 526

STALIN AND ZHUKOV SAY THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE BROKE THE BACK OF FASCISM

…the Russian people, whom Stalin called the most outstanding of all the nations making up the Soviet Union…. He was correct in calling the Russian people the decisive force that broke the back of fascism….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 188

It was neither rain nor snow that stopped the fascist troops near Moscow. The grouping of picked Nazi troops, over one million strong, was routed by the courage, iron staunchness and valour of the Soviet troops which had the people, Moscow and their country behind them.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 41

STALIN SHOULD NOT HAVE RETIRED AFTER THE WAR

CHUEV: Do you think Stalin ought to have retired after the war?
MOLOTOV: No, I do not. But he was, in my opinion, overexhausted. Some took advantage of this. They slipped things over on him and buttered him up. That's why he trusted Khrushchev and distrusted me.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 190

STALIN ABANDONED HIS PLAN TO HAVE HITLER KILLED

…In 1943 Stalin abandoned his original orders to try to eliminate Hitler; he feared that if Hitler was killed his Nazi henchman would be purged by the German military and a separate treaty would be signed with the allies without Soviet participation.
Such a fear was not without foundation. We were aware that in the summer of 1942, on the initiative of Pope Pius XII, the Vatican's representative in Ankara had approached the German ambassador, von Papen, urging that he exert his influence to bring about a separate peace between Britain, the United States, and Germany.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 115

NAZIS VIEWED SOVIET DEFENSES AS WEAK

Two other little-known matters remain to be mentioned. In May 1941, a German Junkers 52 intruded into Soviet airspace undetected by Soviet air defense and landed safely at the central airfield in Moscow near Dynamo Stadium. This caused an uproar in the Kremlin and led to the purge of the military command; first came dismissals, then the arrest and execution of top figures in the administration of the air force and in the command of the Red Army. To Hitler, this spectacular landing signaled that combat readiness of the Red Army was low.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 121

PAVLOV WAS INCOMPETENT

On June 20th Eitingon reported to me that he was displeased by a talk he had with General Pavlov, commander of the Byelorussian military district. Because they had known each other in Spain, Eitingon asked his friendly advice on what trouble spots Pavlov foresaw in his territory. Eitingon said that Pavlov either was drunk or understood nothing about the coordination of various fighting services in modern warfare. Pavlov anticipated no problems and believed that even if the enemy at first seized the initiative on the border he had enough strength in reserve to counter any major breakthrough. He saw no necessity for subversive operations to cause disorganization among the attacking force.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 124

During the German aggression, in June 1941, General Pavlov, commander of the Western Front, displayed grave incompetence and negligence. The result was the loss of Minsk, the Byelorussian capital, on June 28. Stalin recalled Pavlov and his staff to Moscow. Zhukov noted that “On a proposal of the Military Council of the Western Front, brought to trial together with him were…other generals of the Front Headquarters.” They were tried and shot.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 260.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 251 [p. 227 on the NET]

On June 26 Stalin phoned Zhukov in Ternopol, ordering him to return to the General Headquarters at once. The enemy was approaching Minsk, and Pavlov, commanding the West Front, had evidently loss control…. On June 28 Russian troops surrendered Minsk, the capital of Byelorussia. German troops carried out a savage massacre of the inhabitants and destroyed most of the city.
Twice on June 29 Stalin came to the General Headquarters. He was in a black mood and reacted violently to the chaotic situation on the West Front. Zhukov conferred by telegraph with Gen. Pavlov, but it was clear that the situation was hopeless. On the next day Stalin ordered Zhukov to summon Pavlov to Moscow. On his arrival Zhukov hardly recognized him; he had changed so much in the eight days of the war. Pavlov was removed from his command, and with the other generals from this front, he was put on trial. All were shot. Stalin held them responsible for the destruction of the West Front. He attached special importance to this front against which he believed the Germans would deliver their main assault…. The most serious mistake was that the troops were not deployed in depth along the extensive western frontier with the result that the German armored divisions, advancing at speed, were able to outflank and encircle strategic positions.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 326

Pavlov was still on Stalin’s mind. Before becoming commander-in-chief of the Western front, he had made quite a good impression. True, he hadn’t had much experience and his rise after Spain had been rapid. But why had his headquarters been so remiss?… Still, the question nagged at Stalin: how could Pavlov have lost everything so miserably? He called Poskrebyshev and asked, ‘Who, apart from Pavlov, has been sent to the military tribunal? When’s the trial? Where’s the draft sentence? Get me Ulrich!’ Poskrebyshev brought in a thin file and laid it on the desk. It was labeled ‘(Draft) Sentence’:
…The file went on to state that it had been established by preliminary investigation that: “the accused, Pavlov and Klimovskikh, were participants in an anti-Soviet military conspiracy and that they had used their positions to carry out enemy work by not training the personnel

under their command for military action, that with their conspiratorial aims in mind they had weakened the preparedness for mobilization of the troops in the military district, they had disrupted the administration of the forces and surrendered weapons to the enemy without a fight, thus causing great damage to the fighting capacity of the Red Army."
Stalin skipped most of the document, which continued in this vein, but read the last section: "Thus the guilt of Pavlov and Klimovskikh… and that of Grigoryev and Korobkov… has been established. As a result of the above….all four [are sentenced] to the highest form of punishment, namely to be shot, and all their personal property to be confiscated."
Stalin turned to Poskrebyshev and said: 'I approve the sentence, but tell Ulrich to get rid of all that rubbish about "conspiratorial activity". The case shouldn't drag out. No appeal. And then inform the fronts, so they know that defeatists will be punished without mercy.'
… The accused asked to be sent to the front in any capacity; they would show their loyalty to the fatherland and their military duty by giving their blood. They asked the court to believe that everything that had happened was the result of extremely unfavorable circumstances. They did not deny their guilt.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 421-422

STALIN REFUSES TO SIGN A SEPARATE PEACE WITH THE NAZIS

In my view, Stalin and the leadership sensed that any attempt at capitulation–in a war that was so harsh and unprecedented–would automatically ruin the leadership's ability to govern the country. Apart from their true patriotic feelings, of which I am convinced, any form of capitulation was for them unacceptable.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 147

In a little while Stalin was on the line. I reported to him about Hitler's suicide and the letter from Goebbels proposing armistice.
Stalin answered:
"Now he's done it, the bastard. Too bad he could not have been taken alive. Where is Hitler's body?"
"According to General Krebs Hitler's body was burned."
"Tell Sokolovsky that there can be no talks–either with Krebs or any other Hitlerites–only unconditional surrender," said the Supreme Commander.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 390

VLASOV WAS EXECUTED AS A TRAITOR

[Footnote] Colonel Vlasov, highly regarded by Khrushchev and Stalin, boldly escaped encirclement in the defense of Kiev and Moscow but was captured by the Germans in the spring of 1942. Vlasov was turned and created an army of Russian prisoners of war to fight for Hitler. Vlasov's troops were used for punishment expeditions against partisans in the Balkans and in Poland against the Warsaw ghetto uprising of 1944. Vlasov surrendered to the Americans in May 1945 and was handed over to Soviet authorities, who tried and executed him by hanging.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 169

In his book on Vlasov, The History of the Vlasov Army (in German), Hoffman states, apparently on the basis of the Vlasov archives, that by May 1943 the Wehrmacht had 90 Russian battalions and almost as many national legions at its disposal. These figures are grossly inflated, and the attempt to portray the Vlasov movement as a viable alternative to Bolshevism is unconvincing in the extreme. Vlasov's formations were not composed of 'ideological fighters', so much as a mixed bag of criminals and nationalists, but mainly of people who had found themselves in a hopeless situation and were possessed by the single idea that here lay a way to survive. Vlasov's resort to such White emigres as Ataman Krasnov, General Shkuro, General Kluch and others, is eloquent testimony to the movement's ideological poverty.
It was mainly Soviet military success that undermined the Vlasov movement, dispelling as it did the depression, the panic and the apathy that had provided a rich soil for defections. Stalin, however, chose to explain the Vlasov movement as evidence that not all the 'enemies of the people' had been exposed before the war. Strict supervision was to be maintained over returnees from captivity, special measures were to be introduced at the front, with punitive action against anyone overheard voicing their doubt about their commanders' abilities.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 445

BANDERA'S GUERRILLAS KILL THOSE WORKING FOR THE GOVERNMENT

In Bandera's last attempt to keep the nationalist movement intact, terror became the common feature of life in the Western Ukraine. Local authorities loss control in the countryside. Guerrilla commanders prohibited the conscription of the local population into the Red Army. Bandera's men killed conscripts' entire families and burned their houses to establish guerrilla rule in rural areas. The climax of this campaign came with the assassination of Kostelnik on the steps of the Cathedral in Lvov while he was leaving after a religious service. The assassin was blocked by the crowd and shot himself, but he was identified as a member of the terrorist squad personally supervised by Bandera's deputy Shukheyevich, for seven years head of the Ukrainian guerrilla underground. During the war Shukheyevich held the rank of Haupsturmfuhrer in the Gestapo division that liquidated the Polish intelligentsia and the Jewish ghetto in Lvov in July 1941.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 251

We went to find Lebed's relatives, two nephews who were heading anti-communist guerrilla detachments. Lebed wanted to convince them to give up the armed struggle. Lebed's own cousin had been shot by a Bandera group for accepting an offer to become the chairman of the local kolkhoz, even though they knew that his daughter and two sons were in the anti-communist underground. The stoicism of the cousin's daughter made a deep impression on me. Although deeply depressed, she accepted the execution of her father as inevitable because he didn't obey the warnings of the resistance.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 255

The policy of repression led to a declaration of war on two fronts by the OUN, against the Red Army and against the Germans, but in reality they never attacked the Germans. In 1944

Bandera and Melnik were freed [by the Germans] and allowed to lead the armed struggle of the Ukrainian nationalists against the Red Army, which at that time was on the offensive.
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 397

BRITISH AND US PLANES GET IN FIGHTS OVER SOVIET AIRSPACE

[Footnote] Sudoplatov adds: “About once a month during the late ’40s and early ’50s American and British planes violated our airspace; in most cases they were attacked by our fighter planes, and both sides suffered heavy losses in those dogfights.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 257

STALIN JUSTIFIES THE EXCESSES OF HIS SOLDIERS

Stalin interrupted: “Yes, you have, of course, read Dostoevsky? Do you see what a complicated thing is man’s soul, man’s psyche? Well then, imagine a man who has fought from Stalingrad to Belgrade–over thousands of kilometers of his own devastated land, across the dead bodies of his comrades and dearest ones! How can such a man react normally? And what is so awful in his having fun with the woman, after such horrors? You have imagined the Red Army to be ideal. And it is not ideal, nor can it be, even if it did not contain a certain percentage of criminals–we opened up our penitentiaries and stuck everybody into the army.
Djilas, Milovan. Conversations with Stalin. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962, p. 110

STALIN PREDICTED THE FASCIST ATTACK 10 YEARS EARLIER

…When all that can be said against Stalin is piled and counted, I doubt whether anything less than the terrific drive he imposed on the USSR from 1928 onward, could ever have built a socialist state in that land. Looking back, one can see how the other leaders–Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin–led towards destruction. None of them had, I think, as Stalin had, either the insight into the People’s needs, or the guts and will that were needed.
Stalin said: “Build, or be crushed in ten years by foreign invaders.”
They built, and it stood when the foreign invasion came. So, Stalin proved right,…
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 126

Taken as a whole Stalin’s comments on world affairs comprise a wide yet unified vision of world development…. His judgments, measured and responsible, bear the imprint of serious collective thinking. Among his more immediate predictions, that of the coming of World War II proved correct. And his prediction of revolutions following the war–reminiscent of Engels’s “last great war dance” projection–also came true in Eastern Europe, China, and Korea.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 87

Hindenburg has published his declaration to the German people. The die is cast. Germany has again taken the road that leads to a revival of militarism. Another world war is inevitable…. I fear that we shall be its first victims…. The Instantsia [Foreign Office] is quite undisturbed. Koba considers that the Germans will first strike against Poland and that therefore there is no need for us to worry. We must only go on building our industries at a devil’s pace and be ready when another world war breaks out. Koba’s coolness surprises

me. Why is he certain that the Germans will attack the Poles before they attack anybody else?
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 120

So I continued to consider myself a Bolshevik; I never thought of myself as a “Stalinist.” I had been an active revolutionary for more than five years before I had ever heard the name of Stalin. When I saw photos, I did not like his face. But I found myself generally in agreement with his policies. I first doubted his statement in 1928 that the apparent capitalist stability of the 1920s was unstable and would be replaced by a period of wars and revolutions, but he turned out to be right. He also turned out to be right in other predictions and judgments; I concluded that it was foolish to evaluate a man by his looks, and that I could trust his leadership.
Blumenfeld, Hans. Life Begins at 65. Montreal, Canada: Harvest House, c1987, p. 174

WAR IS THE ONLY RECOURSE FOR HITLER

War is the only recourse for Hitler, who has no constructive program. As soon as he feels himself sufficiently armed and sufficiently supplied with allies, he will cast off his mask.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 262

STALIN DISTRUSTS REPORTS OF GERMAN AGGRESSIVE ACTS

On June 13, Marshal Timoshenko phoned Stalin to place the troops on alert. “We will think it over,” Stalin replied. The next day, Timoshenko and Zhukov came back. Stalin told them.

“You propose carrying out mobilization, alerting the troops and moving them to the Western borders? That means war! Do you two understand that or not?!’

Zhukov replied that, according to their intelligence services, the mobilization of the German divisions was complete. Stalin replied:

“You can’t believe everything in intelligence reports.”
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 235 [p. 196 on the NET]

Recalling and analyzing all of Stalin’s conversations with people close to him I have come to the firm conclusion that all his thoughts and deeds were dictated by the desire to avoid war and the confidence that he would succeed in that.

Today our attention is being concentrated, especially in popular mass publications, on the warnings received that preparations were being made for an attack on the USSR, that troops were being concentrated on our borders, and so on. But at that time, as is evident from enemy archives captured after the defeat of Nazi Germany documents of a quite different nature probably found their way to Stalin’s desk. Here is an example.

On February 15, 1941, acting on instructions from Hitler given at a conference on Feb. 3, 1941, Field Marshal Keitel, Chief of Staff of the Supreme High Command, issued a special

“Directive for Misinforming the Enemy”. In order to conceal preparations for the Barbarossa operation, the intelligence and counter-intelligence division of the General Staff evolved and carried out numerous operations in spreading false rumors and information. It was leaked out that the movement of troops to the East was part of the “greatest misinformation maneuver in history designed to distract attention from final preparation for the invasion of England.”

Maps of England were printed in vast quantities, English interpreters were attached to units, preparations were made for “sealing off” some areas along the coast of the English channel, the Strait of Dover and Norway. Information was spread about an imaginary “airborne corps”, make-believe “rocket batteries” were installed along the shore, and rumors were circulated among the troops– some to the effect that they were being sent East for a “rest” before the invasion of England, and others that they would be allowed to pass through Soviet territory to attack India. To add credibility to the version that a landing was to be made in England special operations were worked out under the code names “Shark” and “Harpoon”, the flood of propaganda was turned against England and the usual diatribes against the Soviet Union stopped; diplomats lent a hand, and so on.

Information of this kind along with the shortcomings in the general combat readiness of the Soviet armed forces explain the extreme caution Stalin displayed when it came to carrying out the basic measures contemplated in the operational-mobilization plans regarding preparations for repulsing possible aggression.

While wishing to preserve peace as the decisive condition for building socialism in the USSR, Stalin saw that the governments of Britain and the United States were doing everything possible to incite Hitler to make war on the Soviet Union, that Britain and other Western countries, being in a critical military situation and striving to save themselves from catastrophe, were extremely interested in a German attack on the USSR. That was why Stalin was so distrustful about information from Western governments that Germany was preparing to attack the Soviet Union.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 222-223

On June 13, Marshall Timoshenko phoned Stalin in my presence and asked permission to give orders for the troops of the border Districts to be alerted and the first echelons deployed according to the plans for protection. “We will think it over,” Stalin replied.

The next day we again went to Stalin and informed him of the anxiety in the Districts and the necessity of putting the troops into full combat readiness.

“You propose carrying out mobilization, alerting the troops and moving them to the Western borders? That means war! Do you two understand that or not?!”

But then Stalin asked, nevertheless: “How many divisions have we got in the Baltic, Western, Kiev, and Odessa Military Districts?”

We told him that by June 1 there would be 149 divisions….

“Well, isn’t that enough?” Stalin said. “According to our information the Germans do not have so many troops.”

I informed him that according to intelligence information the German divisions were manned and armed on a wartime footing. The strength of a division came from 14 to 16,000 men. Our divisions, even those of 8000 men, were actually only half as strong as the German divisions.

Stalin remarked: “You can’t believe everything in intelligence reports.”
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 230

We were categorically forbidden to move up any troops to the front line under the border protection plan without Stalin’s personal permission.

On June 21, in the evening, Lieutenant-General Purkayev, Chief of Staff of the Kiev Military District, telephoned to inform me that a German sergeant-major had crossed over to our frontier guards and declared that German troops were moving up to the departure areas for an attack which was to begin on the morning of June 22.

I at once informed the Commissar for Defense and Stalin what Lieutenant-General Purkayev had reported. Stalin said:

“Come to the Kremlin with the Commissar.”

Taking with me a draft of the directive for the troops, I went to the Kremlin along with the Commissar and Lieutenant-General Vatutin. On the way we agreed that at all costs we must get permission to alert the troops.

Stalin was alone when he received us. He was plainly worried.

“But perhaps the German generals sent this deserter to provoke a conflict?” He asked.

“No,” we replied. “We think the deserter is telling the truth.”

At that moment members of the Politburo came in.

“What are we to do?” Stalin asked.

No one answered.

“A directive must immediately be given to alert all the troops of border Districts,” the Commissar said.

“Read it!” Stalin replied.

I read the draft directive. Stalin said:

“It’s too soon to give such a directive–perhaps the question can still be settled peacefully. We must give a short directive stating that an attack may begin with provocative actions by the German forces. The troops of the border Districts must not be incited by any provocation, in order to avoid complications.”

Without losing time Vatutin and I went into the next room and quickly drew up a draft of the directive to be sent by the Commissar.

We then went back to the office and asked for permission to read the directive.

Stalin listened to the draft directive and then read it over again himself, making some amendments, and gave it to the Commissar to sign.

Vatutin at once took this directive to the General Staff to have it immediately transmitted to the Districts. Transmission to the Districts was completed at 00:30, June 22, 1941. A copy of the directive was forwarded to the People’s Commissar of the Naval Forces.

Timoshenko and I were returning from Stalin with some odd feeling of duality.

On the one hand, it seemed we had been doing everything we could to meet the imminent military threat with maximum preparedness: a number of large-scale organizational measures were carried out in the line of mobilization and strategy; everything possible was done to strengthen the western military districts which would have to be the first to engage the enemy; at last, we were authorized that day to issue a directive alerting the troops of the frontier military districts.

On the other hand, the German troops could pass to the offensive the next morning, while we had not completed a number of most important measures. This would seriously impede the struggle with the experienced and strong enemy. The directive that the General Staff was transmitting to the military districts at that time could come too late.

About midnight [on June 21] the commander of the Kiev District, Kirponos reported over the H. F. (high-frequency telephone) from his command post at Ternopol that another German soldier had appeared in our lines besides the deserter previously mentioned by Gen. Purkayev. He was from the 222nd Infantry Regiment of the 74th Infantry Division. Swimming across the river, he presented himself to our frontier guards and told them German forces were going to mount an offensive at 4 a.m.. Kirponos was ordered to speed up transmission to all units of the directive calling for alert status.

Everything was now pointing to the fact that German forces were moving up to the frontier. At 30 minutes past midnight we notified Stalin. Stalin inquired whether the directive had been sent to all districts. I replied in the affirmative.

Various stories have appeared after Stalin’s death to the effect that on the night of June 21 some commanders and their staffs had been either peacefully asleep or even making merry without an inkling of suspicion that anything was amiss. This is not true in fact. The ut three minutes later Stalin picked up the receiver.

I reported the situation and requested permission to start retaliation. Stalin was silent. The only thing I could hear was the sound of his breathing.

“Do you understand me?”

Silence again.

At last Stalin asked:

“Where is the Commissar for Defense?”

“Talking with the Kiev District on the H. F.”

“Go to the Kremlin with Timoshenko. Tell Poskrebyshev to summon all Politburo members.”

At 4:30 a.m. all the Politburo members were assembled. The Commissar for Defense and I were called in. Stalin, his face white, was sitting at the table cradling a tobacco-filled pipe in his hand. After some time he said:

“We must immediately phone the German Embassy.”

The Embassy replied that Ambassador Schulenburg was anxious to deliver an urgent message.

Molotov was authorized to receive the Ambassador.

Meanwhile, the First Deputy Chief of Staff, General Vatutin, had passed word that following a strong artillery barrage on several sectors in the north-western and western directions German land forces had mounted an assault.

A while later Molotov hastened into the office and said:

“The German Government has declared war on us.”

Stalin sank down into his chair and lost himself in thought.

There was a long and pregnant pause.

… “Issue a directive,” said Stalin.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 231-236

Despite German efforts at concealment and disinformation, designed to lull Soviet intelligence into thinking that the military preparations were for the war with Britain, there came during the spring of 1941 an almost endless stream of intelligence information about imminent German invasion. There were at least 84 such warnings, most probably a great many more. They were passed through the office of the head of military intelligence, General Golikov. His reports classified information as either “reliable” or “doubtful.” Most of the information on Barbarossa were placed in the second category. He suggested that much of it

was British misinformation, part of a conspiracy to drive a wedge between the two allies. Warnings sent directly from the British Prime Minister, Churchill, which were culled from decryptions of German orders, were regarded as a particularly blatant attempt at provocation. When Hitler's deputy, Rudolf Hess, made his "peace" flight to Scotland on May 10, 1941, Soviet officials regarded the whole episode as evidence that their mistrust of British motives had been right all along.
Overy, R. J. Russia's War: Blood Upon the Snow. New York: TV Books, c1997, p. 95

STALIN ORDERED THE ATTACK DIRECTIVE BE WRITTEN BUT THE ATTACK DID NOT HAPPEN

Zhukov proposed that the enemy units should be attacked immediately. Stalin told him to write up the directive, which was sent at 7:15. But "considering the balance of forces and the situation obtaining it proved plainly unrealistic—and was therefore never carried out."

[G. Zhukov, Reminiscences and Reflections (Moscow: Progress, 1985), vol. 2, p. 282]
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 246 [p. 198 on the NET]

KHRUSHCHEV LIED WHEN HE SAID STALIN ORDERED NO RETURN FIRE

Khrushchev's affirmation that Stalin had "issued the order that the German fire was not to be returned" is clearly false.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 246 [p. 198 on the NET]

NAZIS VIEWED COMMUNISTS AND MARXISTS AS THE MAIN ENEMY

Note that discussion refers to a "final solution," but not against the Jews. The first promises of a "war of annihilation" and of "physical destruction" were addressed to the Communists. And, sure enough, the Bolsheviks, the Soviets, were the first victims of mass extermination.

General Nagel wrote in September 1941:

"Unlike the diet for other prisoners (i.e. British and U.S.) we are under no obligation to feed the Bolshevik prisoners."

[Alan Clark, La Guerre à l'Est (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1966), p. 250.]
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 250 [p. 225 on the NET]

In the Auschwitz and Chemno extermination camps, "Soviet prisoners of war were the first, or among the first, to be deliberately killed by lethal injections and gassing."

[Arno Mayer, Why Did the Heavens Not Darken? The "Final Solution' in History. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988), p. 349.]

Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 250 [p. 226 on the NET]

There were 3,289,000 Soviet prisoners of war, dead in the concentration camps, “while travelling” or under “various circumstances”! When epidemics took place in the barracks of Soviet prisoners, Nazi guards only entered with flame-throwing teams when, “for hygiene reasons,” the dying and dead were burned along with their lice-ridden beds. There can easily have been 5,000,000 assassinated prisoners, if we take into account the Soviet soldiers who were “simply killed on the spot” when they surrendered.

[Alan Clark, La Guerre à l'Est (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1966), p. 251.]
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 250 [p. 226 on the NET]

Therefore the first extermination campaigns, in fact the biggest, were against the Soviet peoples, including Soviet Jews. The peoples of the USSR suffered the most and endured the greatest number of dead (23 million), but they also showed utter determination and amazing heroism.

Until the invasion of the Soviet Union, there were no large massacres of Jewish populations. At the time, the Nazis had not encountered any serious resistance. But with their very first steps on Soviet soil, these noble Germans had to face adversaries who were fighting to the last man. Right in the first weeks, the Germans suffered important losses, against an inferior race, the Slavs, worse even, against Bolsheviks! The exterminating rage of the Nazis was born in their first massive losses. When the fascist beast started to bleed under the Red Army’s blows, it dreamed up the “final solution” for the Soviet people.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 250 [p. 226 on the NET]

This reality, of the unbelievable terror that the Nazis practiced in the Soviet Union, against the first socialist country, against the Communists, is almost systematically covered up or minimized in bourgeois literature. This silence has a clear goal. Those who do not know of the monstrous crimes committed against the Soviets are more likely to believe that Stalin was a “dictator” comparable to Hitler. The bourgeoisie covers up the real anti-Communist genocide to better publicize what it has in common with Nazism: the irrational hatred of Communism, the class hatred of socialism. And to better cover up the great genocide of the war, the bourgeoisie shines the light on another genocide, that of the Jews.

In a remarkable book, Arno J. Mayer, whose father was left-Zionist, shows that the extermination of the Jews only began once the Nazis had, for the first time, suffered heavy losses. It was in June–July 1941, against the Red Army. The bestiality against the Communists, followed by the unexpected defeats that demolished the sentiment of invincibility of the Ubermenschen (Supermen), created the atmosphere that led to the Holocaust.

“The Judeocide was forged in the fires of a stupendous war to conquer unlimited Lebensraum from Russia, to crush the Soviet regime, and to liquidate international

bolshevism…. Without Operation Barbarossa there would and could have been no Jewish catastrophe, no “Final Solution’….”

[Arno Mayer, Why Did the Heavens Not Darken? The “Final Solution” in History (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988), p. 234.]
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 253 [p. 228 on the NET]

…Once the Nazis had to face the defeats on the Russian front, they decided on a “global and final solution” of the “Jewish problem” during the Wannsee conference of January 20, 1942.

For years, the Nazis had put forward their hatred of “Judeo-Bolshevism,” Bolshevism having been the worst invention of the Jews. The determined resistance of the Bolsheviks prevented the Hitlerians from finishing off their principal enemy. So the latter turned their frustrations on the Jews, whom they exterminated with blind fury.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 254 [p. 228 on the NET]

the Nazis were the greatest enemy of world communism.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 401

In Germany as in Italy, the communists endured the severest political repression of all groups.
Parenti, Michael. Blackshirts and Reds, San Francisco: City Light Books, 1997, p. 6

STALIN CONSULTED AND LISTENED TO OTHER GENERALS IN THE WAR

During the entire war, General Shtemenko worked for the Chief of Staff, first as Chief of Operations, then as under-Chief of Staff.

“I must say that Stalin did not decide and did not like to decide for himself important questions about the war. He understood perfectly well the necessity of collective work in this complex area, he recognized those who were experts on such and such a military problem, took into account their opinion and gave each their due.”

[Chtémenko, L'État-Major général soviétique en guerre (Moscow: Éditions du Progrès, 1976), vol. 2, p. 319.]
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 254 [p. 231 on the NET]

Zhukov wrote subsequently: “Today, after Stalin’s death, the idea is current that he never heeded anybody’s advice and decided questions of military policy all by himself. I can’t agree with it. When he realized that the person reporting knew what he was talking about, he

would listen, and I know cases when he reconsidered his own opinions and decisions. This was the case in many operations.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 368

But Stalin's independence was not tinged with smugness. He had a large group of advisers, and he listened to them. I personally had occasion to observe that he had great respect for technical experts, among others.
Tuominen, Arvo, The Bells of the Kremlin: Hanover: University Press of New England, 1983, p. 171

He set great store by the work of the General Staff, and trusted it implicitly. As a rule, he never adopted important decisions without first looking into the General Staff's analytic situation report and its proposals.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 349

The activity of the Supreme Command is indissolubly associated with Stalin's name. I met him often during the war. Mostly, those were formal occasions at which issues related to the conduct of the war were dealt with. But many important issues were decided at dinners to which Stalin invited his associates. What I liked about Stalin was the complete absence of formalism. Everything that he did in the framework of the Supreme Command or the State Defense Committee led to the immediate fulfillment of any decisions that these bodies may have taken. And fulfillment was closely controlled by the Supreme Commander himself or, on his instructions, by one of his subordinates.

True, such practice imposed a heavy physical burden on the members of the Supreme Command in the State Defense Committee, but people gave no heed to that during the war. Everyone did his utmost and his best. Everyone took the cue from Stalin, and the latter, despite his age, was always active and buoyant. When the war ended and his day's work became relatively routine, he seemed to grow old at once, to become less mobile, still more taciturn and thoughtful. The past war and everything related to it had a strong and visible effect on him.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 362

After Stalin's death, the idea became current that he alone took decisions on questions of a military and strategic nature. I cannot agree with this. I have already mentioned above that when someone who had a good knowledge of the matter made a report to him, he would take notice of it. I even know of cases when he changed his mind with respect to decisions previously taken. This was the case in particular, to the schedule of many operations.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 194

STALIN'S REASONS FOR NOT VISITING THE FRONT DURING THE WAR ARE JUSTIFIED

As for General Shtemenko, he directly addressed Khrushchev's accusation that Stalin, not visiting the front, could not know the realities of war.

"The Supreme Commander could not, in our opinion, visit the fronts more frequently. It would have been an unforgivably lightheaded act to abandon, even for a short period, the General Headquarters, to decide a partial question on a single front."

[Chtémenko, L'État-Major général soviétique en guerre (Moscow: Éditions du Progrès, 1976), vol. 2, p. 354.]
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 257 [p. 233 on the NET]

Hitler issued an order that 'the Kremlin was to be blown up to signalize the overthrow of Bolshevism'….

He [Stalin] was, incidentally, to remain thus voluntarily immured in the Kremlin throughout the war. Not once, so it seems, did he seek direct personal contact with his troops in the field. Trotsky in the civil war moved in his legendary train from front to front, exploring, sometimes under the enemy's fire, advanced positions and checking tactical arrangements. Churchill mixed with his soldiers in the African desert and on the Normandy beaches, cheering them with his idiosyncrasies, with his solemn words, his comic hats, his cigars, and V-signs. Hitler spent much of his time in his advanced field headquarters. Stalin was not attracted by the physical reality of war. Nor did he rely on the effect of his personal contact with his troops. Yet there is no doubt that he was their real commander-in-chief. His leadership was by no means confined to the taking of abstract strategic decisions, at which civilian politicians may excel.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 469

I have heard a variety of opinions about Stalin's personal knowledge of life at the front. In fact, as already mentioned, he visited the Western and the Kalinin Fronts in August 1943. The journey by car took two days and certainly had an impact on the morale of the troops….

In my view, Stalin as head of the Party and the country as a whole had no pressing need to make such trips. The best thing for the front and the country was his presence in the Party Central Committee and the GHQ, to which led all telephone and telegraph communications and all manner of information. Front commanders regularly reported to him on the situation at the front and on all substantial changes in that situation. Thus, the Supreme high Commander had extensive information every day, and sometimes every hour on the course of the war, the needs and difficulties of front commands; and he could, while in Moscow, make decisions properly and with dispatch.
Vasilevskii, Aleksandr M. A Lifelong Cause. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1981, p. 451

Stalin has been criticized by some observers (not generals) for not visiting his troops on the battlefield. General Shtemenko comments: 'It seems to me that Stalin could not visit the front lines more often than he did. It would have been unpardonably negligent for the Supreme Commander to lay aside overall leadership even for a time so as to decide particular problems on one of the Fronts. (In the summer of 1943 Stalin made a visit to the front lines, first to the command post of General Sokolovsky and then to that of General Eremenko.)

Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 168

SAYING THE SOVIET PEOPLE MET THE NAZIS WITH HAPPINESS OR RELIEF IS ABSURD

Certain Russian emigre circles have roundly declared that at the beginning of the war the peoples of the USSR were in a mood of 'mass defeatism' and that when the German armies marched in there was 'wild enthusiasm'. I have always firmly asserted the contrary. I can only say that I never saw it. But mine was a lonely voice raised against this notion, and my attackers had the means of dissemination at their disposal.

The idea that they [the peoples of the Soviet Union] could imagine Nazism to be better than Stalinism is fantastic, and the notion of 'mass defeatism'–of mass surrender to a 'liberating enemy' is pure moonshine. Between 'mass defeatism' and 'I do not want war' there is a great gulf. I too never wanted war, but I was not therefore a defeatist. Let me solemnly place on record that the assertion made by those emigres who carry on their loathsome work under the aegis of certain self-appointed 'liberators', the assertion that the Red Army refused to fight and that whole divisions went over to the enemy, is a plain and vulgar lie. Is it not in any case sufficiently disapproved by the defense of Leningrad, of Moscow, of Novorossisk, Sevastopol, Odessa, and Stalingrad?

Of course we had our Quisling's and our Haw-haws –I have been asked if the Vlasov movement was evidence of mass desertion. If their numbers seem large we must remember that out of hundreds and hundreds of divisions and a population of 200 million the proportion is minute. The vast majority remained completely loyal. The very nature of the Vlasov forces goes to prove my point, for they were the most heterogeneous mob that ever took the field in modern times–a medley of honest prisoners and emigre adventurers and fascists, criminals and dregs of no known origin. Vlasov himself, according to the evidence, never contemplated treachery until his capture–he had fought the Germans cleverly and bravely and was indeed largely responsible for the successful defense of Moscow; it was not until he was a prisoner that the so-called 'National Labor Union of Russian Solidarists (whom Hitler's men mockingly described as 200 percent Nazi) flocked around him and turned his head. The few genuine Soviet people who took service under him had been conditioned in Nazi camps–as were some forced recruits of other countries, by a diabolical technique of hunger training; and even among them there were some men who remained true to their ideals and who could swear that every bullet which they fired missed its mark.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 189-190

… the slowly moving crowd was laden with shapeless bundles; some carried their household goods or dragged them in their barrows. Their faces were grimly set; I don't think many of them had the vaguest notion where they were going, except that it was to the East, away from the oncoming enemy. It never entered my head that slanderers in the Western world would invent the story which has been circulated since the war, that the people of Moscow welcomed the Nazi armies.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 213

… Neither the panic among the elite nor the disorder among the masses [at the time of the Nazi approach to Moscow] ever showed any signs of provoking a widespread revolt against the regime which had made it all possible. I never heard of one single instance of a spontaneous anti-Stalinist mass demonstration, such as might have been expected in the Western world. All police control had disappeared but nowhere did one see a single anti-regime slogan chalked on a wall.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 216

NAZIS RE-OPENED THE CHURCHES BUT THE PEOPLE REMAINED LOYAL TO SOVIET POWER

It was known to Soviet Intelligence that in the occupied zones the Germans had reopened the churches. Throughout Byelorussia, the Ukraine, the Baltic lands, as well as in a part of Russia, the bells clanged again and the churches were full.

… The re-opening of the churches in 1943 [by the Soviet government] has been taken as a sign that a liberal policy towards religion was established and that there was a great return to religion in the country. Neither of these conclusions is based on sufficient evidence. The people, under the awful stresses of war, certainly found solace in religion, but it is a long way from this to a real religious revival (such as some Western radio stations have assumed in their Russian language programs). There is certainly a considerable total number of believers, but the number of unbelievers is immeasurably greater.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 251

STALIN FURIOUS OVER TREATMENT OF FORMER NAZI SCIENTIST

STALIN: And why was he [Tank–a German scientist] not given work?

TOKAEV: Generals Kutsevalov and Lukin said he was a former Nazi and so should not be given work.

Stalin's features were gripped with icy rage. His piercing eyes swept the whole company, as if to ask how such idiocy was possible. He asked me my view. I said frankly that I had never agreed with Kutesevalov or Lukin on this matter.

STALIN: And in my opinion, you were right. But where is Tank now?

TOKAEV: I do not know.

STALIN: Comrade Serov, what does all this nonsense mean? Tank came over himself, asked for work, and was turned away. Find him for me!
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 328

STALIN SAYS FASCISTS ARE NOT NATIONALISTS BUT ARE IMPERIALISTS

In order to hide their reactionary, Black-Hundred, imperialist essence from the German and other peoples, the fascists continued to commit their heinous crimes–the subjugation of the peoples abroad and of the German people at home–by calling themselves 'National Socialists'. Stalin in his speech refuted the claims of these fascists to be either socialists or nationalists. The fascists, he said, were not socialists, for they were the most vicious enemies of the working class of Germany and of other countries. Nor were they nationalists, for they were not engaged in defending Germany but, on the contrary, in subjugating other peoples in the interests of German imperialism. Hitlerites, he said, should therefore be called by their proper name, i.e., imperialists.
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 577

STALIN'S GENERALS IN 1941 LED HIM TO BELIEVE WAR IS NOT IMMINENT

Among members of the Politburo and the Soviet High Command the firm opinion was that war would be averted in 1941. Zhdanov held that Germany was taken up with war against Britain and incapable of fighting on two fronts. On March 20, 1941, Gen. Golikov, head of military intelligence, submitted to Stalin a report on German troops concentration in the borderlands, but expressed the opinion that the information must have originated from the British and German intelligence services. Early in May Adm. Kuznetsov, commanding the Soviet Navy, sent a similar report to Stalin, giving information received from the Soviet naval attache in Berlin on the imminence of war. Like Golikov, he nullified the value of the report by adding that in his opinion the information was false and planted by some foreign agency.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 319

Stalin's generals do not excuse his miscalculations at the start of the war. But in memoirs, and in other recollections, the generals assert that the blame was not only Stalin's but must be shared with the top military leadership. Marshal Zhukov, in his memoirs admits a share of responsibility for the miscalculations on invasion-Day.
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 73

STALIN TRIES TO FORESTALL AN ATTACK UP TO THE LAST MINUTE BUT STILL PREPARES

Timoshenko produced a draft directive, alerting all commands. But Stalin had not given up hope that might be a false alarm. He had the directive redrafted and finally approved its dispatch. It ordered all units on the fronts of the Leningrad, Baltic, Western, Kiev, and Odessa military districts to come to immediate readiness for a possible sudden German attack. Transmission of the directive was completed by 0030 hours on June 22, 1941. At 0400 hours the invasion began.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 321

In mid-March 1941 Timoshenko and I asked Stalin's permission to call up the inductible reserve personnel so as to update their military training in infantry divisions without delay. At first our request was declined. We were told that calling up reservists on such a scale might give the Germans an excuse to provoke a war. At the end of March, however, we were

allowed to call up 500,000 men and non-coms and send them to border military districts to augment infantry divisions there, bringing the strength of each up to at least 8000.

To dispose of this subject, I shall tell you that another 300,000 reservists were called up a few days later so as to man the fortified areas fully with specialists, as well as to augment other arms and services, general headquarters reserve artillery, engineer, signal, air defense, and Air Force logistical service troops. Thus on the eve of the war the Red Army received an additional 800,000 men.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 196

It is true that in March 1941 Stalin, grudgingly, agreed to Zhukov's request to call half a million reservists to the colors, with a further 300,000 several days later. True, too, that the frantic rearmament called for in 1940 brought new labor laws in June 1940 that lengthened the working week to seven days on, one day off.
Overy, R. J. Russia's War: Blood Upon the Snow. New York: TV Books, c1997, p. 94

In these circumstances it is not surprising that Stalin avoided as much as possible any appearance that he was preparing for immediate war. Had not Nicholas II brought about the German attack in 1914 by mobilizing his army? Considering that it was well known that Soviet military doctrine stressed the offensive, would not an increase in Soviet battle-readiness have invited a German preemptive blow? This was the sense of Stalin's response to the proposal of the narkom of defense, Marshal Timoshenko, and General Zhukov on 14 June that the Red Army should undertake full mobilization. 'That's war,' replied Stalin, 'Do you understand that or not?' Even on the evening of 21 June, by which time reports of an imminent attack had intensified, Stalin rejected the recommendation of these military men. Full wartime mobilization would be 'premature'. The question still can be settled by peaceful means', said Stalin, and he approved a compromise order that ambiguously acknowledged the possibility of German attack on 22-23 June and urged troops not to yield to 'provocation'.

…In a a few hours the German onslaught destroyed a large part of the Soviet Air Force, had penetrated the positions of forward Soviet formations and, perhaps, most important, had smashed Soviet communications, which depended heavily on vulnerable wire lines to Moscow. The first reports to reach the capital were treated as provocation, but within only about an hour Stalin had accepted Zhukov's affirmation of their validity and at 4:30 a.m. convened the Politburo. Stalin was 'pale', Zhukov recalls, and his first thought was that they must contact the German ambassador. Evidently he still hoped to find a diplomatic alternative. Within an hour or two Molotov had received what amounted to a declaration of war in the name of the Fuhrer. Stalin reacted to this news with a prolonged silence, which Zhukov broke to propose that they order the troops to fight. Stalin then approved orders for the Red Army to destroy the invader on Soviet territory, but not to pursue him to the west. As matters turned out, this was an irrelevant constraint, but it reflected Stalin's intent, even in the circumstances, of leaving open the door for a negotiated settlement.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 238

From memoirs and speeches we know that Stalin had no illusions about Hitler's Germany. Here is what he told Marshal Timoshenko, shortly before the invasion: 'If a provocation needs to be staged, Hitler's generals would bomb even their own cities. 'More to the point,

he knew that Hitler's appetite for the Ukraine had never abated. While the Fuhrer had at times disavowed what he had said belligerently about France in Mein Kampf, he never retracted the part in which he promised the German people the Breadbasket of the Ukraine….

Far from trusting Hitler, Stalin had secretly moved sizable forces up to the border before the invasion. These comprised five Russian armies, according to a former chief of the General Staff Shtemenko. In the critical days and weeks before the invasion, the following additional measures were taken to strengthen the armed forces in the border areas. Taken together these steps show, in the words of Marshal Bagramyan, that a 'titanic effort was made to prepare the nation for war'. The measures were:

1. In mid-May as many as 28 divisions started moving to border districts on General Staff directives.

2. On 27 May the General Staff ordered the western border districts 'urgently' to build up front command posts and on 10 June the Baltic, Western and Kiev Military Districts were ordered to move their front commands to the newly built posts.

3. In early June, 800,000 reservists were called up for field training and sent to reinforce the western military districts.

4. The Odessa Military District (on the Black Sea) had obtained permission to do this earlier.

5. On 12-15 June the military districts were ordered to bring their divisions closer to the border.

6. On 19 June the military districts were ordered to camouflage airfields, army units, transport, depots and other bases and to disperse the aircraft on the airfields.

7. By mid-1941, Russia's armed forces totaled more than 5 million, almost 3 times that of 1939.

8. In June instructions were issued to naval vessels to intensify patrols. Naval bases were moved to safer ports. On the eve of the invasion, the Baltic, Northern and Black Sea Fleets were placed on battle alert.
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 71-72

STALIN HONORED WITH A CEREMONIAL BRITISH SWORD AT TEHRAN

Shortly after the session of November 29 began [at Tehran], there was a brief but impressive ceremony in the conference room of the Soviet Embassy, when the Stalingrad Sword of Honor was presented. It was inscribed in English and in Russian "to the steel-hearted citizens of Stalingrad. The gift of King George VI in token of the homage of the British people." The ceremony was brief. The British lieutenant commanding the guard of honor handed the magnificent sword to Churchill, who, turning to Stalin, stating that he had been

commanded by the King to present to him the Sword of Honor for transmission to the city of Stalingrad. Birse, who was standing close to Stalin, saw that he was deeply moved as he took the sword, kissed the hilt, and handed it to Voroshilov. Unfortunately, Voroshilov fumbled and nearly dropped it, but managed to pass it to the Russian lieutenant of the ceremonial guard, Stalin spoke briefly, expressing his appreciation, and shook Churchill by the hand.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 382

CHURCHILL IS MAD ABOUT STALIN'S JOKE OF SHOOTING 50,000 GERMAN OFFICERS

On a number of occasions Stalin made teasing remarks which Churchill took in good part. But at dinner on the first evening of the conference, he was not sure at one point whether Stalin was serious or joking, and he overreacted.

Talking of the punishment to be inflicted on the Germans after the war, Stalin said that the German general staff must be liquidated and that since German military might depended on some 50,000 officers, they should all be shot. He may have been serious, but, in fact, field Marshal von Paulus and other officers, taken prisoner at Stalingrad and elsewhere, had been accorded respectful treatment.

Churchill responded vehemently that "the British Parliament and people would not tolerate mass executions." Stalin mischievously repeated that "50,000 must be shot!" Churchill blazed with anger. Eden made signs and gestures to assure him that it was all a joke, but he ignored them. Roosevelt tried to bring good humor back to the occasion by suggesting that not 50,000 but 49,000 should be shot. "I would rather," growled Churchill, "be taken into the garden here and now and be shot myself than sully my own and my country's honor by such infamy!"

At this point Roosevelt's son, Elliott, an uninvited guest who had joined the company after dinner, ineptly made a speech stating that he agreed with Stalin's plan and that he was sure the U.S. Army would support it. Churchill got up from the table and walked into the adjoining room. A minute later he felt hands clapped on his shoulder and turned to find Stalin and Molotov grinning broadly. They assured him that it had only been a joke….
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 388

SU INTELLIGENCE MISLED STALIN ON PROSPECTS FOR WAR

Marshall Zhukov, in his Reminiscences and Reflections, confirms the fact that the General Staff and military intelligence were informed of Hitler's plans. According to Zhukov, General Golikov, chief of the Soviet army's Intelligence Division, presented Stalin with a report on March 20, 1941, containing information of exceptional significance. Zhukov quotes in part from the report:

"1. On the basis of all the aforesaid statements and possible variants of operations this spring I consider that the most probable time operations will begin against the USSR is after the victory over England or the conclusion with her of an honorable peace treaty.

2. Rumors and documents to the effect that war against the USSR is inevitable this spring should be regarded as misinformation coming from the English or perhaps even the German intelligence service."

Zhukov reports that Admiral Kuznetsov, people's commissar of the Soviet navy, attached a similar comment to his report.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 738

KHRUSHCHEV LIED WHEN HE SAID STALIN WENT INTO SECLUSION WHEN WWII STARTED

In the attempts to refurbish Stalin's reputation in the years after Khrushchev's removal some authors disputed the very fact of Stalin's shameful desertion during the first days of the war. For example, Kuznetsov's memoirs assert that on June 23 Stalin "was working energetically" and that on June 24 Kuznetsov saw Stalin holding an important conference in his office at the Kremlin. Zhukov's memoirs refer to meetings with Stalin on June 26 and 29. In some other memoirs the authors claim, if not to have met with Stalin, at least to have talked with him on the phone between June 23 and June 30.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 754

It was Khrushchev in his February 1956 "secret speech" at the 20th Party Congress who first told the story of Stalin's sudden depression during the first days of the war, claiming that he had relinquished the leadership of the country….

Khrushchev himself was in Kiev at the beginning of the war and could have had little first-hand knowledge of what was actually taking place in the Kremlin….

This story–that Stalin gave up the leadership during the first days of the war–has been repeated by quite a few reputable authors, citing Khrushchev as their source. The power crisis in the Kremlin during the first week of the war also became the subject of several works of fiction. Biographies of Stalin published in the West have repeated the tale, often with additional embellishment. In the well-illustrated biography of Stalin by Jonathan Lewis and Philip Whitehead, published in Britain and United States in 1990 and used as the basis for a television series, they describe events of 22 June 1941 as established fact without making any reference to Khrushchev or Beria:

"Stalin himself was prostrate. For a week he rarely emerged from his villa at Kuntsevo. His name disappeared from newspapers. For 10 days the Soviet Union was leaderless…. On 1 July Stalin pulled himself together."

Alan Bullock, in his dual biography of Hitler and Stalin published in 1991, also asserts as fact the allegation that Stalin "suffered some kind of breakdown" and that there are "no orders or other documents signed by Stalin from 23 to 30 June." Bullock also repeats the story that members of the Politburo discussed the possibility of arresting Stalin. Even though the whole episode is a complete fabrication, it nevertheless has appeared in encyclopedias and even in such an authoritative work as the, Oxford Encyclopedia of the Second World War

published in 1995. But one has only to read the memoirs of Marshal Zhukov, where Stalin's activities, orders, and directives during the first days of the war are well documented, in order to become convinced that the story is false….

At the beginning of the 1990s the visitors' book from Stalin's Kremlin office covering the years 1924-53 was discovered in the Politburo archive. These records were kept by Stalin's junior secretaries in Stalin's office. These rather dry documents are of enormous interest to students of Soviet history, and were published in, chronological order with commentaries and explanatory notes by the journal Istorichesky Arkhiv during the years 1994-97….

The visitors' book makes it clear that on 22 June, the day that the war began, the first to appear in Stalin's office at 5:45 a.m. were Molotov, Beria, Timoshenko, Mekhlis, and Zhukov. About two hours later the gathering was joined by Malenkov, Mikoyan, Kaganovich, Voroshilov, and Vyshinsky. In the course of the day a large number of senior military, state and Party figures came and went. Meetings went on without interruption for 11 hours. It is known that more than 20 different decrees and orders were issued that day, including the text of the appeal to the Soviet people, drafted collectively and read out on the radio by Molotov. Stalin, who had not slept the night before, left earlier in the evening to have a short rest at the Kuntsevo dacha, only 15 minutes' drive from the Kremlin. But he was unable to sleep and returned to the Kremlin at 3 a.m. on 23 June in order to consult with military leaders and members of the Politburo. Meetings continued in the afternoon. Voroshilov, Merkulov, Beria, and General Vatutin (deputizing for Zhukov who had flown to the southern front) finally left Stalin's office at 1:45 a.m. on 24 June….

Activity during the next days was just as strenuous. On 26th June Stalin worked in the Kremlin from midday to midnight and received 28 visitors, mainly military leaders and members of the government. The largest number of meetings took place on Friday 27 June with 30 people coming into the office. The following day, 28 June, was similar, with the final meetings coming to an end after midnight. Stalin did not go to his Kremlin office on the Sunday; however, the assertion by two biographers, Radzinsky and Volkogonov, that this was the day Stalin fled and shut himself up in the dacha hardly corresponds to what actually happened. Both authors have rather unreliably based their conclusions on the fact that there are no entries in the Kremlin office visitors' book for 29 and 30 June. But according to Marshal Zhukov, "on the 29th Stalin came to the Stavka at the Commissariat for Defense twice and on both occasions was scathing about the strategic situation that was unfolding in the west." On 30 June Stalin convoked a meeting of the Politburo at the dacha at which it was decided to set up the State Defense Committee (GKO)….

Thus Stalin did not abandon the leadership of the country during the first days of the war, although he did push aside a large number of his Party colleagues, convinced that collective Party leadership would only have been a hindrance in wartime conditions….

If one looks at all Stalin's actions and the military decisions that were taken during the first days of the war, with hindsight it is perfectly possible to come to the conclusion that given the intensity and the power of the blow inflicted on the USSR by the German army and its allies, whose forces taken together amounted to almost 200 divisions, the tactical decision to keep the main forces of the Soviet army 200-300 kilometers from the border was absolutely correct. It was this that made it possible to carry out local counterattacks and on 26th June,

on Stalin's orders, to create a new reserve front using the 5th Army. Soon after that a new third defense line was established. The German army continued to advance but only at the price of very heavy losses.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 241-245

IN 1943 MUCH OF THE ANTI-RELIGION ACTIVITIES WERE ENDED

There is an element of truth in these assertions. Certainly in 1943 much of the previous persecution of the church was ended, many bishops and other clergy were released from confinement, hundreds of previously closed churches were opened, seminaries and an Orthodox Academy were allowed to open, and a Patriarchate was established.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 776

On Sept. 4, 1943, Stalin startled the world by his sudden rehabilitation of the Greek Orthodox Church, which, identified with the ancien regime, had been half-suppressed since the revolution. Stalin received the Metropolitan Sergius, the actual head of the Church, and after a long and friendly interview with him, decreed the restoration of the Holy Synod. The reason he gave for this act was that the Church had co-operated in the war effort and thereby proved its loyal devotion to the fatherland.

[Footnote]: 'It is very fortunate for Russia in her agony', this was Churchill's wartime verdict, 'to have this great rugged war chief at her head. He is a man of massive outstanding personality, suited to the somber and stormy time in which his life has been cast.'
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 490

On 14 September 1943 Stalin met with Metropolitan Sergei and two other hierarchs and granted them permission to convene a sobor (assembly) of the church to elect a patriarch, which had not been allowed since the death of Patriarch Tikhon in 1925. Following this reconciliation the church was granted a synod for administration, a regular publication, theological academies and religious instruction for children. The clerics gratefully hailed Stalin as 'the Supreme Leader of the Russian People', among other accolades. Thus it was appropriate that Stalin invited Metropolitan Nikolai to join him in celebrating the victory over the Germans at a reception in the Kremlin.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 265

SOVIET MASSES COULD SEE WWII COMING

In the Soviet Union, however, everyone reckons with the imminent war as with a hundred percent certainty. Our very existence, say the Soviet people, flourishing more and more from day-to-day, is so evident a refutation of all Fascist theories that the Fascist states, if they themselves would survive, must destroy us. Just as those who had been living by carrying on their crafts with primitive tools, feeling themselves threatened by machinery, banded together and senselessly stormed the machines, so will the Fascist states in the end hurl themselves against us.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 87

But the Soviet citizens know too that malicious fools are lying in wait outside their frontiers ready to attack them, and that these frontiers must be effectively protected. Therefore they go about the work of establishing their socialist economy…and they speak of the war, no longer as of a more or less probable event of the distant future, but as a very real imminent thing.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 89

To tell the truth, none of us believed that Germany would honor her treaty with the Soviet Union for long and we were sure that sooner or later she would attack us. However, the treaty gave us the time we needed so much to build up our defenses and foiled the imperialists' hopes of creating a united anti-Soviet front.
Rokossovsky, K., Ed. by Bob Daglish A Soldier's Duty. Moscow: Progress Pub., 1985, p. 8

SU TRYING TO POSTPONE THE WAR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE TO BUILD ITS STRENGTH

Nevertheless, everything is, of course, being done to postpone the outbreak of the war as long as possible, or even, contrary to all probability, to avoid it altogether….but it [the Union] knows too that the longer it can postpone the outbreak of the war, the stronger it will be and the smaller will be the sacrifice which the ultimate victory will cost.

But, having decided that this war is coming in spite of everything, indeed, that it will be there tomorrow, they are adjusting themselves to it, and this war mentality explains, as I have said, many things which would otherwise be incomprehensible.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 90

When Churchill visited Moscow in the summer of 1942, Stalin told him: 'I didn't need any warnings [of invasion]. I knew war would come, but I thought I might gain another six months or so.' Doubtless Russia would have been in a stronger position militarily if Germany had attacked in 1942.
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 71

FEW PEOPLE IN THE SU WELCOMED THE NAZIS AS LIBERATORS

But there is a persistent idea in the West, the twin of the notion that troops surrendered out of disloyalty, that civilians greeted the invaders as liberators on a grand scale. In some areas they did bring flowers or bread and salt, the traditional Slavic tokens of welcome. Collaboration quickly began in some places, and peasants disbanded the collective farms. But a good deal of specific evidence either counters the idea of a widespread reception for the Germans or shows that it did not necessarily stem from hatred of Stalinism.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 216

This evidence contradicts orthodox interpretations of Stalinism. Because the old USSR had been under it [Stalinism] considerably longer and had, in the old views, suffered "total terror" and been "crushed," response to the Germans should have been much more favorable than

in former eastern Poland, under Moscow's control less than two years. But the opposite occurred.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 220

STALIN ORDERS A COUNTERATTACK AT THE RIGHT TIME

Convinced that urgent and energetic new impulses from the center were what was needed, Stalin ordered Vatutin to formulate another order, issued that day [June 22] by the Chief War Council…and which emerged, heavily edited by Stalin, as order No. 3. It directed that…'from the Baltic to the Hungarian border, I permit the crossing of the border and action in disregard of the border.'
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 408

RETURNING CAPTURED SOLDIERS WERE INTERNED BUT COULD PROVE LOYALTY

In 1942, as in 1941, great numbers of servicemen escaped from encirclements, either in entire groups or individually. Officers were at once dispatched to special NKVD concentration camps. And since the position in July-August 1942 was that much more critical, Stalin went even further. Officers who had been in enemy-occupied territory for any length of time and had not served with the partisans, and who were now in the NKVD's special camps, should be given the chance 'to take up arms to prove their loyalty to the motherland'. Special assault rifle battalions were to be formed of precisely 929 such officers for use in the most active parts of the front.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 461

Yes, at the end of World War II, Stalin incarcerated returning Soviet prisoners of war, but now we know that most of them were released quickly after routine processing in temporary camps.
The Future Did Not Work by J. Arch Getty, Book Review of The Passing of an Illusion by Franois Furet [March 2000 Atlantic Monthly]

Prisoners of war joined the Germans largely because they had a choice of doing that or starving; of 5.1 million captured by May 1944, over 3 million had died in German hands.
Thurston, Robert W. "On Desk-Bound Parochialism, Commonsense Perspectives, and Lousy Evidence: A Reply to Robert Conquest." Slavic Review 45 (1986), 241.

STALIN FEARS ZHUKOV IS DISPLAYING NAPOLEONIC TENDENCIES

When it came to the most historic act of the war, the ratification of the German surrender, he [Stalin] evidently did not hesitate to bestow the privilege on Zhukov. Gen. Antonov was deputed to send the message and, having dictated it, Stalin stood up and shook him firmly by the hand.
Yet he had cause to think the Zhukov ungrateful, when, with Moscow's approval, the marshal gave a press conference in Berlin to Western journalists. He described in detail the preparation of the Berlin campaign, and talked about Allied cooperation, demobilization of

the Red Army, Soviet treatment of war criminals, the superiority of the German over the Japanese soldier, but he uttered not a single word about Stalin. It was left to Ralph Parker, the correspondent of The Times, to ‘rescue’ Zhukov by asking him whether Stalin had played a day-to-day part in the operations. Zhukov replied tersely that ‘Marshal Stalin led all sectors of the Soviet-German front on an active and daily basis, including the front I was on’. To Stalin, it looked as if Zhukov was beginning to exhibit Napoleonic tendencies and he saw to it that the marshal was sent off to distant and unimportant jobs when the war was over.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 469-470

CONTRARY TO PROPAGANDA STALIN DID VISIT THE FRONT DURING THE WAR

When Beria returned from his trips to the front and reported his views on the state of affairs, the bombardments, or the poor showing of some ‘suspect’ general or other, Stalin felt a certain vulnerability. He had not been near the front since October 1941, when he had gone to the Volokolamsk Highway to watch the anti-aircraft fire in the sky. Meanwhile, he had to listen to Beria and Malenkov describing their ‘baptism by fire’. He therefore determined he would go to the front, too, even if only for the sake of posterity. And a very carefully prepared trip did indeed take place. Stalin spent some time on the Western and Kalinin fronts in August 1943 and thereafter felt his image as a war leader was safe.
On 1 August 1943 he left Kuntsevo by a special trained consisting of an ancient locomotive and some broken-down carriages. Both the platform and the small train itself were camouflaged with branches. Stalin was accompanied by Beria, his special assistant, Rumyantsev, and bodyguards in plain clothes. Arriving at Gzhatsk, Stalin met the commander of the Western front, Sokolovsky, and Bulganin, who was a member of the war council. He heard their reports, wished them well, went to bed for the night and set off the next day in the direction of Rzhev, on the Kalinin front, which was commanded by Yeremenko. Here he stayed in a simple peasant hut….
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 480-481

He [Stalin] made Zhukov his most trusted military expert, and sent him at the most dramatic moment to the Battle of Stalingrad.
And when the situation in the sector was at its worst, Stalin personally appeared for several hours on the battlefield.
The words: “Stalin is with us”! spread like a forest fire from trench to trench. With new spirit, the Red soldiers fought the Wehrmacht–in the trenches, in the streets of the besieged city, in the surrounding valleys and hills.
Fishman and Hutton. The Private Life of Josif Stalin. London: W. H. Allen, 1962, p. 146

Stalin did not just concentrate on politics. He actively took part in the preparations for the Summer campaign of 1943. Kraskyn, the Press Department’s senior Press Officer, wrote the following:
“Stalin’s frequent visits to the foremost front-lines at times when the fighting was extremely fierce, when enemy bullets and grenades were virtually plastering every inch of our defense lines, and there was no protection for anyone, was definitely a clear example of the courage,

determination, and fighting spirit of a born leader…. Stalin was with his men and commanders, and managed to inject the troops with fresh fighting spirit and so turn the scales in our favor.
These frequent visits to various sectors of the front were never publicized but somehow the news spread, the people throughout the country told each other that 'The Beloved and Wise Leader' had taken active part in the "Great Patriotic War.' They pledged themselves to give him every support.
Fishman and Hutton. The Private Life of Josif Stalin. London: W. H. Allen, 1962, p. 148

After visiting a front sector in the summer of 1943, he [Stalin] hastened to inform the Allied leaders of the event, writing to President Roosevelt: 'Only now, on returning from the front, can I reply to your last message… I am having to make more personal visits to various sectors of the front and to subordinate everything else to the needs of the front…. In the circumstances, you will completely understand that at this moment I cannot depart on any journey… to fulfill my promise [to meet Roosevelt in the region of the Bering Straits].'
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Autopsy for an Empire. New York: Free Press, c1998, p. 148

In the spring of 1991, there appeared on TV for two hours former general Volkogonov (a strange anti-communist renegade who wrote books in Russia and in America, full of caustic calumny and lies regarding Stalin and socialism–editor.) Volkogonov stated that Stalin made only one trip to the front, only once did the Commander-in-Chief leave Moscow, stopping 50 kilometers from the front, slept on a soft bed, met Commanders in order that he could write to Churchill & Roosevelt how he was in the thick of the fighting at the front.
This General-Historian wrote a huge book dedicated to the Stalin 'terror,' called "Triumph and Tragedy."… Let me, a person who was with Stalin all through the war years, let me state what really happened. This is confirmed by my friends, who together were bodyguards around Stalin.
Let me quote the source, Volkogonov himself: "The top leader, for the first time, smelled its deadly odor, stood a while and then on a lark decided that he would, on this October morning, also go to the front."
But facts state the following, that Stalin had those thoughts before any of the Politburo leaders. According to Volkogonov, Stalin just listened to some minor commanders, and then came back. On his return, according to Volkogonov, Stalin's car went into a ditch. The cavalcade went. Stalin did not stay. Stalin was moved by Beria into another car and off they went. Thus, the trip to the front was accomplished.
But this is the way it was, since I was present there….
In August of 1941, Stalin and Bulganin were going at night to the district of Maloyaroslavets in order to see the actual front and the fighting going on….
At the end of October, Stalin and Voroshilov went to see the 16th Army of General Rokossovsky where they saw the operations of the rocket "Katuysha" launchers. Then the Germans started shelling us here, so that we had to immediately get onto the highway. Of course, German aviation then started to bomb the place from where the "Katuyshas" were shelling them, salvo after salvo…. Our automobile was covered with mud, flak, bullet holes… in this way, we returned to Moscow.
During the summer of 1942, Stalin went to the Western Front, across the river Lamoi and together with commanders, looked at the dogfights in the air, going over a pontoon bridge with Tukov and Khrustalev, he then proceeded to go back to the Kremlin.

Stalin also went to many points of the front, of course in secret, since the enemy was always on the lookout for the whereabouts of Stalin. From Marshal Sokolovsky, Stalin went to Yukhnov to see Marshall Voronov and his artillery. Going to the woods, everything was quiet, you could hear birds singing, Stalin sadly remarked:
How peaceful it is…. You cannot believe that outside these woods, there is death and people are dying….
At a designated stop, a train was waiting at Yukhnov where Stalin met General Yeremenko. The meeting took place in the village of Khoroshevo. Here, we found Beria trying as always to get into the good graces of Stalin, requisitioning a good bed, fancy coverings, pillows, etc.. Stalin always told him to take it back where he got it and slept with his Army greatcoat on as the common soldiers slept.
(Here, we shall not quote any more from Volkogonov, since the lies and untruths are repeated in various different scenarios in this book and it is not that important to dwell on this traitor, who sold out and besmirched his country in the pay of foreign powers!–Editors)
I feel that now, the reader can understand the differences between eyewitnesses and second-hand accounts, or just plain lies. Volkogonov could not have known all the important details, known only to us, the eyewitnesses. Then why the lies that Stalin did not meet even commanders of the front? Then with whom did he meet while seeing Sokolovsky, Voronov, and Yeremenko? This is sheer stupidity. How can this traitor state about Stalin that: He was incompetent, that catastrophic decisions were made, and not caring about the dying soldiers. All these lies are not diminishing Stalin's leadership… the opposite is true, they show him to be a great leader and his strategic knowledge complemented that of his Marshals and Generals.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 38-41

During the heaviest fighting of the Great Patriotic War, the other government dacha was utilized near Semenovsk. Stalin rarely used this dacha, but the front, the South-Western fighting was near this dacha, close to 110 kilometers from Moscow. This was designated by Stalin to be a hospital and Stalin many times went there to talk and visit the Red Army men who were being treated there.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 106

Reports published since the end of World War II showed that Stalin visited all sections of the front in his armored train and took a personal hand in the preparation of all major actions.
Duranty, Walter. Stalin & Co. New York: W. Sloane Associates, 1949, p. 87

Throughout the hostilities, except when he traveled to Yalta and Teheran to confer with the Allied leaders or when he made a much-publicized trip to the proximity of the front, Stalin stayed in Moscow or its environs. And he worked himself like a dog.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 435

It was just after the victory at Kursk that Stalin on 3 August 1943 undertook his only look at the front. His exact itinerary is unclear, but he definitely went to the small city of Yunkov on the Roslavl highway, about 200 km west and somewhat south of Moscow. Here he summoned two senior commanders and told them twice over that they must plan to

recapture Smolensk, a point that he could easily have made by wire. Stalin's motivation for the trip seems to have been personal curiosity, not propaganda, for it was not publicized at the time.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 250

STALIN'S HEALTH GOT WORSE AFTER WWII

I [Budu] understand that many accounts published in the United States have reported that the strain of the Yalta Conference took a heavy toll on President Roosevelt, already ailing; but few people realize that it was almost equally hard on Stalin. I was able to see at firsthand the effect the meeting had had on my Uncle Joe during the time I spent with him at the Soukssa sana.
I found Stalin terribly aged. His exacting work during the war, the sleepless nights, the overexertion, had left deep traces on his face. He walked slowly. His eyes no longer possessed that yellow glitter which had once been their most noticeable feature.
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 216

At the Potsdam Conference in July, 1945, he had suffered a rather bad heart attack and his doctors had forbidden him either to speak at the reviews in the Red Square or to pass the winter in Moscow. He had to spend the entire cold season at his Black Sea villa at Sochi.
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 226

"His last year's were very gloomy. When the war was over he fell apart and became very ill. They thought that he would die. But this was a state secret–they didn't even tell me at the time. I had no idea what was wrong. I was ordered not to telephone even. The war had taken a lot out of him."
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 210

YALTA DID NOT GIVE THE SU AND STALIN ANYTHING THEY DID NOT ALREADY HAVE

It is not true that Yalta gave Stalin authority to subjugate the Baltics, Balkans, and large parts of Poland and Eastern Europe. Yalta couldn't have given this permission to the Soviets, for they already had these countries in their possession when the Yalta summit began.
Nisbet, Robert A. Roosevelt and Stalin. Washington, D.C. : Regnery Gateway, c1988, p. 69

SU AND STALIN QUITE GENEROUS AT YALTA

It would be sad to end this part of the chapter without citing a memorandum that Hopkins wrote and passed over to the President during a final session at Yalta. An altercation among the three powers arose concerning German reparations. Pressure seemed to be growing on Stalin to join Churchill and Roosevelt on a point. Hopkins wrote (the memorandum is reprinted in facsimile in Sherwood's Roosevelt and Hopkins on page 860) to FDR: "The Russians have given us so much at this conference that I don't think we should let them down."
Nisbet, Robert A. Roosevelt and Stalin. Washington, D.C. : Regnery Gateway, c1988, p. 77

From the pre-atomic perspective of February 1945 the Yalta Far Eastern agreements appeared favorable to the United States. Stalin got little that he could not have taken by force, and he might have taken more had he chosen to declare war against Japan unilaterally. When this observation is at last reached, the meaning of Yalta to contemporaries comes through in stark fashion. Given the military realities of the moment–the Red Army flooding over Eastern Europe and standing on the 0der 35 miles from Berlin, while the smaller Western Armies, recovering from the Ardennes debacle, were to the far side of the Rhine–there was no earthly reason for Stalin to continue to cooperate with his Western allies. Tantalizing evidence suggests not only that the Russian dictator could have had his Red Army take Berlin during the Yalta Conference, but that he inhibited his troops from making such an effort…. Stalin seemed impressively restrained as well as reasonable at Yalta. He could have laid a series of Diktats on the conference table regarding Eastern Europe, he could have refused to discuss plans for entry into the war against Japan, refused to discuss reparations, and claimed anything he wished as booty. A look at the map and the Red Army's positions would have shown any reasonably well-informed citizen in the West in February 1945 that Stalin had no need to bind himself to commitments or ties with the Grand Alliance. But the marshal had made commitments; he had desired continuation of the Grand Alliance.
Rose, Lisle Abbott. After Yalta. New York: Scribner, 1973, p. 25

For at the Crimea, Stalin had agreed to the establishment of American weather stations in Siberia, to the creation of large American air installations along the Amur River in the Soviet Maritime Provinces, and to an American naval base on Kamchatka.
Rose, Lisle Abbott. After Yalta. New York: Scribner, 1973, p. 65

Roosevelt and his entourage had been delighted with Stalin's concessions.
Rose, Lisle Abbott. After Yalta. New York: Scribner, 1973, p. 65

In the final meeting at Yalta, the whole question of reparations seemed to have reached a deadlock. It was decided that the matter should be referred to an Inter-Allied Commission to be set up in Moscow, but it seemed impossible to agree on the terms of the basic directive on which the Commission would proceed. During the argument, Hopkins wrote the following note and passed it to Roosevelt: "The Russians have given in so much at this conference that I don't think we should let them down. Let the British disagree if they want to….
Sherwood, Robert E. Roosevelt and Hopkins. New York: Harper, 1948, p. 861

ROOSEVELT SAID AT YALTA THAT STALIN WAS NO IMPERIALIST

As a faithful apostle of Woodrow Wilson he [Roosevelt] believed that imperialism of the British-French kind was the greatest enemy of democracy. "Of one thing I am sure, Stalin is not an imperialist," he exclaimed at Yalta.
Nisbet, Robert A. Roosevelt and Stalin. Washington, D.C. : Regnery Gateway, c1988, p. 96

STALIN STALLED AND PROLONGED WWII AS LONG AS HE COULD BY EVERY MEANS POSSIBLE

But Stalin was acting only from immediate motives of security, without pursuing expansion for its own sake; and as Germany was not moving into the Balkans, he did not move either…. His purpose now was to win time, time, and once again time, to get on with his economic plans, to build up Russia's might and then throw that might into the scales when the other belligerents were on their last legs.
[Footnote]: 'Lastly we require time', Stalin had said at the Congress in March 1939. 'Yes, Comrades, time. We must build new factories. We must train new cadres for industry. But this requires time, and no little time at that. We cannot outstrip the principal capitalist countries economically in two or three years'.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 438

STALIN ALLOWS HIS GENERALS TO MAKE THEIR OWN DECISIONS

In the first phase of the war the army paid a heavy price for, among other things, the loss of self-reliance which its commanding staffs had suffered as a consequence of the purges. The warning was not, however, wasted on Stalin. He had the sense to give back to his generals their freedom of movement, to encourage them to speak their mind, to embolden them to look for the solution of their problems by way of trial and error, and to relieve them from fear of the boss's wrath, a fear which weighed so heavily on Hitler's generals. He [Stalin] punished his officers with draconic severity for lack of encourage or vigilance; he demoted them for incompetence, even when the incompetents happened to be Voroshilov and Budienny; and he promoted for initiative and efficiency. Hitler's generals had a shrewder appreciation of Stalin's method than Hitler himself when they said that the top rungs of the Russian ladder of command 'were filled by men who had proved themselves so able that they were allowed to exercise their own judgment, and could safely insist on doing things in their own way'.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 494

It is nevertheless true that, like Hitler, Stalin took the final decision on every major and many a minor military issue. How then, it may be asked, could the two things be reconciled: Stalin's constant interference with the conduct of the war, and freedom of initiative for his subordinates? The point is that he had a peculiar manner of making his decisions, one which not only did not constrict his generals, but, on the contrary, induced them to use their own judgment. Hitler usually had his preconceived idea–sometimes it was a brilliant conception, sometimes a bee in his bonnet –which he tried to force upon a Brauchitsch a Halder or a Rundstedt. For all his [Hitler] so-called dilettantism, he was a doctrinaire in matters of strategy, impatient with those who could not see the merits of his particular dogma or plan. Not so Stalin. He had no strategic dogmas to impose upon others. He did not approach his generals with operational blue-prints of his own. He indicated to them his general ideas, which were based on an exceptional knowledge of all aspects of the situation, economic, political, and military. But beyond that he let his generals formulate their views and work out their plans, and on these he based his decisions. His role seems to have been that of the cool, detached, and experienced arbiter of his own generals. In case of a controversy between them, he collected the opinions of those whose opinion mattered, weighed pros and cons, related local viewpoints to general considerations and eventually spoke his mind. His decisions did not therefore strike his generals on the head–they usually sanctioned ideas over which the generals themselves had been brooding. This method of leadership was not

novel to Stalin. In the early 20s he came to lead the Politburo in an analogous way, by carefully ascertaining what were the views of the majority and adopting these as his own. Similarly, the generals were now receptive to his inspiration, because he himself was receptive to their thoughts and suggestions. His mind did not, like Hitler's, produce fireworks of strategic invention, but his method of work left more room for the collective invention of his commanders and favored a sounder relationship between the commander-in-chief and his subordinates than that which prevailed at the 0berkommando der Wehrmacht.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 495

This is not to say that Stalin simply followed the majority of his commanders. Even that majority was, in a sense, of his own making. In the depths of defeat he radically renewed and rejuvenated the high commanding staffs. He brushed aside all sterile pretensions of seniority and paid attention only to performance in battle. Nearly all his famous marshals and generals held subordinate positions or were juniors when war broke out. The basic selection of the new military elite took place during the battle of Moscow, when Zhukov, Vasilevsky, Rokossovsky, and Voronov came to the fore. It continued with the battle of Stalingrad, in which Vatutin, Yeremenko, Malinovsky, Chuikov, Rotmistrov, Rodimtsev, and others made their names. It was nearly completed during the battle of Kursk, the turning-point in the meteoric career of the young Cherniakovsky, who within three years rose from major to army general.. These men, nearly all in their 30s or 40s, unhampered by the deadweight of routine, avidly learned in the hard school of battle until they became their enemies' equals and then superiors.
[Footnote]: Stalin's method of work is quite well illustrated in the following quotation which describes–in a too popular and simplified manner but correctly in substance–his intervention in one of the more important episodes of the Stalingrad battle, the disagreement between Vasilevsky and Rokossovsky over whether they should strike first at von Paulus or at Manstein. The disagreement had been referred to Stalin. Rokossovsky protested against the diversion of Malinovsky's army, which had been placed under his orders, for the operation against Manstein. Stalin sounds the views of other generals:
Moscow General Headquarters.
Stalin (speaks over the phone): What is your opinion? Turn against Manstein? Thank you. (Puts down receiver and calls again). Hallo… There is a proposal from Vasilevsky that we should dispose finally of Manstein. It is proposed that Malinovsky's army be used for that. What is your opinion? To leave it with Rokossovsky? Thank you. (Puts down the receiver and calls again.) Vasilevsky proposes to shift Malinovsky's army and to assign it to Yeremenko in order to route Manstein. Your opinion? (Listening) No, that's no answer. Yes or no? You would like to think it over? All right.
In the end Stalin sides with Vasilevsky and orders the attack on Manstein.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 496

Stalin did not make Hitler's mistakes; he never interfered in the tactical dispositions of the generals. It was for them to execute the variations on the given theme. Also, he never undervalued the courage of his enemies. Speaking of Mannstein, he said: "If he had not been one of Hitler's generals I would have made him the senior professor of our Military Academy."
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 342

Having assumed responsibility for the change in the deployment, as provided for in the Supreme Command's directive, I nevertheless reported in to the Supreme Commander. After listening to my arguments Stalin said:
"Do as you think better, you're in a better position to judge on the spot."
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 354

STALIN WAS HELD HIGH AND LOVED BY SOVIET PEOPLE AFTER WINNING THE WAR

Stalin [at the end of the war] now stood in the full blaze of popular recognition and gratitude. Those feelings were spontaneous, genuine, not engineered by official propagandists. Overworked slogans about the 'achievements of the Stalinist era' now conveyed fresh meaning not only to young people, but to skeptics and malcontents of the older generation. The nation was willing to forgive Stalin even his misdeeds and to retain in its memory only his better efforts. Since nothing succeeds like success, even his errors and miscalculations, including those in 1939-41, now looked to many like acts of prudent statesmanship.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 549

STALIN SAYS THE ARMY IS THE ONLY POWER THAT CAN RESTRAIN THE ROTTEN THIRD REICH

[Stalin stated], "The Army is the only power in this rotten Third Reich that can restrain Hitler from aggression."
Alexandrov, Victor. The Tukhachevsky Affair. London: Macdonald, 1963, p. 25

STALIN DID NOT PLAY FAVORITES WITH HIS SUBORDINATES

The "Horse Marshals" commanded in 1941–all three from the old First Cavalry Army. Timoshenko, in the center proved reasonably competent, though he, too, suffered heavy losses. On the southern and northern flanks, Budenny and Voroshilov were merely catastrophic, especially the former. Stalin's other protege, Marshall Kulik, came to grief in a clumsy operation before Leningrad. General Tyulenev became involved in the disasters in the Ukraine. All four were removed, but none was shot (except, apparently, Kulik, but only after the war). As late as 1957, Tyulenev was defending Stalin's Lwow operations of 1920, the old wound in the side of the Soviet Army which had festered so long and so desperately.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 455

[Stalin said to Voroshilov], "I don't want to hurt you, Klim, I'm fond of you. Only this disorder and confusion gets on my nerves. Besides, you know as well as I do that it is no use appearing too gentle with the military. A moment's weakness is enough to settle one's fate."
Alexandrov, Victor. The Tukhachevsky Affair. London: Macdonald, 1963, p. 61

The reorganization of the Red Army had been started after the Winter War, with the sacking of Voroshilov as Defense Commissar and his replacement by Timoshenko on May 7.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 474

Around 4 p.m., he [Stalin] came to the courtyard that was fenced in. They [Stalin's friends, Voroshilov, Kirov, and Kalinin] played at their sport. It made no difference whether I played with Stalin or Voroshilov. There were no differences in rank for the bodyguards or the members of the government. On the playing field, we were all treated the same.
The losers were made to sit under the table, while the winners would bang with anything hard on the table, over the heads of the losers. Many times, Stalin had to sit with me underneath the table and have the banging penetrating our ears. All this was in great fun and comradely enjoyment.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 7

Stalin always invited his bodyguards, his friends, or his housekeeper to fish, or to the table… everything always went harmoniously with no commands to obey.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 9

In the middle of April 1940 a special session of the Central Committee and the Main Military Council met to consider steps to improve Soviet fighting power. Voroshilov, who had been a dominant voice as Defense Commissar for 15 years, was subjected to a hostile cross-examination. Stalin dismissed what he called "the cult of admiration for Civil War experience" and finally sacked his Civil War comrade,… In his place Stalin appointed Timoshenko, who had brought the Finnish fiasco to a satisfactory close.
Overy, R. J. Russia's War: Blood Upon the Snow. New York: TV Books, c1997, p. 82

Stalin also sanctioned the arrest of Molotov's wife, the brother of Kaganovich, two sons of Mikoyan, and the wife of Poskrebyshev.
Medvedev, Roy. On Stalin and Stalinism. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 150

It is, of course, a blatant lie that Stalin did not distinguish between personal and political power or interchanged the two.
THUS SPAKE KAGANOVICH by Feliks Chuyev, 1992

Stalin also joined Zhdanov in condemning violations of party democracy, especially co-optation and "familyness"–that is the appointment to party offices of "personal friends, fellow townsmen, people who have shown personal devotion." Familyness discouraged constructive criticism and self-criticism and created conditions that provided family members with "a certain independence both of the local people and of the Central Committee of the party." To eliminate that practice and other problems that beset the party bureaucracy, Stalin advocated "still another kind of verification, the check-up from below, in which the masses, the subordinates, verify the leaders, pointing out their mistakes and showing the way to correct them. This kind of verification is one of the most effective methods of checking up on people."
Stalin made a point of telling party leaders that their positions did not make them omniscient and that they needed to heed the criticism and advice of the party masses, of the "little people." He also condemned the "formal and heartless bureaucratic attitude of some of our party comrades toward the fate of individual party members" expelled from the party: "Only people who in essence are profoundly anti-party can have such an approach to members of the party."

Chase, William J., Enemies Within the Gates?, translated by Vadim A. Staklo, New Haven: Yale University Press, c2001, p. 220.

STALIN ORDERED FRONTIER TROOPS NOT TO GIVE NAZIS ANY EXCUSE TO ATTACK FIRST

Whatever happened, he [Stalin] had ordered, Soviet frontier forces must not allow themselves to be provoked into firing at the Germans: under no circumstances was Hitler to be given the opportunity of branding the Soviets as aggressors.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 2

But a number of Stalin's top generals admit that there were reasons for extreme caution prior to the invasion. Stalin did not wish to give Hitler a pretext for attacking him.
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 69

It was the opinion of the US ambassador Harriman, who probably had more meetings with Stalin than any other Western leader, that he was obsessed with the danger of premature mobilization of his troops. Stalin, he said, was unable to forget the consequences of hasty mobilization that caused Russia to stumble into World War I….
Mobilization of a country's armed forces is an extreme measure and the act itself can provoke war. The story of Tsarist Russia's early mobilization on the eve of World War I is a gem of tragi-comedy. Stalin, an avid student of history (George Bernard Shaw once said that Stalin and 'won a point' against HG Wells on an event in British history), and no doubt studied the incident in detail.
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 172

NAZI INVASION OF THE SU WAS FAR LARGER THAN NORMANDY INVASION FORCES

Between the Baltic and the Black Sea, the German forces were arranged in three massive army groups, comprising seven armies, four Panzer groups and three air fleets. Poised on the frontiers, waiting for dawn to break, were no fewer than 3,200,000 men – 148 divisions, including 19 Panzer divisions and 12 motorized infantry divisions, with 600,000 trucks, 750,000 horses, 3580 armored fighting vehicles, 7184 artillery pieces and 1830 aircraft. It was indeed an awesome array of force – by comparison, the Allied invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944 landed a first wave of six seaborne divisions and three airborne, a grand total of nine divisions containing some 75,000 British and Canadian troops and 57,000 Americans, along a front of less than 50 miles, as opposed to one of nearly 1000 miles.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 3

The Hitlerite leadership was sending to the Soviet front more and more allied troops. On the front line extending from the Barents Sea to the Black Sea Nazi Germany and its allies had 217 divisions and 20 Brigades…. The absence of the second front permitted Germany to keep only 20 percent of its armed forces on all other fronts and in the occupied countries.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 363

“The invasion of Normandy across the Channel in June, 1944 began in easy conditions and proceeded without any great resistance by German forces on the coast– something that we certainly had not expected. The Germans in fact did not have the defenses they had been boasting of.”
“And what actually was the ‘Atlantic Wall’ like?” I asked Eisenhower.
“Along the entire length of the ‘Wall’,” Eisenhower replied, “there were no more than 3000 guns of different calibers. On the average this was a little over one gun per kilometer. There were only a few concrete fortifications equipped with artillery and they could present no obstacle for our troops.”
The weakness of the “Wall” was quite frankly admitted by the former Chief of the General Staff of the German Army, Colonel-General Halder. In his memoirs published in 1949 he wrote: ” Germany had no defenses against the landing force of the Allies which attacked under cover of aviation which was fully and entirely dominant in the air.”
According to Eisenhower, the chief difficulties in the Normandy landing and in the advance of the Allied forces were presented not by German resistance, but by the shipment of troops across the Channel and their material supply.
Frankly speaking, I was somewhat puzzled when in 1965 I saw the American film “The Longest Day.” It shows a completely different enemy, than the one Eisenhower described, talking about the June 1944 landing of Allied troops. Of course, the present-day political lining of this technically well-produced film is easily understandable, but after all there has got to be a limit somewhere.
After the successful landing of the main Expeditionary Force the Germans did not put up any major resistance until July 1944 when they re-grouped their forces against the Expeditionary troops from the coast of Northern France. But even then they were neutralized by the greatly superior Allied land and air forces. On that front there were no Allied offensive operations in the full sense of the word, no operations involving penetration of a deeply organized defense or battle against strategic reserves and counter-offensives as was the case on the Soviet-German front.
With but few exceptions, the offensive operations carried out by the American and British troops proceeded in the form of pursuit of mobile enemy defense. According to Eisenhower, organization of supplies and construction of communication routes over unfavorable terrain presented the main difficulties to the advancing Allied forces.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 682-683

Rundstedt said frankly: “I thought the invasion would come across the narrower part of the Channel, between La Havre and Calais–rather than between Caen and Cherbourg [the Normandy Coast].
I asked Rundstedt his reasons for this calculation. He replied: “The Somme-Calais area seemed to us so much better, strategically, from your point of view–because it was so much closer to Germany. It was the quickest route to the Rhine. I reckoned you could get there in four days.”
His reasoning suggested that his calculation was governed by a preconceived view, based on the assumption that the Allies would take what was theoretically the best line, regardless of the practical difficulties. I remarked to him that, for the same reasons, it was likely to be the most strongly defended sector–surely a good reason why the Allies were likely to avoid it.

He admitted the point but answered: “The strength of the defenses were absurdly overrated. The ‘Atlantic Wall’ was an illusion, conjured up by propaganda–to deceive the German people as well as the Allies. It used to make me angry to read the stories about its impregnable defenses. It was nonsense to describe it as a ‘wall.” Hitler himself never came to visit it, and see what it really was.
Hart, Liddell. The German Generals Talk. New York: W. Morrow, 1948, p. 236

According to Stalin’s calculation, Hitler had 240 divisions on the Soviet-German front towards the end of 1942 (including Finnish, Italian, and Hungarian divisions). The more precise figures provided by Zhukov show that in November 1942 the Germans had 266 divisions on the Soviet-German front comprising a total of 6.2 million men….
Medvedev, Roy. On Stalin and Stalinism. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 140

The economy and resources for the first blow [of the Germans] were also much more powerful, because the enemy had almost the entire military potential of Europe in his hands.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 412

“And what in fact was the ‘Atlantic Wall’ like?” I asked Eisenhower.
“There was actually no ‘Wall’ at all.” Eisenhower replied.
“There were the usual trenches, and those did not run in a continuous line. There were no more than 3000 guns of different caliber along the entire length of the ‘Wall’.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 457

Incidentally, the weakness of the “Wall” was quite frankly admitted by the former Chief of General Staff of the German Ground Forces, Col.-General Halder. In his memoirs published in 1949 he wrote: ” Germany had no defenses against the landing of the Allies which attacked under cover of aviation which was fully end entirely dominant in the air.”
According to Eisenhower, the chief difficulties in the invasion of Normandy lay in landing the troops across the Channel and their material supply. As for the German resistance, it was insignificant there.
Frankly speaking, I was somewhat puzzled when in 1965 I saw the American film “The Longest Day. This film, based on the historical fact–the invasion of Normandy by the Allied Forces across the Channel in June 1944–shows the enemy to be far stronger than it actually was. The political leaning of this film is easily understandable… but after all there has got to be a limit somewhere.
The Germans did not put up in the major resistance to the Expeditionary Force until July 1944 when they transferred their Forces from all over the coast of Northern France. But even then it was rebuffed by the greatly superior Allied land and air forces. There were–and there could be–no Allied offensive operations in the full sense of the word, no operations involving penetration of a deeply organized defense or fighting against operational reserves and counterattacks as was the case on the Soviet-German front simply because there were no major opposing enemy forces there.
According to Eisenhower, establishing communication routes over unfavorable terrain presented the main difficulty to the advancing Allied forces.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 458

At last in the summer of 1944 the Western allies were ready to open the second front Massive German forces remained in the East, 228 divisions as compared to the 58 facing Eisenhower and Montgomery.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 469

HITLER OPENLY ADMITS HIS WAS FOCUSED ON THE SU FIRST

… Burckhardt [a politician who met with Hitler] flew to his home in Basel, Switzerland, called the British and French ministers from Berne, and duly passed on the information [from Hitler]. What he did not tell them, however, was Hitler's final statement – partly because he did not fully appreciate its significance.
"Everything I am doing is directed against Russia," he had said in parting. "If the West is too obtuse to grasp this, then I shall be forced to come to terms with the Russians and turn against the West first. After that I will direct my entire strength against the USSR. I need the Ukraine, so that nobody can ever starve us out again, as they did in the last war." It was one of the very few occasions when Hitler told a foreign politician the truth.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 184

STALIN WAS A PHYSICALLY FIT LEADER AT THE START OF WWII

General Kostring, the German military attache, who had been born in Moscow, had spent much of his life in Russia, and spoke Russian as easily as German, was in a particularly expansive mood.
[He stated in August 1939] "There have been endless rumors that Stalin is at death's door," he warned the visitors. "Such a sick man that he's only a figurehead…. Don't you believe it! The man is both absolutely fit and possesses a tremendous capacity for work." Stalin, he pointed out, was interested primarily in the Far East as a field for the expansion of Soviet influence. In the west, he rarely wanted a secure border.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 249

STALIN IS OUTSMARTING HITLER WHEN HITLER THINKS HE IS THE SMARTER ONE

According to Khrushchev, Stalin had a much more cynical sales pitch for him and the other members of the Politburo that day [Aug. 24, 1939], one which was a much more accurate reflection of the realpolitik of his thinking. "Of course, it's all a game to see who can fool whom," he told them. "I know what Hitler's up to. He thinks he's outsmarted me – but actually it's I who have outsmarted him!"
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 291

"Please understand, Stalin," I said, "if Hitler wins, we're finished…. Others may be able to buy themselves out… they may come to some arrangement… they may divide the world among themselves… with us it's different…. As soon as there is no danger of a second front Hitler will put us down… or he will eat us up… Tertium non datur…" The Latin quotation made him [Stalin] smile. "You haven't forgotten your Latin," he said, adding, "Have

confidence in me, Papasha… don't be afraid… I can dupe anybody… even Hitler…. In the Tiflis market I always managed to get the better even of Armenian traders… and they are tougher to deal with than any Hitler or Chamberlain…"
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 254

Every intelligent reader of the world press realized that Hitler and Stalin were out to cheat one another as soon as possible, when they concluded their pacts. What everybody does not know, however, is that Stalin stands a far better chance of winning the great game.
Ludwig, Emil. Three portraits: Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin. New York Toronto: Longmans, Green and Company, c1940, p. 123

NAZIS UNDERESTIMATED SOVIET MILITARY STRENGTH

None of the generals tried to press their doubts and misgivings on Hitler any further. On February 3, 1941, at noon, they all attended a conference with him in the Chancellery, to discuss the army's operational directive for the campaign in the east. Halder, who had the task of presenting the plan, said nothing to dissuade Hitler. On the contrary, he gave him reassuring news about intelligence assessments of Soviet strength: it was believed there would be only 155 Soviet divisions facing more or less the same number of German, who were "far superior in quality." And though they estimated Soviet tank strength at about 10,000, compared with the German total of 3500, the Soviet tanks were believed to be mostly old and obsolete models.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 555

In this area, Halder was a little more cautious: "Even so, surprises cannot be ruled out," he warned. Had he but known, there were indeed some surprises to come, for although total Soviet production of the superb new T-34 medium tank and the KV heavy tank during the whole of 1940 had amounted to only 115 and 234 respectively, during the first six months of 1941 the Soviet factories produced over 1000 T-34's and 393 KVs. What was more, the estimated number of Red Army divisions on the Soviet western front had to be amended to 247 in April, and when fighting started at least 360 were identified.
Hitler readily agreed with the poor impression Halder had of Soviet arms and production, however. He treated the generals to a 10-minute statistical lecture on Soviet tank production since 1928, rattling off figures and specifications from memory. Unfortunately, the manuals and reports he had memorized were all either faulty or out of date. His figures proved conclusively how thinly armored and poorly equipped all the Soviet tanks were; in reality, the new models were so strong that no German anti-tank gun was effective against them.
Lack of good, accurate intelligence was a constant problem for the Germans in their planning against the Soviets. "It would be easier for an Arab in flowing burnous to walk unnoticed through Berlin, than for a foreign agent to pass through Russia!" General Kostring, the military attache in Moscow, told Abwehr chief Admiral Canaris. And since any Soviet citizen who showed any sign of dissent soon found himself in the gulags, the opportunities for recruiting local agents were few and far between. With reliable information so scarce, the intelligence assessors tended always to belittle Soviet abilities,…
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 556

Stalin was undoubtedly aware from agents of the GRU, his military intelligence agency, that German intelligence consistently underestimated Soviet military strengths. Johnny Herwarth, who spent January and February of 1941 on assignment to the Luftwaffe High Command's Reconnaissance Division, was particularly struck by the number of assessment papers which had been written by Germans who had either been born in the Soviet Union or who had lived there and been expelled, and who therefore had an interest in belittling everything Soviet. Under normal battle conditions, such a situation would have been very desirable for the Soviet Union: to be underestimated by your enemy is to gain an important psychological and even tactical advantage. But in the spring of 1941, the circumstances were very different.
When the man Herwarth had been working for, Col. Engineer Schwencke, traveled to the Soviet Union in April 1941 to see for himself what was going on, he was at first shown very little. Suddenly, however, he and his party of two other officers and eight representatives of German industries were taken to see a number of important and highly revealing plants -during the month of April they were shown round four aircraft body factories, three engine factories and a light metalworking plant, all of which were working flat out on the very latest Soviet aircraft. The German experts were most impressed – the factories they saw were the biggest and most modern in Europe, and more were being built. The aircraft they were producing were simple but tough, and far superior to those in service with the Soviet air force, on which German intelligence assessments were based.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 581
At the end of their tour, the German experts were treated to a farewell dinner, at which a leading soviet aircraft designer, Artem Mikoyan, youngest brother of the Trade Commissar and co-designer of the Mig fighters, told them: 'Now you have seen the mighty technology of the Soviet fatherland. We shall valiantly ward off any attack, whatever quarter it comes from!" It would be hard to imagine Stalin's message being put more clearly.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 582

SOCIALISM SAVED THEM IN WWII

Our own situation [after WWI] was even more catastrophic, but we managed to extricate ourselves. It was certainly not our socialism which was responsible for our doing so, as Koba would claim. That's stuff for children and fools. Koba himself knows this is rubbish needed only for propaganda and maintaining the morale of the younger generation. In actual fact, what saved us [from economic collapse after WWI] was our planned economy. This was understood long ago in the capitalist countries too.
[But that is socialism]
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 172

BY THE TIME WEST STARTED THE SECOND FRONT THE SU HAD ALREADY DEFEATED THE NAZIS

It was the Soviet Union that had beaten the fascist army. The second front, which Great Britain and the U.S. had promised as early as 1942, was not to materialize until June 1944, after it was clear that the Nazis had already been decisively defeated. In fact the Anglo-American invasion was aimed more at stopping communism than defeating fascism. [This invasion took place during the same period that the British army "liberated" Greece,

which had already been liberated by the Communist-led Resistance.) For under Communist leadership, underground resistance movements, based primarily on the working class, had developed throughout Europe. Because the Communists, both from the Soviet Union and within the other European nations, were the leaders of the entire anti-fascist struggle, by the end of the war they had by far the largest parties in all the nations of Eastern and Central Europe, as well as Italy and France, where the fascists' power had been broken more by internal resistance than by the much-heralded Allied invasion. In fact, it is likely that if the Anglo-American forces had not invaded and occupied Italy and France, within a relatively short time the Communists would have been in power in both countries.
Franklin, Bruce, Ed. The Essential Stalin; Major Theoretical Writings. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p. 32

On his return from the Teheran conference Stalin said:
"Roosevelt has given his word that large-scale action will be mounted in France in 1944. I believe he will keep his word. But even if he doesn't, we have enough of our own forces to complete the route of Nazi Germany."
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 493

On his return from the Teheran Conference, Stalin said: "Roosevelt has given his word that extensive action will be mounted in France in 1944. I believe he will keep his word. But even if he does not, our own forces are sufficient to complete the rout of Nazi Germany."
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 229

From the precise manner in which Stalin expressed his ideas one could see that he had given much thought to all these matters. Although he believed that we were strong enough to finish off Nazi Germany single-handed Stalin sincerely welcomed the opening of the Second Front in Europe, which brought closer the end of the war, so much desired by the Soviet people.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 535

When Russia was invaded by Hitler's blitzkrieg in 1941 she was glad to find friends and allies in Britain and the United States; but the fact remains that the brunt of the fighting was done by Russia, and that she lost 40 or 50 times more people than either of them. Until June 1944 Britain and the USA fought, in effect, what was only a peripheral war against Germany…. Not till 1944, when the Germans had already been virtually defeated, did the "real" Second Front open.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co.,1971, p. 62

In this final report on the war, in October, 1945, General Marshall, the United States Chief of Staff stated: "The refusal of the British and Russian peoples to accept defeat was the great factor in the salvage of our civilization….
"There can be no doubt… that the heroic stand of the British and Soviet peoples saved the United States a war on her own soil. The crisis had come and passed at Stalingrad… . before this nation was able to gather sufficient resources to participate in the fight in a determining manner."

Winston Churchill had previously made a similar statement to Parliament, on August 2, 1944: “It is the Russian army which has done the main force of ripping the guts out of the German army.”
Duranty, Walter. Stalin & Co. New York: W. Sloane Associates, 1949, p. 88

Despite the absence of a second front in Europe, the Soviet Union put Nazi Germany on the brink of a military disaster.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 353

On returning from the Teheran Conference, Supreme Commander Stalin said:
“Roosevelt has given me his firm word to open extensive actions in France in 1944. I think he will keep his word.”
“And if he doesn’t keep his word,” he thought aloud, “we are strong enough to crush Hitler Germany on our own.”
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 354

“In June the Allies intend to finally conduct a major landing operation in France. Our allies are in a hurry,” Stalin smiled. “They are afraid that we will rout Nazi Germany without them.”
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 261

Although he believed that we were strong enough to finish off Nazi Germany single-handed, Stalin sincerely welcomed the opening of the Second Front in Europe, which brought closer the end of the war, so much desired by the Soviet people who were extremely exhausted by the war and privatizations.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 281

German General Zimmerman, Chief of Operations on the Western Front, said: ‘The war against the British and Americans in France was lost on the Eastern Front even before the landing of the Anglo-American armies on the Continent.’ And: “it would be no exaggeration to say that the Eastern Front steadily pumped all the efficient manpower and combat equipment out of the German armies in the West.’ Quoted in historian, Yeremeyev’s The USSR in World War II.
Axell, Albert. Stalin’s War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 209

FASCIST ARMIES WERE NOT AS STRONG AS THE FASCISTS THOUGHT

It’s a fact that Germany [in May 1941] had the best army both in material and organization, but the Germans were wrong in thinking that it’s an ideal, invincible army.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 225

STALIN DID MAKE MILITARY MISTAKES AND HE TOOK THE BLAME

True, I must say Stalin realized that the unfavorable situation in the summer of 1942 had resulted, among other things, from his own personal error made when approving the plan of operations of our forces in the 1942 summer campaign. And he did not seek any other guilty party among the leaders in General Headquarters or the General Staff.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 376

STALINGRAD WAS THE TURNING POINT OF WWII

Stalin listened attentively. By the way he smoked his pipe, smoothed his mustache, and never intervened even once, we could see that he was pleased. The Stalingrad operation implied that Soviet forces would henceforth control the initiative.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 406

The Stalingrad victory turned the tide of war in favor of the Soviet Union: the Soviet Army began driving the enemy off Soviet soil.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 424

It [the battle of Stalingrad] was an operation that actually marked a radical turning-point in the war and ensured the retreat of the German forces from our country.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 661

NAZI GENERALS BLAME HITLER FOR THEIR DEFEAT

Reading post-war memoirs, written by German generals and field-marshals, one is simply taken aback by their interpretations of the reasons for their setbacks, miscalculations, and blunders and their oversights in troop control.
Most of these authors cite Hitler as the prime reason and point out that having imposed his personal control over Germany's Armed Forces in 1941 and being a dilettante in matters of strategy and grand tactics, he directed the armed struggle dictatorially, without heeding the advice of his generals and field marshals. As I see it, there is some measure of truth in this–perhaps even a large measure–yet it is not here that lie the basic reasons for the German defeats.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 516

At the very start of our work at the Control Council we reached an understanding with Eisenhower to send a group of Soviet officers from the intelligence division of the front headquarters to the American zone to interrogate the chief war criminals, for as it turned out, there were more of them in that zone than in any other.
They included Goering, Ribbentrop, Kaltenbrunner, Keitel, Jodl and other prominent figures of the Third Reich. However, obviously acting on special instructions, the Americans refused to allow our officers to question all of the war criminals. In fact, only a very few were interrogated, and those did their best to foul their trail, endeavoring to accuse Hitler alone of all the crimes perpetrated against humanity, and thus shirking confessing their own guilt.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 664

STALIN REFUSES TO COMPROMISE WITH HITLER NEAR THE WAR'S END

Very shortly Stalin was on the line. After reporting to him about Kreb's appearance and our decision to let general Sokolovski negotiate with him, I asked his orders.
Stalin answered:
"So that's the end of the bastard. Too bad it was impossible to take him alive. Where is Hitler's body?"
"General Krebs says Hitler's body was burned."
"Tell Sokolovski that there can be no negotiations–only unconditional surrender. No talks either with Krebs or any other Hitlerites.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 622

THE SU BORE THE MAIN FASCIST ATTACK OF WWII

No one can deny that the main brunt of the fight against the Fascist armed forces was borne by the Soviet Union. It was the fiercest, the most bloody and difficult of all the wars that our people have ever fought.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 643

For three years Soviet Russia had been forced to take the bloodbath in Europe while her Western allies nibbled at the periphery, conserving, then rapidly building up, their armed strength.
Rose, Lisle Abbott. After Yalta. New York: Scribner, 1973, p. 62

Yet, like most Russians, Stalin resented his allies' "privileged" position in the war (and would until June 6, 1944, and even thereafter). His country was being bled; all the casualties the British and Americans sustained in North Africa and Italy did not amount to those the Russians suffered in one major battle; how could all the billions of Lend-Lease compensate for these millions of Soviet lives lost?
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 562

But whatever experts and the logic of the situation argued, the fact remained that the momentous, most bloody battles were being fought on the Eastern Front. The British victory at El Alamein in October 1942 was secured against an Italo-German force of about 100,000. The Red Army suffered more than that in casualties in only a few weeks' spring fighting in the Crimea, one of many Eastern fronts. This contrast could not but be embarrassing and then galling to the Western leaders, as well as to public opinion in Britain and America.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 564

STALIN TELLS ZHUKOV TO LEAD THE VICTORY PARADE IN BERLIN WHEN THE ALLIES REFUSE

Returning to Berlin, we suggested to the Americans, British, and French that a military parade in honor of the victory over Fascist Germany be held in Berlin itself. A short time later we received their consent. It was decided to hold a parade of Soviet and Allied troops in September in the area of the Reichstag and the Brandenburg Gate, the scene of the final battles, when the Soviet troops stormed Berlin on May 1 and 2, 1945.

But then, on the very eve of the parade, we were suddenly informed that for some reason the Commanders-in-Chief of the Allied Forces could not come to Berlin for the victory parade, and had authorized their generals to attend.
I immediately put through a phone call to Stalin. When he heard my report he said:
“They want to belittle the importance of the victory parade in Berlin. Just wait, they’ll be up to something else next. Ignore their refusal and take the salute yourself, all the more so, since we have more right to do it than the Allied commanders.”
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 655

STALIN COMPLAINS THAT THE ALLIES ARE NOT DISARMING THE GERMAN PRISONERS

Around May 20, 1945, Poskrebyshev called me at my home late in the evening and told me Stalin wanted to see me in the Kremlin as soon as possible.
With Stalin in his office were Molotov and Voroshilov.
After mutual greetings Stalin said:
“While we have disarmed all the officers and men of the German Army and placed them in prisoner-of-war camps, the British are keeping the German troops in a state of combat readiness and establishing cooperation with them. To this day the headquarters of the German forces headed by their commanding officers are enjoying complete freedom and on Montgomery’s instructions the arms and material of the German troops are being collected and put in order.
I feel, Stalin continued, the British want to retain the German troops so that they can be used later. But this is an outright violation of the agreement between the heads of government of the immediate disbandment of all German forces.”
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 657

Further on in the course of the Control Council’s work it became more and more difficult for us to reach understanding with the Americans and British who did their best to resist our proposals aimed at fully implementing the Declaration on the defeat of Germany and the agreements reached at the conferences of Heads of Government.
Soon afterwards we received reliable information that during the final campaign in the west, Churchill had sent Field-Marshal Montgomery a secret cable instructing him carefully to collect German weapons and material and stock, so that they could be easily redistributed among German units with which it would probably become necessary to cooperate should the Soviet offensive continue.
At the next Control Council meeting we had to make a sharply-worded statement on this subject, emphasizing that history knew few examples of such perfidy and betrayal of allied commitments and duty.
“The Soviet Union,” we pointed out, “is strictly abiding by its Allied undertakings. We believe the British Command and its Government merit serious condemnation.”
Montgomery made an attempt to reject the Soviet charge. His American colleague, General Clay, kept silent. He obviously knew about the British Premier’s directive.
… Some time after the speech Montgomery himself confirmed he had received the cable.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 665

Through repeated checking we established for sure that despite our protest the British were still retaining German troops in their zone. I was compelled to submit to the Control Council a memorandum on the presence of organized units of the former Nazi army in the British zone.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 678

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"I think," Stalin continued, "the British seek to retain the German troops so that they can be used later. But that is an outright violation of the agreement between the Heads of Government on the immediate disbandment of all German forces."
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 429

Soon afterwards we received reliable information that during the final campaign of the war against Nazi Germany, Churchill telegraphed to Field Marshal Montgomery directing him "to be careful in collecting German arms, to stack them so that they could easily be issued again to the German soldiers whom we should have to work with if the Soviet advance continued."
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 438

Everything became absolutely clear. While signing on behalf of his country's commitments to uproot German militarism immediately and once and for all, and eliminate the German Wehrmacht, Churchill was giving secret orders to the military command to preserve the arms and military units of the former Nazi army as a basis for a reconstituted West German Army pursuing far-reaching anti-Soviet goals. And all this turned out to have been known to the Supreme Command of the Allied Expeditionary Forces and to Eisenhower personally. Frankly, I was very much upset then and changed my initial opinion of Dwight Eisenhower.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 455

ZHUKOV NOTES THAT EISENHOWER, NOT MONTGOMERY, FOLLOWS THE YALTA AGREEMENT

"Before settling the matter of the routes by which the British and American forces will move to Berlin," I replied, "it will be necessary to move all Allied troops to the areas in Germany which have been assigned by the Yalta conference. Only after this will we consider the practical problems of the passage of the Allied troops to Berlin, as well as the stationing of Allied personnel in Berlin itself. Until American and British troops leave Thuringia, and the

British, the Wittenberg area, I cannot agree to the admission of Allied military personnel to Berlin."
Montgomery was about to object when Eisenhower said:
"Don't argue Monty, Marshal Zhukov is right. You'd better get out of Wittenberg as soon as possible and we, from Thuringia."
With a laugh Stalin said:
"We ought to invite Eisenhower to Moscow sometime. I want to meet him."
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 661

ZHUKOV NOTES THAT NAZI INDUSTRY TIED TO WESTERN FAT CATS WAS NOT BOMBED

Eisenhower's headquarters was located in a huge building belonging to the "I. G. Farbenindustrie" chemical concern which stood intact in spite of heavy bombing that had left the city of Frankfurt in ruins.
It is remarkable that in other parts of Germany, too, property belonging to the I. G. Farbenindustrie also remained intact although they presented excellent targets for air raids. It was obvious that Washington and London had given the Allied High Command special instructions….
And I must add that several other big munitions plants in West Germany also remained untouched. As it became clear later, the financial strings from the biggest munitions plants in the western regions of Germany led to the American and British monopolies.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 662

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Several other big munitions plants also remained undamaged. As it became clear later, the financial strings from these biggest munitions plants led to the American and British monopolies.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 435

Corporations like DuPont, Ford, General Motors, and ITT owned factories in enemy countries that produced fuel, tanks, and planes that wreaked havoc on Allied forces. After the war, instead of being prosecuted for treason, ITT collected $27 million from the US government for damages inflicted on its German plants by Allied bombings. General Motors collected over $33 million. Pilots were given instructions not to hit factories in Germany that were owned by US firms. Thus Cologne was almost leveled by Allied bombing but its Ford plant, providing military equipment for the Nazi army, was untouched; indeed, German civilians began using the plant as an air raid shelter.
Parenti, Michael. Blackshirts and Reds, San Francisco: City Light Books, 1997, p. 19

ZHUKOV SAYS ALLIES ARE WORKING TO GET SOVIET PRISONERS TO DEFECT

…In the eastern part of Germany we did our best to return all those released to their homes which throughout the grim years of imprisonment they had all been longing for. But considerable numbers of Soviet people and war prisoners were in the zones occupied by our Allies.
But then we received reliable information that the Americans and British were indoctrinating the Soviet citizens and war prisoners to get them to defect. Persuasion was used to induce them to stay in the West, where they were promised well-paid jobs and all kinds of comforts. In this process lies, slander of the Soviet Union, and intimidation were brought into play, especially with regard to those who had served under the traitor Vlasov, or who had been in the service of the Germans as policemen.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 665-666

EISENHOWER ADMITS SOVIET'S OFFENSIVE RELIEVED THE PRESSURE ON THE US AT NORMANDY

Recalling that offensive [our offensive in the East] Eisenhower said "For us it was a long-awaited offensive. We all felt relief, particularly after we had received news that the offensive was proceeding with great success. We were sure the Germans could now no longer reinforce their Western Front."
Unfortunately, with the start of the Cold War and especially after the surviving Nazi generals began to flood the book market with their reminiscences, such objective views have plainly been distorted. The over-zealous propaganda makers from the anti-Soviet camp even go so far as to allege that it was not the Soviet Army that helped the Americans in their battles in the Ardennes but the Americans who all but saved the Soviet army.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 683

THERE WAS NO PANIC IN EVACUATING MOSCOW

QUESTION: And how did the evacuation proceed from Moscow? On this question, many of the present leaders are trying to state that there was panic among the population, that there were thousands of deserters and that people were trampled to death at railway stations.

ANSWER: [Moscow Soviet Chairman, Vasili Pronin, who was chairman from April 1939 to 1945 says], All these are lies—empty wind blowing. There was absolutely no panic.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 33

MIKOYAN DESERTED MOSCOW AFTER THE INVASION

[Moscow Soviet Chairman, Vasili Pronin, who was chairman from April 1939 to 1945 says], … Mikoyan left for the East. I only found this out on Oct. 18th when Stalin telephoned me. He was furious with Mikoyan since Mikoyan was Deputy Chairman of the Soviet Peoples Committee. Stalin also told me that he found out that Mikoyan and others were taking with them precious metals and left all of them at the railway station, some two tons.

Stalin never forgot anything. When in 1952 Mikoyan was removed from the Politburo, Stalin reminded Mikoyan of this desertion during the war!
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 34

STALIN DID EVERYTHING HE COULD THINK OF TO AVOID WAR WITH HITLER

The clearest evidence that Stalin had no plans to attack Hitler first can be found in his almost frantic efforts to appease the German leader right up to June.
Overy, R. J. Russia's War: Blood Upon the Snow. New York: TV Books, c1997, p. 94

Zhukov much later recalled of the days just before the war: "All his [Stalin] thoughts and acts were inspired by one desire–to avoid war–and confidence that he could do it."
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 621

But of course Stalin's foreign-policy did not content itself with such Chamberlainlike pleas with would-be aggressors. It pursued any conceivable avenue to avoid or postpone an armed conflict into which the Soviet Union might be drawn.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 366

And in Europe too, Soviet diplomacy sought (in a much more realistic way than that of Britain and France) to avoid war. To do Stalin justice, he never made a secret of that objective or pretended that his detestation of fascism was greater than his desire to avoid war, or more precisely to avoid Russia's military involvement in one.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 399

He [Stalin] preferred to list Russia among the "peace loving states"–a statement of his which for once was sincerely meant and true: no other statesmen, not even Neville Chamberlain, feared war as much is he.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 468

Now, I think, it is time to speak of the main error of that time which naturally gave rise to many others–the miscalculation in deciding the probable date on which the German forces would attack.
In the last few prewar months the leadership did not call for any steps that should have been taken when the threat of war was particularly great….
One cannot help asking why the leadership headed by Stalin did not put through the operational plan they themselves had endorsed?…
More often than not, people blame Stalin for these errors and miscalculations. He had certainly made mistakes, but one cannot consider the causes of these mistakes in isolation from the objective historical processes and phenomena, from the entire complex of economic and political factors….
Comparing and analyzing Stalin's conversations with people close to him in my presence I have come to the firm conclusion that all his thoughts and deeds were prompted by the desire to avoid war, and that he was confident in succeeding.

Stalin was well aware what misfortunes would befall the Soviet people in a war with such a strong and wily enemy as Nazi Germany. That was why he strove, as our entire Party did, to win time.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 264-265

THE SOVIET ARMIES WERE ORDERED NOT TO RETREAT REGARDLESS

Is easy to argue that from the summer of 1942 the Soviet army fought because it was forced to fight. Yet the impact of Order No. 227 [Do Not Retreat] can be exaggerated. It was aimed primarily at officers and political commissars, rather than the rank-and-file, which had always been subject to very harsh discipline. The order also applied only to unauthorized retreats, not to retreats in general. No doubt legal niceties did not play a great part with the NKVD interrogators, but it was not an order that was applied entirely without discrimination. There was at the time a sense that desperate circumstances called for desperate measures.
Overy, R. J. Russia's War: Blood Upon the Snow. New York: TV Books, c1997, p. 201

SU HAD GREATER MILITARY MIGHT AND OUTPRODUCED THE NAZIS

In short, the Russians outproduced the Germans in the mechanized weapons of war in every year throughout the conflict. The Germans started the invasion with a larger accumulation of heavy weapons, and destroyed much of what the Russians had in the first five months. But the Russians eventually succeeded in maintaining their super production–often in quality as well as quantity–and in concentrating their armaments (after the first five months) more rapidly and more effectively to achieve local superiorities and win key battles.
Except for the early months of the war, before Stalin abandoned most of his disastrous strategic ideas and removed some of his incompetent friends left over from the Civil War (notably Marshal Budenny, who managed to lose 665,000 prisoners in one big bag in Ukraine in August, 1941), the Russians were as well led by their generals as the Germans were. After the first few months, the Russian troops displayed as high a morale as the Germans, and steadily greater confidence in victory. Stalin made many costly mistakes even after the first few months, but his over-all strategy thereafter avoided the irreparable disasters that Hitler imposed on his army.
As it was, the Germans invaded a country that was colossal in size, somewhat superior in military and civilian manpower, potentially much superior in armaments, as good in generalship, greatly superior in top leadership as far as the war was concerned, and possessed of defensive supply lines that had not been war-ravaged. Other things being equal, the stronger power wins the war…. These early German advantages made the war seem close in 1941, and even in 1942: but Russia's superior strength was never altogether overcome, and eventually won the war. The outcome was by no means certain, but it was, as we can now see, probable.
Randall, Francis. Stalin's Russia. New York: Free Press,1965, p. 282-283

AT THE START OF THE WAR NAZIS HAD MILITARY SUPERIORITY OVER THE SU

Harriman and Beaverbook had three evening meetings with Stalin–Sunday, September 28, Monday the 29th, and Tuesday the 30th, of 1941….
At the first meeting with Stalin, cordiality prevailed. Stalin gave a candid review of the military situation, as he had done with Hopkins, saying that Germany's superiority to Russia was, in air power, in a ratio of three to two– in tanks, a ratio of three or 4 to 1–in divisions, 320 to 280.
Sherwood, Robert E. Roosevelt and Hopkins. New York: Harper, 1948, p. 387

HULL RECOMMENDS THE NAZI LEADERS BE SHOT QUIETLY WITHOUT A PUBLIC TRIAL

On March 17, 1943 Hull, Eden, and Hopkins had tea with the President in his study, and Hopkins wrote:
Hull said he hoped that we could find a way to avoid any longwinded trials of Hitler and his principal associates after the war; that he hoped we could find a way to get the ones that should be shot and do it quietly. He said he thought a public trial would be very bad; that we should settle with Hitler in the same way he would handle us if he were to do it.
Sherwood, Robert E. Roosevelt and Hopkins. New York: Harper, 1948, p. 714

HOPKINS DENIES THERE WAS ANY YALTA AGREEMENT THE RUSSIANS WERE TO TAKE BERLIN

The other memorandum was inspired by an "inside" story in Drew Pearson's column in the Washington Post on April 22, 1945. Pearson had written: "Though it may get official denial the real fact is that American advance patrols on Friday, April 13, one day after President Roosevelt's death, were in Potsdam, which is to Berlin what the Bronx is to New York City," but "the next day withdrew from the Berlin suburbs to the River Elbe about 50 miles south. This withdrawal was ordered largely because of a previous agreement with the Russians that they were to occupy Berlin and because of their insistence that the agreement be kept." Pearson stated that this agreement had been made at Yalta. Hopkins indignantly wrote:
This story by Drew Pearson is absolutely untrue. There was no agreement made at Yalta whatever that the Russians should enter Berlin first. Indeed, there was no discussion of that whatever. The Chiefs of Staff had agreed with the Russian Chiefs of Staff and Stalin on the general strategy which was that both of us were going to push as hard as we could.
It is equally untrue that General Bradley paused on the Elbe River at the request of the Russians so that the Russians could break through to Berlin first. Bradley did get a division well out towards Potsdam but it far outreached itself; supplies were totally inadequate and anyone who knows anything about it knows that we would have taken Berlin had we been able to do so. This would have been a great feather in the army's cap, but for Drew Pearson now to say that the President agreed that the Russians were to take Berlin is utter nonsense.
Sherwood, Robert E. Roosevelt and Hopkins. New York: Harper, 1948, p. 884

STALIN SAYS THEY CAME DOWN ON THE CHURCH BECAUSE OF ITS OPPOSITION

[During his May 1945 meetings with Harry Hopkins Stalin stated that] at the time of the revolution the Russian communist party had proclaimed the right of freedom of religion as

one of the points of their program. The Russian Patriarch and the entire then existing church had declared the Soviet Government an anathema and had called on all church members not to pay taxes nor to obey the call to the Red Army but to resist mobilization, not to work, etc. He said what could the Soviet Government do but to in fact declare war on the church which assumed that attitude. He added that the present war [World War II] had wiped out this antagonism and that now the freedom of religion, as promised, could be granted to the church.
Mr. Hopkins said he thoroughly understood the Marshal's opinions.
Sherwood, Robert E. Roosevelt and Hopkins. New York: Harper, 1948, p. 906

HITLER COMPLIMENTED STALIN'S EFFECTIVENESS

It is very stupid to sneer at the Stakhanov system. The arms and equipment of the Russian armies are the best proof of its efficiency in the handling of industrial man-power. Stalin, too, must command our unconditional respect. In his own way he is a hell of a fellow!
Hitler, Adolph. Hitler's Table Talk, 1941-1944. Trans. by Cameron & Stevens. New York: Enigma Books, 2000, p. 587

Had he been given the time, Stalin would have made of Russia a super-industrialized monster, completely contrary to the interests of the masses, but justified by demagogic pedantry and designed to raise the standard of life for his own particular partisans. His final objective would have been the absorbing of the whole of Europe into the Bolshevik ring. He is a beast, but he's a beast on the grand scale.
Hitler, Adolph. Hitler's Table Talk, 1941-1944. Trans. by Cameron & Stevens. New York: Enigma Books, 2000, p. 657

If Stalin had been given another 10 or 15 years, Russia would have become the mightiest State in the world, and two or three centuries would have been required to bring about a change. It is a unique phenomenon! He has raised the standard of living–of that there is no doubt; no one in Russia goes hungry any more. They have built factories where a couple of years ago only unknown villages existed–and factories, mark you, as big as the Herman Goering Works. They have built railways that are not yet even on our maps…. I have read a book on Stalin; I must admit, he is a tremendous personality, an ascetic who took the whole of that gigantic country firmly in his iron grasp.
Hitler, Adolph. Hitler's Table Talk, 1941-1944. Trans. by Cameron & Stevens. New York: Enigma Books, 2000, p. 661

AFTER THE JUNE 1941 ATTACK STALIN STILL SUSPECTED IT MIGHT BE JUST A PROBE

How could this [the German attack on June 22, 1941] be a mere provocation, pleaded the generals (still no one dared to shout, though obviously this situation called for it), if Soviet cities from Odessa to Murmansk were being bombed and German soldiers were miles inside Russia and advancing. There was one thin thread of reason in Stalin's otherwise irrational compound of despair and hope. In 1938 and 1939 the Japanese had attacked suddenly and with large forces, but it had turned out to be a "provocation"–i.e., a probe of Russian strength

in the Far East rather than full-scale war. Perhaps Hitler was playing the same game, and perhaps it was not Hitler but his generals.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 538

GENERALS DEFEND STALIN'S MILITARY DECISIONS IN THE EARLY PART OF WWII

At this point [on June 15, 1941], convinced that the beginning of war was imminent, the Ministry Of Defense and the General Staff implored Stalin to transfer a larger number of divisions from the reserves to the western borders and to create a more solid, concentrated disposition of forces in the regions near the front. Stalin categorically rejected this demand, insisting on the need to maintain large-scale reserves at a considerable distance from any conceivable frontline. After the war, studying all the General Staff maps in the archives when working on the first volume of his memoirs, Zhukov came to the conclusion that the advice he had given in the spring of 1941 was possibly mistaken:…
"It is common to criticize Stalin for failing to move the main forces of our army from the interior of the country in time to meet and repulse the enemy attack. I am hesitant to be dogmatic about what might have happened if he had done so–whether the outcome would have been better or worse. It is certainly possible that our army, inadequately provided with anti-tank and anti-aircraft defenses and less mobile than the forces of the enemy, would not have been able to withstand the slashing, powerful blows of the armored force of the enemy assault and would have found itself in exactly the same dire situation as the forces who actually were in the border districts during the first days of the war. And in that case, who knows what the result might have been for Moscow, Leningrad, or the south of the country."
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 234

STALIN AND ZHUKOV ISSUE LAST MINUTE DIRECTIVES FOR MILITARY PREPAREDNESS

On 21 June 1941 Stalin telephoned the commander of the Moscow military district, Tyulenev, ordering him to put the anti-aircraft defense of Moscow into a state of immediate alert….
When Zhukov and Timoshenko arrived at the Kremlin at 20:50 they had already prepared a draft directive to be sent to all military districts, warning of a possible German surprise attack at dawn on 22 June 1941 and ordering all units to be brought to full military preparedness. Stalin shortened the text a little and approximately two hours later it was sent from General Staff headquarters to all border districts….
The directive was absolutely clear, stating that military action could begin on 22 June; it commanded that forward defense positions were to be occupied in all fortified border districts in the course of the night, that all units were to be brought to full military readiness, aircraft dispersed and camouflaged, and a black-out imposed on all cities and military objectives. There were only three or four hours left for the Soviet army deployed along the western border to prepare for the German offensive.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 240

Why, then, would Stalin, who gave priority to strengthening the armed forces and protecting the country's security, ignore a spate of invasion warnings?
..There is some evidence that Stalin had not entirely lost his senses. On 21 June, the eve of the invasion, Stalin ordered Moscow party officials not to leave town the following day, Sunday. Two hours before the invasion, at 2 a.m. on the 22nd, Stalin telephoned General Tyulanev, Commander of the Moscow Military District, and gave orders to put the city's anti-aircraft defenses at 75% of war readiness.
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 69

NAZI ARMY IS MUCH WEAKER ON THE WESTERN FRONT THAN ON THE EASTERN IN 1945

At the beginning of the Anglo-American campaign [in early 1945] the Germans had 60 extremely weak divisions in the West whose overall strength was equal to 26 complete divisions. The Allies had 91 full-strength divisions.
The Allies enjoyed a particular superiority in the air. They could suppress any resistance both on land and in the air practically at any point by means of air strikes.
So, the forcing of the Rhine by the US and British troops took place in easy conditions, and the Rhine was taken practically without German resistance.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 344

Bourgeois historians endeavor to show that the decisive battles of the Second World War took place where the Anglo-American war was being waged. They cite the Battle of EL Alamein in Northern Egypt as one such battle. Let us remind ourselves once again: in October 1942, there were over 50 German divisions on the Stalingrad Front, while there were no more than 12 in the region of El Alamein. The difference is plain to see. Let us remember too that at that time the German command kept the principal tank and aviation forces at Stalingrad. Bourgeois historians also lose any sense of value when they compare the Battle of Stalingrad to the landings of American troops on the island of Guadalcanal. The Japanese garrison defending the island did not exceed 2000 men.
Vasilevskii, Aleksandr M. A Lifelong Cause. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1981, p. 229

RED ARMY WORKED WITH RELEASED ANTIFASCIST PRISONERS AFTER WWII

The military councils, commandants, and political department workers recruited for work at district councils German Communists released from concentration camps, anti-fascists and other German democrats with whom we at once established friendly mutual understanding.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 404

NAZIS KILLED MANY GERMAN COMMUNISTS

He [Kalinin] asked me how Berlin had been captured, how life in Germany was being normalized, how things were getting on in the German Communist Party, a great number of whose members were brutally killed by the Nazis.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 422

ALLIED GENERALS DECLINE TO VIEW THE VICTORY PARADE IN BERLIN SO ZHUKOV DOES IT

But on the very eve of the parade, we were suddenly informed that for a number of reasons the Commanders-in-Chief of the Allied Forces could not come to Berlin for the victory parade, and had authorized their generals to attend.
I immediately put a telephone call through to Stalin. He heard my report and said:
“They want to belittle the importance of the parade of troops of the anti-Hitler coalition countries. Just wait, they’ll be up to something else next. Ignore the refusal of the Allies and take the salute yourself, all the more so, as we have more rights to it than they.”
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 427

SOVIET LEADERS WANTED TO GET EVEN WITH THE NAZIS BUT DECIDED NOT TO

To be frank, when the war was still on I was fully determined to get even with the Germans for all their cruelty. But when our troops had routed the enemy and entered the German territory, we checked our wrath. Our ideological convictions and internationalist feelings did not allow us to give in to blind vengeance.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 471

STALIN WORKED HARD AND KEPT LONG HOURS DURING WWII

Although he occasionally let his hair down, Stalin spent most of the war overladen with work. Most nights were passed in his makeshift office deep below the Mayakovski Metro station. The days were long and exhausting, and usually he slept not in a bed but on a divan. Not since Nicholas I, that most austere of Romanovs, had a ruler of the Russians been so frugal in his habits. Stalin was aware of the precedent, and turned himself into a human machine for the winning of the Great Patriotic War.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 438

Stalin also had a great capacity for organization. He worked very hard himself, but he also could make others work to the full extent of their ability, squeezing from them all that they could offer.
Vasilevskii, Aleksandr M. A Lifelong Cause. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1981, p. 452

BEFORE AND DURING THE WAR THE ALLIES AIDED NAZIS ECONOMICALLY MORE THAN THE SU

For Hitler, the pact with Stalin not only removed the danger of a two-front war, but it provided Germany with a steady supply of Russian petroleum, platinum, cotton, scrap and pig iron, timber, feed grains and vegetables….
These supplies to Hitler aroused anger among the Western democracies who accused Russia of helping Hitler's war effort. But, to be fair, Russia was a junior partner compared to Nazi Germany's brisk commerce with the West. American companies, for instance, had nearly 60 branches in Germany and heavy investments in that country. (In 1943 American Senator Harley Kilgore, a member of the War Investigations Committee, said these investments were actually impeding the US war effort. A Senate report stated that US investment in Germany totaled $1 billion.).
Britain also aided Hitler. In 1940 the Junkers Ju 87B was the Luftwaffe's most important tactical attack aircraft, delivering aerial artillery right into the front line. Ironically, in view of its use against the West (and later against the Russians), it was initially powered by a British Rolls-Royce engine. In 1935 the first prototype Messerschmitt Bf 109, which became the standard fighter of the German air force, was also equipped with a Rolls-Royce engine, although these were later replaced by German ones.
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 48

SOVIET SOLDIERS DID NOT TAKE REVENGE OR RAPE AFTER THE WAR

AUTHOR: Some books have made claims of widespread rape and looting.
MARSHAL RUDENKO: Such claims are untrue! If such cases were brought to the attention of our officers the perpetrators received maximum punishment.
But our political advisers and party organizations made strenuous efforts to prevent our soldiers from avenging themselves against the Germans. For example, our soldiers were instructed not to act according to the principle that because my village was burnt down in Russia, I will burn down your village in Germany. It would have been a crime to do this. That's why a huge propaganda work was done. Of course, you understand how difficult such a job is; it involves tremendous work to teach this to the troops. After all, some of the families of our soldiers had been burned to death or shot by Nazi soldiers.
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 50

STALIN AND HIS GENERALS ARE BOTH RESPONSIBLE FOR FAILURE TO MOBILIZE SOON ENOUGH

Author: But what about criticisms of Stalin for his failure to order mobilization in time?
General Pavlovsky: That was not only Stalin's mistake. The military commanders failed to convince Stalin that it was necessary to mobilize the army and keep it on the alert. They should have proved their case to Stalin! It was their responsibility. So, it is their mistake as much as his. Also, keep in mind that mobilization was a tricky thing, because it could provoke war when Stalin was trying by diplomatic means to delay it.

Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London , Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 125

SU DID WHAT IT COULD TO HELP THE WARSAW UPRISING

Another charge circulated by the London group was that the Red Army refused to help the Poles who revolted in Warsaw. This uprising was staged by General Bor, who headed the section of the underground loyal to the London group, on orders from London and without consultation with the Red Army, with General Berling, commander of Polish troops in Russia, and without informing Allied military leaders in England. The result was the virtual destruction of Warsaw, and the loss of 250,000 Polish lives. The Nazis, as soon as the uprising started, began systematic razing of the city, block by block.

In Poland I talked with Polish generals and War Minister Rola-Zymierski. They agreed that the Red Army knew absolutely nothing before the uprising. It started on August 1st, but it was not until two women, without the permission of General Bor, made their way through sewers and across rivers, reaching the Red Army on September 12, that the Russians had definite word of the uprising. These two women did not represent Bor's Army, but were from the People's Army which held the northern part of Warsaw and had cooperated in the uprising in the belief that it had been undertaken in cooperation with the advancing Reds. They gave the Russians details as to where the insurgents were located. Red Army planes immediately dropped food and ammunition. The Red Army had long before decided that it would be too costly to take fortified Warsaw by direct assault, but did, when informed of the uprising, change its plans to the extent of smashing through to Praga on the bank of the river across from Warsaw.

Rola-Zymierski said that it would have been impossible for the Russians to have taken Warsaw by frontal attack without staggering losses, and that even then the attempt might not have been successful. Warsaw was captured months later when the marshes froze and it became possible to encircle the city, as the Red Army staff had planned to do from the beginning. Zymierski believed that Bor had undertaken the costly adventure in the hope that Warsaw could be liberated without Red aid. Others believed that the London Poles had planned to come to Warsaw if Bor was successful and set up an anti-Soviet regime.

The evidence does show that Bor had more confidence in the Nazis than in the Russians. General Tarnova, who commanded Bor's Home Army Security Troops, told me that he knew when the uprising started that the Red Army would be unable to help. He went on to say that the Red Army had done everything possible to save the Polish forces in Warsaw. When the end came the Russians made arrangements for the Polish troops in Warsaw to retreat across the Vistula under cover of Russian artillery fire. Bor ordered that this not be done, and that all Polish troops surrender to the Germans rather than go with the Russians and continue the fight against Germany.

All the time I was in Moscow it was known that the Russians were willing to have Mikolajczyk of the London government-in-exile become Premier of the new government in Poland. Mikolajczyk went back to London to arrange this and a possible merger of the two groups. As a result he was ousted by the London group. They were interested in only one kind of Polish government–one that would be anti-Soviet above all else.

Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 100

…Here also I met General Boni Rola-Zimerski head of the new Polish Army.
Rola-Zimerski gave a long detailed account of Red Army operations in which he had taken part, leading up to the capture of Praga, a suburb of Warsaw on the east bank of the wide Vistula River. He stated categorically that the Warsaw uprising, which was launched on the joint responsibility of the London Poles of the regime-in-exile, and General Bor, head of the underground Polish Home Army, was begun without prior consultation or liaison of any kind with the Red Army. He then explained that from what he, as leader of the Polish People's Army (a rival of the anti-Soviet Home Army), knew of Red Army plans, they had never included a frontal attack on Warsaw.
…Looking back now on the London Poles' fierce outcry that the Russians had "betrayed" them by not storming Warsaw and bringing salvation to General Bor, who had given the signal for a rising without even consulting our own chiefs-of-staff liaison in Britain, it seems clear that their own ineptitude of leadership and their fatally misguided sense of diplomacy were chiefly to blame.
In Poland itself the prestige of the exiled government rapidly disintegrated after the Warsaw fiasco. Hundreds of Bor's former officers began to join the new Polish People's Army. In Lublin we met two of the earliest of these disillusioned patriots to come over. One of them, Col. Tarnova, had been commander of all Bor's Home Army security troops. He reported that even before the uprising he and many of his 2,500 officers had openly disagreed with Bor's plans for two sound military reasons: 1) their means were insufficient to the task; and 2) they had no understanding with the Red Army. Tarnova had, in effect, resigned his command and fled from Warsaw with the intention of reaching liberated Poland, where he had intended to communicate with (then) Premiere Mikolajczyk of the regime-in-exile, to request him to postpone the uprising until liaison could be established with the Allies. It was, however, already too late to interfere when he reached Lublin. Now he agreed completely when the General Rola-Zimerski declared:
"We are deeply convinced that Bor's order was given purely for political reasons…. The plan of the Home Army all along has been to appear suddenly in cities being occupied by the Red Army and only at the last moment, in order to assume power. Their mistake was that they thought they could operate in Warsaw independent of the will of the Red Army."
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 54

Stalin considered the uprising ill timed and misconceived. He was opposed to co-operation with Bor-Komorowski and the underground, whose hatred of the Russians was well-known. He appreciated Rokossovsky's military difficulties….
Soon after the start of the uprising, Churchill, misinterpreting Russian inactivity at the Vistula, sent a cable to Stalin, informing him that British planes were dropping supplies to the Poles and seeking assurances that Russian aid would soon reach them. Stalin's reply was noncommittal and suggested that the extent of the uprising had been grossly exaggerated. Under pressure from the London Poles, Churchill asked Eden on Aug. 14 to send a message to Stalin through Molotov, urging him to give immediate help to the Warsaw Poles. Two days later Vyshinsky informed the U.S. ambassador that the Soviet government would not allow British or American aircraft to land on Soviet territory after dropping supplies to the Warsaw region, "since the Soviet government does not wish to associate itself either directly or indirectly with the adventure in Warsaw." But on Sept. 9 this decision was reversed. Moreover, from Sept. 13 Soviet planes flew over Warsaw, bombing German positions and dropping supplies to the insurgents.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 399

Rokossovsky in his memoirs suggests that as commander of the 1st Belorussian Front he was responsible for the decision not to attempt to go to the aid of the Poles in Warsaw. Further he states that “Stalin wanted to give all possible help to the insurgents and to ease their plight.”
Zhukov wrote later that he himself had ascertained that the Red Army had done all it could to help the insurgents “although the uprising had not been in any way coordinated with the Soviet command. At that time–both before and after our forced withdrawal from Warsaw the first Byelorussian front continued to render assistance to the insurgents by air–dropping provisions, medicines, and ammunition. I remember there were many false reports on the matter in the Western press that could have misled public opinion.”
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 506

First of all I wished to find out how things were in Warsaw itself where the German command was dealing ruthlessly with the organizers of an uprising in the city. The population was subjected to brutal reprisals. The city was razed to the ground. Thousands of peaceful civilians perished under the wreckage.
As was established later neither the command of the front nor that of Poland’s 1st Army had been informed in advance by Bor-Komorowski about the coming uprising. Nor did he make any attempt to coordinate the insurgent’s actions with those of the 1st Byelorussians Front. The Soviet command learned about the uprising after the event from locals who had crossed the Vistula. General Headquarters had not been informed either.
On instructions by the Supreme Commander, two paratroops officers were sent to Bor-Komorowski for liaison and co-ordination of actions. However, Bor-Komorowski refused to receive the officers, nor did we hear from them ever again.
In order to assist the insurgents in Warsaw and in fulfilling a mission assigned by the command of the 1st Byelorussian Front, Soviet and Polish troops crossed the Vistula and seized the Warsaw embankment. However, Bor-Komorowski again made no attempt to make contact with them. In a day or so the Germans brought up considerable forces to the Embankment and began pressing our troops. An adverse situation developed with our troops suffering heavily. Having considered the situation, and being convinced of the impossibility of capturing Warsaw, the command of the front decided to withdraw the troops from the Embankment to the original position.
I have ascertained that our troops had done all they could to help the insurgents, although the uprising had not been in any way coordinated with the Soviet Command.
All that time–both before and after our forced withdrawal from Warsaw–the 1st Byelorussian Front continued to render assistance to the insurgents by air-dropping provisions, medicines, and ammunition. I remember there were many false reports on the matter in the Western press that could have misled public opinion.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 550-551

When I met Rokossovsky I asked him if he had been ordered to halt before Warsaw at the moment of the insurrection in August 1944. He gave me his word of honor that he had not. The Soviet forces had tried to make contact with the insurgents, but everyone sent on this mission had disappeared. The Polish general Bor-Komarowski did not want to have the slightest contact with the Red Army. I also put the question to my father: “Evidently, in the eyes of Stalin, this insurrection was a provocation organized by Churchill, who wanted to install the London Polish Government,” he replied.

Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 99

I have ascertained that our troops did everything they possibly could to help the insurgents, although the uprising had not been in any way coordinated with the Soviet Command….
All that time–both before and after our troops' forced withdrawal–the First Byelorussian Front continued to furnish assistance to the insurgents by air-dropping provisions, medicines, and ammunition. I remember there were many false reports on the matter in the Western press which could have misled public opinion.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 302

On 2 August 1944 our intelligence agencies received information that an uprising against the Nazi occupation had started in Warsaw. Startled by the news, the Front HQ immediately went hunting for information to assess the scale and nature of the uprising. It was so sudden that we were quite at a loss, and at first we thought that the Germans might have spread the rumor, though we could not understand its purpose. Frankly speaking, the timing of the uprising was just about the worst possible in the circumstances. It was as though its leaders had deliberately chosen a time that would ensure defeat. These were the thoughts that involuntarily came to my mind….
Certain carping critics in the Western press did at one time charge the First Byelorussian Front and, of course, me as its Commander, with deliberately failing to support the Warsaw insurgents, thereby condemning them to death and destruction….
The fact of the matter is that those who had instigated the people of Warsaw to rise had had no intention of joining forces with the approaching Soviet and Polish armies. On the contrary, they had feared this. They had been concerned with other things. For them the uprising had been a political move with the objective of assuming power in the Polish capital before the Soviet troops entered it. These had been their orders from the people in London.
Rokossovsky, K., Ed. by Bob Daglish A Soldier's Duty. Moscow: Progress Pub., 1985, p. 255-256

…The Chief of the General Staff, Antonov, established contact between us and the insurgents immediately on receiving the message of request…. Soviet planes were continuously dropping arms, ammunition and food for them.
Rokossovsky, K., Ed. by Bob Daglish A Soldier's Duty. Moscow: Progress Pub., 1985, p. 257

The tragedy of Warsaw kept worrying me, and the realization that it was impossible to launch a major rescue operation was agonizing….
I spoke with Stalin over the telephone, reporting the situation at the front and everything relevant to Warsaw. Stalin asked whether the Front was capable of immediately launching an operation with the object of liberating Warsaw. When I replied in the negative he directed us to give all possible help to the insurgents so as to ease their plight. He endorsed all my proposals concerning how we could help them….
I have mentioned that, starting with 13 September 1944 we had begun to supply the insurgents by air with weapons, ammunition, food and medical supplies. This was affected by our Po-2 bombers, which dropped their loads from low altitudes at points indicated by the insurgents.
Rokossovsky, K., Ed. by Bob Daglish A Soldier's Duty. Moscow: Progress Pub., 1985, p. 261

The approximately 40,000 insurgents went into action with less than 10,000 weapons (including rifles, machine-guns and pistols) and less than five day's supply of ammunition. Nevertheless, the fighting lasted two months. To be fair, the Russians did make efforts to assist the Poles. Some aid supplies were airdropped, and small groups of Russian liaison officers were parachuted into Warsaw; most of them lost their lives.

…Marshal Rokossovsky makes this comment on the tragedy in Warsaw: 'Starting 13 September we had begun to supply the insurgents by air with weapons, ammunition, food and medical supplies. We used night bombers. From 13 September to 1 October 1944, Front aircraft flew 4821 sorties in aid of the insurgents, 2535 of them with various supplies.'

An official military history published in Moscow says that Russian aircraft parachuted to the Polish insurgents 2667 submachine guns and rifles, 41,780 grenades, 3 million rounds of ammunition, 113 tons of rations and about 1000 pounds of medicines.
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 103

When Winston Churchill, asked his military staff in August why the Soviet offensive on Warsaw had halted and whether this had been prompted by political considerations, British General staff officers gave this reply: 'The Germans are making great efforts to hold this nodal point in their communications and they have surrounded and annihilated Russian armored forces which were advancing on the city.' Russian historian Lev Bezymensky comments: 'You can't help admiring the insight and honesty of these British General Staff officers.'
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 105

RED ARMY WAS IN NO POSITION TO IMMEDIATELY AID THE WARSAW UPRISING

The Poles in London wanted postwar Poland to be in the hands of a bourgeois, capitalist, reactionary, anti-socialist, anti-Soviet, pro-Western government headed by Mikolajczyk. The political goals set by Mikolajczyk in cahoots with Churchill required that Warsaw be liberated [by British and American forces] before the Soviet army reached the city. That way, a pro-Western government supported by Mikolajczyk would already be in control of the city by the time the Soviets arrived. But it didn't work out that way. Our troops under Rokossovsky got there first. The anti-Communist Poles in London thought the Soviet army would enter the city as soon as we reached the Vistula. That's why they ordered Bor-Komorowski to stage a last-ditch revolt against the Germans.
However, our forces didn't do what the insurgents expected. They didn't enter the city. Instead, Rokossovsky's army waited on the right bank of the Vistula. You might ask why we didn't cross the river immediately and liberate the city. Well, there were a number of factors. First, the river itself posed a major natural obstacle; it would take time to ford and cost us heavily in men and equipment. Second, an advancing force always suffers more casualties than a defending force. Both these considerations meant we had to wait for reinforcements to catch up with our advance units. Furthermore, our commanders figured we would suffer fewer losses if, rather than attacking frontally, we could drive the Germans out of the city by

attacking them from the left bank and then closing in on them with a flanking action which our troops were already preparing south of Warsaw where they had established a bridgehead. But all these preparations took time. That's why we had to wait on the far side of the river during the Polish uprising inside the city.
The Germans suppressed the Warsaw revolt and took the insurgents prisoner, including General Bor-Komorowski. Usually when the Hitlerites captured the leader of an insurrection in occupied territory, they would have no mercy; they would shoot him at once. But this Bor-Komorowski was allowed to live and after the war conducted anti-Polish and anti-socialist activities–which makes me wonder what sort man he was.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 188

On August 1, 1944, the Polish government in London set off an insurrection in Warsaw. These reactionaries began their criminal adventure solely to prevent the Red Army from liberating the Polish capital. The Red Army, which had just advanced 600 kilometres, had lost many men and much matEriel. It was impossible for it to go forward to Warsaw and help the insurrection. In fact, the Polish reactionaries had deliberately hidden from the Soviets their intention to start the insurrection. But the Nazis, having concentrated several divisions in Warsaw, massacred the population and destroyed the capital.
K. K. Rokossovsky, A Soldier's Duty. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1985, pp. 254–263.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 265 [p. 243 on the NET]

Stalin saw this as a war within a war. He wrote to Churchill and Roosevelt:
"Sooner or later, the truth will be known about the handful of criminals who, in order to seize power, set off the Warsaw adventure."
Staline, Discours 9 fevrier 1946 (Euvres Editions NBE, 1975), vol. XIV, p. 376.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 265 [p. 243 on the NET]

Rokossovsky's advance to the outskirts of Praga, the suburb of Warsaw on the opposite bank of the broad Vistula, made liberation seem at hand. Already on July 24, however, general Bor-Komorowski, commanding the Polish underground army in Warsaw, had decided to order an uprising before the Red Army could reach the city. He was fanatically anti-Russian. He was determined that the Poles should liberate their own city and prepare the way for the London government to take power, excluding the Polish Communists. For these reasons and also from stubborn pride he avoided all contact with Rokossovsky and the Russian High Command, refusing even to consider co-ordinating action with the Red Army.
The people of Warsaw were, however, expecting Rokossovsky's forces to cross the river and come to their aid…. They were bewildered when no Russian crossing was attempted and the Russian guns fell silent.
On Aug. 1 Bor-Komorowski's underground army of 40,000 men attacked the Germans in the city. They were poorly armed and lacked supplies, but they fought bravely. The battle raged for 63 days, but the uprising was savagely crushed. Over 200,000 of the city's inhabitants were killed. The Germans expelled the 800,000 survivors and razed the city to the ground.
The uprising and what Churchill called the "Martyrdom of Warsaw" aroused controversy. The Allied leaders suspected that Stalin had ordered the Red Army to halt at the Vistula and that he was callously leaving the city to its fate. The London Poles actively fomented these

suspicions in Britain and the United States. In fact, Rokossovsky's forces had been halted and were in no position to cross the river and liberate the city.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 398

Footnote: The Warsaw uprising is still a matter of controversy. The latest contribution is Nothing but Honour which fails to present the full story. Among the major factors which are minimized or ignored are, first, that Rokossovsky's forces, exhausted after their rapid advance, were halted by the German offensive; the second factor concerns General Bor-Komorowski. He lacked the training and experience for high command, and he gravely miscalculated the situation. Not only did he deliberately reject all idea of coordinating the uprising with the Red Army, but he also failed to secure firm undertakings of Allied support. On learning of the uprising General Anders, commander of the Polish II Corps in Italy, denounced Bor-Komorowski's action as "a serious crime" and "madness."
It was, indeed, a terrible tragedy and one for which Stalin and the Red Army have been unfairly criticized. It left scars on Russian-Polish relations which took many years to heal. But it also had the effect of making many Poles realize that they must show realism and come to terms with Russia. For the Polish government in London it was a political and military defeat from which it never recovered.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 506

After the German invasion of the Soviet Union, Anders was plucked from his Siberian prison camp and asked to form a new Polish army from fellow prisoners, to fight alongside the Red Army.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 361

The situation was further complicated by the failed Warsaw uprising, organized by the emigre leaders without the knowledge of the Soviet government.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin's Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 259

On Aug. 1, 1944, armed insurrection against the Germans broke out in Warsaw. The insurgents were led by officers who took their cue from the Polish Government in London. The Red Army had rapidly approached Warsaw, and the commanders of the rising mistakenly believed that the German garrison was about to evacuate the city. The mass of the insurgents were animated by the desire to liberate their capital through their own efforts. Their commander, however, was himself guilty of a gross political mistake–he gave the order for action without trying to establish contact and to co-ordinate the rising with the command of the advancing Russian army. Incidentally, the commander of that Russian army was a Pole, Marshall Rokossovsky. That mistake sprang, of course, from the political situation. The leaders of the rising hoped that they would either be in control of the Polish capital before the entry of the Russians, or that, failing this, they would exert moral pressure on the Russians to acknowledge the political claims of those who had helped them to expel the Germans.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 522

It soon turned out that the timing of the insurrection was disastrous. Rokossovsky's army had been stopped by the Germans at the Vistula and then thrown back. The German garrison, far from evacuating the capital, turned all its might and fury against the insurgents. A somber and desperate battle developed, in which the Poles fought with unique romantic

heroism, and the Germans revenged themselves by burning and pulling down street after street and house after house, until the city of Warsaw virtually ceased to exist. The Poles begged for help. Mikolajczyk appealed to Stalin. Stalin's behavior was extremely strange, to say no more. At first he would not believe the reports about the rising and suspected a canard. Then he promised help but failed to give it. So far it was still possible to put a charitable interpretation upon his behavior. It may be, it is indeed very probable, that Rokossovsky, repelled by the Germans, was unable to come to the rescue of Warsaw, and that Stalin, just conducting major offensives on the southern sector of the front, in the Carpathians and in Rumania, could not alter his strategic dispositions to assist the unexpected rising. But then he did something that sent a shudder of horror through the allied countries. He refused to allow British planes, flying from their bases to drop arms and food to the insurgents, to land on Russian airfields behind the fighting lines. He thereby reduced British help to the insurgents to a minimum. Then Russian planes appeared over the burning city with help, when it was too late.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 523

The British and American governments begged Stalin to support the insurgents. Stalin refused, arguing that the insurrection had begun without any prior coordination with the Soviet command and that it was an adventure for which the London Poles were to blame.
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 416

It has long been conventional in the West to hold Stalin and the Red Army responsible, indirectly, for the horrors that befell Warsaw…. It is said that the Polish Home Army expected help from the Soviet Union. Instead the Red Army sat on the Vistula and watched the destruction of the city in front of them….
The truth is far more complicated than this. The Warsaw rising was instigated not to help out the Soviet advance but to forestall it. Polish nationalists did not want Warsaw liberated by the Red Army but wanted to do so themselves, as a symbol of the liberation struggle and the future independence of Poland. This ambition was all the more urgent because only days before, on July 21, a Communist-backed Polish Committee for National Liberation was set up with Stalin's blessing. At Lublin on July 22 the Committee was declared to be the new provisional government; four days later a pact of friendship was signed, with the Soviet Union recognizing the new government. All of this was at least technically within the terms agreed at Tehran, where Churchill and Roosevelt had half-heartedly acquiesced to Stalin's request to keep the frontiers of 1941 and his share of Poland as divided in the German-Soviet pact. What Polish nationalists and the Western Allies could not tolerate was the almost certain fact that any new Polish state born of German defeat would be dominated by the Soviet Union. The Polish government in exile in London, led by Mikolajczyk, urged the Home Army to launch a pre-emptive nationalist insurrection and remained unalterably opposed to any idea that the Soviet Union should keep the territory seized in 1939.
The real issue was not political–there was nothing knew about the hostility between Soviet leaders and Polish nationalists–but military. Could the Red Army have captured Warsaw in August 1944 and saved its population from further barbarities? The answer now seems unambiguously negative. Soviet forces did not sit and play while Warsaw burned. The city was beyond their grasp. In the first days of August the most advanced Soviet units were engaged in bitter fighting on the approaches to the city; the small bridgeheads over the Vistula were subject to a fierce German onslaught. To the north both sides desperately contested the crossing of the Bug and Narew rivers, which might have opened up another

avenue to the Polish capital. This was hardly inactivity, though it could little benefit the Poles. Stalin was completely, and no doubt correctly, dismissive of the military potential of the Polish army. “What kind of army is it?” he asked Mikolajczyk, who was visiting Moscow in early August, “without artillery, tanks, air force? In modern war this is nothing….” Soviet commanders knew that this was not like Kiev or Minsk; their forces were tired and short of arms, and the Germans had made the defense of the Warsaw district a priority. Late in August 1944 General Rokossovsky, whose troops were tied down on the Warsaw front, told a British war correspondent that “the rising would have made sense only if we were on the point of entering Warsaw. That point had not been reached at any stage…. We were pushed back….” When Zhukov was sent to the Warsaw front in early September to report to Stalin on the confused situation there, he concluded on military grounds that the Vistula could not yet be crossed in force. German war memoirs, which are less suspect as a source, confirm that the Red Army was prevented from helping Warsaw by the sudden stiffening of the German defense.
Overy, R. J. Russia’s War: Blood Upon the Snow. New York: TV Books, c1997, p. 296-297

With incredible courage they [the Poles] held out for no less than nine weeks against the most savage attacks. But their tragic gamble failed, first because they had underestimated the reaction of the Germans, who instead of abandoning the city brought up powerful reinforcements to suppress the uprising; second, because they notified neither the Western Allies nor the Russians of their intentions; and third (and in part, because of that), because they received virtually no help from outside.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 852

Stalin can hardly be blamed for the decision to launch the Warsaw uprising. This was a tragic, if understandable, mistake by the AK commanders and the exiled government, deliberately made without consultation with any of the three major Allies. Stalin appears to have been surprised as well as irritated by it. It occurred at a time when the Russian advance in the center had run out of steam and preparations for the next phase of the campaign had not yet begun. This was not in fact launched until mid-January 1945.
Given the unexpected German rally and counterattack on the Vistula front it would have been difficult for Rokossovsky’s forces to have broken through to relieve the Warsaw insurgents, even if Stalin had wanted to.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 854

At the end of September 1944 I returned to General Headquarters from Bulgaria. A few days later the Supreme Commander [Stalin] instructed me to promptly go to the area of Warsaw….
First of all I wished to find out how things were in Warsaw itself whose residents had not long before staged an uprising against the fascist aggressors. The German Command dealt ruthlessly with the insurgents and subjected the population to brutal reprisals. The city was razed to the ground. Thousands of civilians perished in the wreckage.
As was established later, neither the command of the Front nor that of Poland’s First Army had been informed in advance by Bor-Komorowski, the leader of the uprising, about the forthcoming events in Warsaw. Nor did he make any attempt to coordinate the insurgents’ actions with those of the First Byelorussian Front. The Soviet command learned about the uprising after the event from local residents who had crossed the Vistula. The Stavka [Soviet military command] had not been informed in advance either….

On instructions by the Supreme Commander [Stalin], two paratroop officers were sent to Bor-Komorowski for liaison and coordination of actions. However, Bor-Komorowski refused to receive the officers.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 301

POLISH ARMY LAUNCHES HOPELESS ATTACKS WITHOUT WORKING WITH RED ARMY

The Polish First Army then launched its own attack across the Vistula into Warsaw itself, but after heavy losses was forced on Sept. 23 to retreat back across the river. Even at this late stage the Polish Home Army distrusted their pro-Communist compatriots so profoundly that they refused to coordinate their operations with the new attacking force. A week later they surrendered, victims not so much of cynical Stalinist calculation but of their own nationalist fervor: love of their country and hatred of the two great powers at either shoulder that had conspired to crush it.
Overy, R. J. Russia's War: Blood Upon the Snow. New York: TV Books, c1997, p. 298

STALIN SAYS THE WARSAW UPRISING WAS FOOLISH AND POORLY TIMED

That the Polish insurgents made a critical error is no longer in doubt. Taking their orders from London, they failed to coordinate their uprising with Moscow, which was probably tantamount to suicide. Moscow learned about the uprising after it had started and Stalin disassociated himself and the Soviet Command from it. On 16 August, he sent a message to Churchill: 'The Warsaw action is a reckless and fearful gamble, taking a heavy toll of the population. This would not have been the case had Soviet headquarters been informed beforehand about the Warsaw action and had the Poles in London maintained contact with them.'
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 103

…Air Marshal Rudenko, one of the Russian officers involved in helping the Warsaw Poles –he was chief of the 16th Air Army–maintained that it was simply not possible for the Red Army to rush effective aid to Warsaw in late August 1944. He said Russian air bases were too far away. He blamed the tragedy on the Polish Emigre government in London.
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 103

In the 1980s, declassification of pertinent British documents adds to the evidence that Moscow was not notified in advance of the Warsaw Uprising. A commission appointed by the British General Staff reported on 31 July 1944, on the eve of the uprising: 'It would be politically and militarily unacceptable to undertake any such measures without the approval and cooperation of the Russians.'
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 105

Cold War

VICTORS WRITE HISTORY

What the 21st century will call them [acts which could be considered treasonous] will depend on who are the victors. The victors always write the history books.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 122

AID TO GREEK GUERILLAS

Second Meeting of Hoxha with Stalin
March-April 1949
In conclusion, I mentioned to Comrade Stalin the threats the external enemies were making towards Albania.
He listened to me attentively and, on the problems I had raised, expressed his opinion:
“As for the Greek people’s war,” he said among other things, “we, too, have always considered it a just war, have supported and backed it whole-heartedly. Any people’s war is not waged by the communists alone, but by the people, and the important thing is that the communists should lead it.”
Hoxha, Enver. With Stalin: Memoirs. Tirana: 8 N‘ntori Pub. House, 1979.

Here [Greece] we meet another “left” criticism of Stalin, similar to that made about his role in Spain but even further removed from the facts of the matter. As in the rest of Eastern Europe and the Balkans, the Communist had led and armed the heroic Greek underground and partisan fighters. In 1944 the British sent an expeditionary force commanded by general Scobie to land in Greece, ostensibly to aid in the disarming of the defeated Nazi and Italian troops. As unsuspecting as their comrades in Vietnam and Korea, who were to be likewise “assisted,” the Greek partisans were slaughtered by their British “allies,” who used tanks and planes in all-out offensive, which ended in February 1945 with the establishment of a right-wing dictatorship under a restored monarchy. The British even rearmed and used the defeated Nazi “Security Battalions.” After partially recovering from this treachery, the partisan forces rebuilt their guerrilla apparatus and prepared to resist the combined forces of Greek fascism and Anglo-American imperialism. By late 1948 full-scale civil war raged, with the right-wing forces backed up by the intervention of U.S. planes, artillery, and troops. The Greek resistance had its back broken by another betrayal, not at all by Stalin, but by Tito, who closed the Yugoslav borders to the Soviet military supplies that were already hard put to reach the landlocked popular forces. This was one of the two main reasons why Stalin, together with the Chinese, led the successful fight to have the Yugoslav “Communist” Party officially thrown out of the international Communist movement.
Franklin, Bruce, Ed. The Essential Stalin; Major Theoretical Writings. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1972, p. 34

STALIN INSISTS ART REFLECT REALITY

Fifth Meeting of Hoxha with Stalin
April 1951

Some days after this meeting, on April 6, I went to the Bolshoi Theatre to see the new opera ‘From the Depths of Heart’ which, as I was told before the performance, dealt with the new ”life in the collective farm village. That same evening Comrade Stalin, too, had come to see this opera. He sat in the box of the first floor closest to the stage, whereas I, together with two of our comrades and two Soviet comrades who accompanied us, was in the box in the second floor, on the opposite side.
The next day I was told that Stalin had made a very severe criticism of this opera, which had already been extolled by some critics as a musical work of value. I was told that Comrade Stalin had criticized the opera, because it did not reflect the life in the collectivized village correctly and objectively. Comrade Stalin had said that in this work life in the collective farm had been idealized, truthfulness has suffered, the struggle of the masses against various shortcomings and difficulties was not reflected, and everything was covered with a false lustre and the dangerous idea that everything is going smoothly and well.
Hoxha, Enver. With Stalin: Memoirs. Tirana: 8 Nentori Pub. House, 1979.

The great idea is to confer upon the writer (while at the same time enlarging the scope of his work), the mission of setting out, as clearly as possible, the scientific and moral evidences of socialism–but without paralyzing literary activity by pinning it down exclusively to political propaganda. This application of the social sense to creative work implies the definite abolition of “art for art’s sake,” and of individually selfish art with its narrowness and its pessimism.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 207

SU DICTATORSHIP SAVED THE SU AND THE CAPITALIST DEMOCRACIES

Had the USSR been a political democracy of the Western type during the past 20 years, had its people been permitted to choose what was soft, easy, and pleasant, rather than what was hard, painful, and necessary, the Soviet Union would not exist today. Its destroyers would also, in all likelihood, have destroyed the independence of Britain and the freedom of America as well, for the military collapse of Russia would have rendered the victors invulnerable and invincible. Dictatorship has been the price of survival for the USSR and for the United Nations.. Herein lies its justification — except in the eyes of those who are conccerned only with the propriety of means and never with the primacy of ends, or with the eternal verities to the exclusion of the tough tasks of the day, or with the virtues of national suicide under unrestricted freedom as against the vices of national survival by way of coercion.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 326

Had nazi and Japanese forces effected a junction in India in 1942, the defense of Russia and Britain, and prospectively of America, would have become all but impossible.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 559

In World War II Russia saved the west by defeating the fascist powers.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 7

SU DID NOT SOCIALIZE EASTERN EUROPE WHEN IT COULD HAVE

What is surprising is not that so-called “totalitarian” methods of winning friends and influencing people were displayed in these lands during and after their liberation, but that dictatorial devices were not employed more extensively. Moscow had the power (at the risk, to be sure, of a rupture with the Atlantic Powers) to give unqualified support to Communist groups and to Sovietize this whole vast region. With judicious moderation, it refrained from doing so. In no case did its program precipitate civil war within the lands freed by the Red Army, despite widespread resentment at requisitions by Soviet troops who lived off the land.
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 526

Soon, it became clear that none of the ruined nations of East Europe could hope for reconstruction loans from Washington, unless they remade their governments to suit the USA. To some extent they were willing to do this. Bulgaria changed its cabinet at Washington’s order and postponed an election when America protested its form. All of the East European nations hoped for American loans and were willing to make adjustments. They offered industrial concessions to foreign capital; they were ready to postpone socialism, as Lenin did in the days of NEP. Nor did Moscow object to this; Moscow was not at all anxious to take on the economic problems of East Europe, in addition to her own. If these lands could get American loans by concessions to capitalism, Moscow was not disposed to interfere.
In the first years after victory– Moscow handled affairs in East Europe with a loose hand. Americans supposed the arriving Red Army would at once “sovietize” these eastern nations, nationalize industry, collective farms. American correspondents were amazed to discover that the Red Army did not even stop King Michael’s jailing of Communists; they called it Romania’s affair. When I was in Poland in 1945, it was “treason” to urge collective farming, lest this alienate the peasant. Moscow intended to have “friendly nations” on her border but many of Moscow’s acts in 1945-46–the long tolerance of King Michael’s brutally reactionary regime in Romania, the lack of Russian support to Communists fighting in Greece, the calling off of Bulgarian elections because of an American protest, the acceptance of three Poles from London into the Warsaw cabinet–indicated that Stalin would make many concessions in East Europe to keep his wartime friendship with Britain and the United States.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 108

I visited Rumania after the Russian occupation. All the government authorities and the common people testified to the fact that Russia gave freedom to the democratic elements in Rumania to govern themselves.
I also visited Finland. An election was held after the Russians had freed it from the Germans. As far as I could find out, no one charged that the election had been influenced by the Russians. The electoral results showed the Finnish Communists to be in the minority. Similarly in Hungary and Austria, the Soviets permitted governments to be formed which are not communist by any stretch of the imagination.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 99

Stalin does not wish to have a Communist government set up in the occupied areas now. He would prefer a liberal democratic coalition of elements friendly to Russia–officials who would not be secretly plotting war against either Poland or the Soviet Union [as did the Germans].

Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 102

What, then, does the Soviet Union want in the countries which surround her?
First of all, friendly governments. Russia would prefer not to have communist governments now, but does not object to communist control if that is the genuine desire of the majority of the population of the country concerned. I saw an example of this last in the Baltic states, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, now Soviet Republics. On my visit there I found that the workers and peasants, who make up a majority of the population, were all in favor of being part of the Soviet Union. The middle classes wanted to be independent, but admitted that they had an oppressive dictatorship before the present government. The propertied classes wanted to do away with Soviet rule so that they could get back their factories and property. Every person I met, without exception, preferred the Republics to the German occupation. These countries prospered after they became Soviet republics, and it is likely that popular support for the present status will increase rather than lessen.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 103

…But I can till you something about what it was like when the Red Army conquered Rumania and from this you may… be able to piece together a pattern of a destiny soon to unfold throughout the Balkans.
In Dorohoi and Botosani, two prefectures in Rumanian Moldavia which had been held by the Russians since April, 1944, I talked to mayors and to village officials, to trade unionists and to farmers, to Jewish refugees from Antonescu's concentration camps and to a Rumanian chief of police, to representatives of several large American business organizations and to a mother superior in a Rumanian convent.
All these people, some with satisfaction and others with regret, agreed on one thing: they said the Russians had not instigated any revolutionary movements. They said the Red Army had observed the Molotov declaration with disciplined correctness–and we saw the declaration posted wherever the hammer and sickle flew.
There appeared to be no open effort by the Red Army to propagandize the masses in favor of communism or socialism. Pictures of the King and Queen and of the late Dowager Queen Marie still hung on the walls of official buildings, while Stalin's portrait was strangely absent, except in offices of the Red Army. On the surface of things, nothing suggested that the inhabitants did not enjoy a degree of liberty which, considering that Rumania was still a country at war against Russia, was astonishing. In fact, many of the Rumanians apparently wanted to fight on the winning side now. The handsome young Russian commandant of Dorohoi told me that peasants were coming to him every day, asking to enlist in the Red Army.
"The loyalty of the population is remarkable," said he. "Men wish to become soldiers and women wish to join up as nurses. We have to refuse as politely as we can."
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 28

…Will Russia put her dearly won understandings with Britain and America in jeopardy by attempting to establish paramountcy of Communism? I was speculating about this one day with an elderly Communist, and this is what he said: "If any one had told me a few years ago that there would be no revolution in Eastern Europe after this war, I would have called that

man crazy. But that's the way it is now. Russia above all wants stability in this part of the world and where the Red Army goes there will be no revolution."
It seemed true enough, if you applied traditional Marxist definitions of a working-class revolution. In the liberated lands beyond Soviet borders one saw no proletarian uprisings of the conventional pattern. There were no open exhortations to workers to overthrow the bourgeoisie; no demands for a "workers and peasants dictatorship"; no open denunciations of capitalism; no extravagant prophecies of an early Communist or socialist Europe. The familiar terminology of class warfare seemed almost to have disappeared from the lexicon of Europe's Leftists. If the Kremlin was fostering revolution it was doing so with a hand heavily gloved in velvet, and it was pointing rather than pushing.
…"But no one can say that the Comintern or the Soviet government is bolshevizing these countries," he [a loyal follower of Stalin] rejoined.
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 59

At the same time, however, Stalin managed to establish and to obtain his allies sanction for two principles, both very hazy, by which political life in the Russian zone was to be guided. One was that he should be free to intervene against pro-Nazi and fascist parties and groups and to establish a democratic order in the countries neighboring Russia. The other was that the Governments of those countries should be 'friendly to Russia'. For the first time Stalin applied these principles to the Polish issue, which stood at the center of allied diplomatic activity throughout the last part of the war. His purpose was to prevail upon the western allies that they should abandon the Polish government in London, on the ground that it was neither democratic nor friendly to Russia…. Apart from the fact that he undoubtedly believed that what he did served a profoundly Democratic purpose, the strength of his argument was in the fact that the Polish Government in London had indeed been a motley coalition of half-Conservative peasants, moderate Socialists, and of people who could not by any criterion, 'eastern' or 'western', be labeled democrats. The core of its administration consisted of the followers of the Polish dictators Pilsudski and Rydz-Smigly. More important still, the members of that Government, democratic and anti-democratic, were, with very few exceptions, possessed by that Russophobia which had been the hereditary propensity of Polish policy, a propensity enhanced by what the Poles had suffered at Russian hands since 1939. In truth, of all Polish parties, only the Communists were friendly to Russia'.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 520

The question must be asked whether Stalin, while he was bargaining for his zone of influence, already contemplated putting it under exclusive Communist control. Had the scheme of revolution been in his mind at the time of Tehran or Yalta? Had it finally taken shape at the time of Potsdam? His detractors as well as his apologists concur on this point, for both want us to see an extremely shrewd and far-sided design behind his actions. Yet Stalin's actions show many strange and striking contradictions which do not indicate that he had any revolutionary master-plan. They suggest, on the contrary, that he had none. Here are a few of the most glaring contradictions. If Stalin consistently prepared to install a Communist government in Warsaw, why did he so stubbornly refuse to make any concessions to Poles over their eastern frontier? Would it not have been all the same to him whether, say, Lvov, that Polish-Ukrainian city, was ruled from Communist Kiev or from Communist Warsaw? Yet such a concession would have enormously strengthened the hands of the Polish left. Similarly, if he had beforehand planned revolution for eastern Germany, why did he detach from Germany and incorporate into Poland all the German

provinces east of the Neisse and the 0der, the acquisition of which even the Poles themselves had not dreamt? Why did he insist on the expulsion of the whole German population from those lands, an act that could not but further embitter the German people not only against the Poles but also against Russia and communism. His claim for reparations to be paid by Germany, Austria, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Finland, understandable as it was in view of the devastation of the Ukraine and other Soviet lands, could not but have the same damaging effect on the Communist cause in those countries. This was even truer of Stalin's demand for the liquidation of the bulk of German industry. Already at Teheran, if not earlier, he had given notice that he would raise that demand; at Yalta he proposed that 80 percent of German industry should be dismantled within two years after the cease-fire; and he did not abate that demand at Potsdam. He could not have been unaware that his scheme, as chimerical as ruthless, if it had been carried out, would have entailed the dispersal of the German working-class, the main, if not the only, social force to which communism could have appealed and whose support it might have enlisted. Not a single one of these policies can by any stretch of the imagination be described as a stepping-stone towards revolution. On the contrary, in every one of those moves, Stalin himself was laboriously erecting formidable barriers to revolution. This alone seems to warrant the conclusion that even at the close of the war his intentions were still extremely self-contradictory, to say the least.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 536

Mikolajczyk reports a curious conversation with Stalin in August 1944. Not without peasant-like slyness, the Polish politician tried to sound Stalin on his plans for Germany, and told him that German prisoners, captured by the Poles, allegedly expressed the hope that after the war Germany would embrace communism and, as the foremost Communist state, go on to rule the world. Stalin, so Mikolajczyk reports, replied indignantly that 'communism fitted Germany as a saddle fitted a cow'. This contemptuous aphorism undoubtedly reflected his mood. It harmonized so perfectly with the whole trend of his policy vis-a-vis Germany, it was so spontaneous, so organic, so much in line with what we know of his old disbelief in western European communism, and it accorded so much with all that he said and did in those days, that it could not have been sheer tactical bluff.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 537

Early in 1947, he still hesitated whether he should carry to its conclusion the 'revolution from above' in eastern Europe, where he still tolerated non-Communist parties in the governments and allowed some scope to capitalist interests.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 581

Since the Allied Control Commissions had been established in the ex-Nazi satellite states of Rumania and Bulgaria as well as Hungary, Soviet control over these states was only to be 75-25, while Britain ("in accord with the USA") would enjoy 90-10 control in Greece.
Rose, Lisle Abbott. After Yalta. New York: Scribner, 1973, p. 15

At this stage, to avoid the charge of a Communist takeover, Stalin took care to see that the governments formed, with Soviet approval, were coalitions of radical and peasant parties with Communists holding key ministries, such the Ministry of the Interior responsible for the police. In the case of Hungary, four non-Communist parties were represented and

Communists held only two ministerial offices. In Bulgaria a similar coalition had been formed under the umbrella of the Fatherland Front.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 895

In the first two years after the war, only Yugoslavia and Albania could be described as single-party Communist states, although even here the name was avoided in favor of the People's Front and Democratic Front. The governments of the other five– Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria–were all coalitions. In two cases at least (Czechoslovakia and Hungary) they were genuine coalitions in which several parties with their own organizations and very different views combined to carry out a short-term radical program with such reforms as the redistribution of land. When elections were held in Czechoslovakia in May 1946 and Hungary in November 1945 they were generally regarded as fair, producing a Communist success in the first case with 38 percent of the vote, and a Communist defeat in the second, with 57 percent for the Small Farmers' party.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 928

… and it was security infinitely more than any ideological considerations which determined Stalin to create in Eastern and part of Central Europe a "friendly" cordon sanitaire, in place of that hostile cordon sanitaire which had been set up by the Western powers at the end of the First World War.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co.,1971, p. 56

Finland, which no longer represented any danger to the Soviet Union after the Second World War, continues to be a Western-type democracy to this day, and so does Austria. It has even been suggested by one American historian that Stalin would have been perfectly satisfied if half a dozen " Finlands" could have been set up in Eastern Europe. But this was scarcely possible in a country like Poland, with its long tradition of Russo-phobia, nor very easy in countries like Romania and Hungary, once the Cold War, with its challenge to Russia's "sphere of influence," had got going in earnest–which it did from the very moment the Second World War had ended.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co.,1971, p. 56

He [Stalin] also denied–and this was characteristic of 1946–that there were "totalitarian police states" in the East European countries–Poland, Romania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria were governed by "a bloc of several parties ranging from four to six, and the more or less loyal opposition parties can take part in the government…."
Obviously, Stalin was not on very solid ground here, but to keep in with the West he had been anxious since the war to meet the Western powers at least part of the way. He had not–not yet–tried to impose all-communist governments on the Eastern countries, and at that time he valued the East/West coexistence as symbolized by Czechoslovakia and Finland. Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary, as ex-fascist powers, had to be dealt with rather more "vigilantly," but even here pro-forma appearances were still being kept up, as they were in the very special case of Poland. If Yugoslavia was the most extremely communist country of the lot it was, in fact, against Stalin's wishes.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co., 1971, p. 113

For the present [1947] Hungary was a strange amalgam of people's democracy and bourgeois democracy, and American imperialism had not yet given up hope a winning her over and turning her into an anti-Soviet base.
… there were still many strongholds of "bourgeois democracy" in Hungary. A large part of industry and most of trade was still in private hands. The kulaks, dodging their duties, were supplying the black market. Many of the civil servants were still pre-war, and had served under Horthy. Clerical reaction was still very strong, as were the reactionary and pro–fascist parties in parliament, and there were right-wing anti–communist elements among the government parties.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co., 1971, p. 323

One of the troubles with the Hungarian CP had been that some of its older members had imagined that the experiment of 1919 would be resumed with the help of the Red Army, and that a Soviet Hungary would now be firmly set up. It took some time to explain to them that there could be no question of restoring the dictatorship of the proletariat, and that a people's democracy, in which the CP cooperated with other progressive forces, was something quite different.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co., 1971, p. 324

Communism was triumphant and its leaders celebrated their victory. A technical point, however, had to be clarified. No one had yet explained how the new communist states were to be fitted into a Marxist-Leninist scheme of historical stages. Stalin had insisted that they should remain formally independent countries (and he discouraged early proposals for them to be simply annexed to the USSR as had been done with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania).
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 517

On 28 January 1945 Stalin said, "We have no wish to impose anything on the other Slavic peoples. We do not interfere in their internal affairs. Let them do what they can. The crisis of capitalism has manifested itself in the division of the capitalists into two factions– one fascist, the other democratic. The alliance between ourselves and the democratic faction of capitalists came about because the latter had a stake in preventing Hitler's domination, for that brutal state would have driven the working class to extremes and to the overthrow of capitalism itself. We are currently allied with one faction against the other, but in the future we will be against the first faction of capitalist, too.
Dimitrov, Georgi, The Diary of Georgi Dimitrov, 1933-1949. Ed. Ivo Banac. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 358

Perhaps we are mistaken when we suppose that the Soviet form is the only one that leads to socialism. In practice, it turns out that the Soviet form is the best, but by no means the only, form. There may be other forms–the democratic republic and even under certain conditions the constitutional monarchy….
Dimitrov, Georgi, The Diary of Georgi Dimitrov, 1933-1949. Ed. Ivo Banac. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 358

On 7 June 1945 Stalin proposed that they declare categorically that the path of imposing the Soviet system on Germany is an incorrect one; an anti-fascist democratic parliamentary

regime must be established. The Communist Party proposes a bloc of anti-fascist parties with a common platform. Don't speak so glowingly of the Soviet Union, and so on.
Dimitrov, Georgi, The Diary of Georgi Dimitrov, 1933-1949. Ed. Ivo Banac. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 372

On 6 December 1948 Stalin said to some Communist East European leaders, "In your country, where the working-class seized power not by means of an uprising but with help from outside–with the help of the Soviet army, in other words–the seizure of power was easier; you can do without the Soviet form, going back to the model of Marx and Engels–i.e., the people's democratic parliamentary form. We are of the opinion that you can do without the Soviet regime. In your case, you will be able to carry out the transition from capitalism to socialism by means of a people's democracy. The people's democracy will play the role of the dictatorship of the proletariat….
As long as there are antagonistic classes, there will be dictatorship of the proletariat. But in your country, it will be a dictatorship of a different type. You can do without a Soviet regime.
Dimitrov, Georgi, The Diary of Georgi Dimitrov, 1933-1949. Ed. Ivo Banac. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 451

US STOLE SOME ISLANDS IN VIOLATION OF THE UN CHARTER

At the same time, however, the U.S.A. was already hatching plans to take over the protectorates of the Marian, Carolingian and Marshall Islands in Micronesia–which in due course they did, thus breaking the U.N. Charter with an act of flagrant imperialistic robbery.
Gromyko, Andrei. Memoirs. New York: Doubleday, c1989. p. 121

GROMYKO JUSTIFIES THE HELP GIVEN TO HUNGARY

Let me say something about the events that took place in Hungary in 1956. I was not yet Foreign Minister, but I was informed about the upheaval being experienced by a friendly country that had taken the path to socialism.
I must emphasize as strongly as I can that the help given to Hungary by the Soviet Union was absolutely justified.
Gromyko, Andrei. Memoirs. New York: Doubleday, c1989. p. 231

GROMYKO EXTOLS MOLOTOV'S ROLE IN THE GOVT

Unquestionably, Molotov occupies a special place in the history of Soviet diplomacy. While continuing to hold a series of senior party jobs, he took over as Foreign Commissar from Litvinov in 1939, was succeeded as Foreign Minister–the title of post of commissar having been changed to minister in 1946–by Vyshinsky in 1949, and then held the post again from 1953 to 1956. He was in effect second in command throughout the Stalin period.
Of course, the main guidelines of foreign policy were determined by the Politburo, but even there Stalin's opinion was decisive, and he left Molotov responsible for dealing with a number of issues involving other countries. In the U.S.A., Britain, and other Western countries Molotov was regarded as a 'hardliner' in foreign policy, but in fact he was no harder than the party and its Central Committee.
Gromyko, Andrei. Memoirs. New York: Doubleday, c1989. p. 313

US TRIES TO DICTATE PEACE IN ASIA AND DETERMINE EAST EUROPE GOVTS

In the East, Washington not only took sole charge of the armistice with Japan, freezing both Russia and China out of the arrangements, but made supplementary terms with the Japanese generals, by which they kept on fighting the Chinese Communists until America's $300 million airlift could bring Chang Kai-shek's troops north to accept the surrender. In the West, Washington ordered Bulgaria to add to her cabinet some men of America's choice, if she wished to be recognized. The Russians were astounded. "We don't tell France, Belgium, or Holland to change their cabinets," they said.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 107

SU TOOK BACK AFTER WWII TERRITORY THAT WAS THEIRS

Insult seemed added to injury when American commentators more and more grudged Russia "the great territory grabbed in the war." To Russians, this was their own territory, lost in the first world war, only partially regained in the second. The Russians had lost or ceded 330,000 square miles in the first war, and regained 250,000 square miles in the second, a net loss of 80,000 square miles, which roughly covered the territory ceded to Finland and Poland.
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 111

SU REVIVES AFTER WWII BY INTEGRATING EASTERN EUROPE NOT EXPLOITING IT

Let me illustrate by an anecdote. Ten years ago, I met a Czech in Moscow; he had come to make an economic treaty with the USSR. I asked him what truth there was in the American claim that Moscow exploited the East European lands. He replied: "when we deal with the Chiefs of Soviet industry, they bargain for their prices and we bargain for ours. They are tough bargainers. But if they press too hard then Gottwald takes it up with Stalin for a 'political settlement,' and says the terms will ruin us…. Then Stalin gives us help."
Strong, Anna Louise. The Stalin Era. New York: Mainstream, 1956, p. 127

Patrascanu accepted the armistice in the name of the King, and under the circumstances the terms seemed surprisingly moderate. Rumania had to pay an indemnity of $300 million, no more than that imposed on Finland. She lost no territory and earned a chance, by joining in an alliance with Russia, of getting back her prewar control of Transylvania, which Hitler had handed over to Hungary's Admiral Horthy. Patrascanu seemed to think he had made a fair bargain.
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 41

To speed up reconstruction and to raise the standard of living he had to draw on the economic resources of other nations.
In theory he could do that in three different ways. He might have asked the western allies, especially United States, for assistance. In the heyday of the alliance there had been much talk of American loans to Russia and of Russo-American trade. But amid the tensions and

conflicts that developed later, the vistas of economic co-operation faded. Stalin must, anyhow, have been reluctant to bring his country to that position of relative dependence in which any debtor inevitably finds itself vis-a-vis his creditor. His choice was practically limited to two methods, one essentially nationalist, the other revolutionary. The nationalist method consisted in the imposition of tribute on the vanquished nations, the dismantlement and transfer to Russia of their industries, the levying of reparations from their current output, and the direct use of their labor. The revolutionary method, promising to bear fruit more slowly but more permanently, consisted in the broadening of the base on which planned economy was to operate, in an economic link-up between Russia and the countries within her orbit. The gradual integration into the system of planned economy of several small and medium-sized countries, most of which had been industrially more developed than Russia before the '30s, promised to quicken the tempo of Russia's as well as of their own reconstruction. The first condition of that integration was that communism should be in power in the countries concerned.
We have seen that the two policies, the nationalist and the revolutionary, clashed on crucial points. Stalin did not, nevertheless, make a clear-cut choice between the two; he pursued both lines simultaneously; but whereas the nationalist one predominated during the war, the revolutionary one was to gain momentum after the war.
… He now replaced his socialism in one country by something that might be termed 'socialism in one zone'.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 551-552

STALIN CONVENED THE 1952 PARTY CONGRESS

In 1952 Stalin called us together and suggested that we should convene a party Congress.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 276

KIM IL SUNG STARTED THE KOREAN WAR NOT STALIN

Nevertheless, Stalin decided to ask Mao Tse-tung's opinion about Kim Il Sung's suggestion. I must stress that the war wasn't Stalin's idea, but Kim Il Sung's. Kim was the initiator.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 368

I'm telling the truth now for the sake of history: it was the initiative [to start the Korean War] of Comrade Kim Il Sung, and he was supported by Stalin and many others–in fact, by everybody.
Schecter, Jerrold. Trans & Ed. Khrushchev Remembers: the Glasnost Tapes. Boston: Little, Brown, c1990, p. 144

It was not Stalin's initiative, but he supported Kim Il Sung. Although I blame Stalin for all the crimes he committed, on this I am with him. If I had had to make a decision, I would also have given my consent to Kim. This was a question of the internal affairs of Korea. It was only natural that the people of Korea were fighting then, and are still fighting, to become a unified, socialist Korea.
Schecter, Jerrold. Trans & Ed. Khrushchev Remembers: the Glasnost Tapes. Boston: Little, Brown, c1990, p. 145

Throughout 1949 the Soviet Union delivered weapons and other military equipment to North Korea at an intense pace, each consignment personally approved by Stalin. The North probed the South to test the strength of its defenses. They crossed the border and conducted ‘reconnaissance in force’. Following one such sortie, Shtykov [the Soviet Ambassador to North Korea] received a threatening telegram from Stalin, dated October 27, 1949: ‘You were forbidden to advise the government of North Korea to undertake active operations against the South Koreans without permission of the Center… You failed to report the preparation of major offensive actions by two police brigades and in practice you allowed our military advisers to take part in these actions…. We require an explanation.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Autopsy for an Empire. New York: Free Press, c1998, p. 153

A key document is a special report from Shtykov to Stalin dated January 19, 1950:
“On the evening of January 17… Kim Il-sung declared that when he had been in Moscow, Comrade Stalin had told him he should not invade South Korea; if the army of Syngman Rhee were to invade the North, then it would be right to make a counter offensive against the South. But since up to this time Syngman Rhee has not started an offensive, it means that the liberation of the people of the southern part of the country continues to be delayed.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Autopsy for an Empire. New York: Free Press, c1998, p. 154

The Korean communist leader Kim Il-Sung went to Moscow in March 1949 and requested a large increase in assistance so that he might attack the South. Stalin refused, advising the Korean comrades to get on with their preparations but to fight only if invaded.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 553

TITO PUSHED THE HUNGARIAN INVASION

We reported to Tito on why we had come and confronted him with our decision to send troops into Budapest. We asked for his reaction. I expected even more strenuous objections from Tito than the ones we had encountered during our discussions with the Polish comrades. But we were pleasantly surprised. Tito said we were absolutely right and that we should send our soldiers into action as quickly as possible. He said we had an obligation to help Hungary crush the counterrevolution. He assured us that he completely understood the necessity of taking these measures. We had been ready for resistance, but instead we received his wholehearted support. I would even say he went further than we did in urging a speedy and decisive resolution of the problem.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 421

KHRUSHCHEV AND STALIN WRESTLE WITH THE EAST GERMAN PROBLEM

Meanwhile, Walter Ulbricht and our other comrades in the GDR were facing serious troubles directly stemming from the ambiguous status of West Berlin. Berlin was an open city, which posed two problems: First, there was the problem of people crossing from East Berlin into West Berlin. The GDR had to cope with an enemy who was economically very powerful and therefore very appealing to the GDR’s own citizens. West Germany was all the more enticing

to East Germans because they all spoke the same language. An East German with adequate professional qualifications had no difficulty finding a job if he moved to West Germany. The resulting drain of workers was creating a simply disastrous situation in the GDR, which was already suffering from a shortage of manual labor, not to mention specialized labor. If things had continued like this much longer, I don't know what would have happened. I spent a great deal of time trying to think of a way out. How could we introduce incentives in the GDR to counteract the force behind the exodus of East German youths to West Germany? Here was an important question–the question of incentives. How could we create conditions in the GDR which would enable the state to regulate the steady attrition of its working force?

The second problem was the problem of the West Berliners' easy access to East Berlin. Residents of West Berlin could cross freely into East Berlin, where they took advantage of all sorts of communal services like barbershops and so on. Because prices were much lower in East Berlin, West Berliners were also buying up all sorts of products which were in wide demand–products like meat, animal oil, and other food items, and the GDR was losing millions of marks.

Of course, even if we had a peace treaty, it wouldn't have solved these problems because Berlin's status as a free city would have been stipulated in the treaty and the gates would have remained open….

The GDR's economic problems were considerably relieved by the establishment of border control between East and West Berlin. Comrade Ulbricht himself told me that the economy of the GDR immediately began to improve after the establishment of border control. The demand for food products in East Berlin went down because West Berliners were no longer able to shop there. This meant that the limited supply of consumer products was available exclusively to the citizens of East Berlin….

Of of course there were some difficulties. The East Berliners who had jobs in West Berlin were suddenly out of work. But there was never any problem of unemployment. On the contrary, most of the people affected were construction workers, who were very much needed in East Germany. They were all given jobs suitable to their qualifications….

If the GDR had fully tapped the moral and material potential which will someday be harnessed by the dictatorship of the working-class, there could be unrestricted passage back and forth between East and West Berlin. Unfortunately, the GDR–and not only the GDR–has yet to reach a level of moral and material development where competition with the West is possible. The reason is simply that West Germany possesses more material potential and therefore has more material goods than the GDR…. If we had at our disposal more material potential and had more ability to supply our material needs, there's no question but that our people would be content with what they would have and they would no longer try to cross over to the West in such numbers that the drain has become a major threat to a state like the GDR.

Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 454-456

When the two German republics were being formed, West Berlin became a stumbling block and destroyed relations among former allies as well as between the East and the West. The West began to step up subversive efforts inside the GDR, using West Berlin as a base. This was fairly easy for the West to do because Germans were used against Germans. The usual problems of language, of a strange culture, and of outward appearance of agents did not exist as the West looked for agents to send into the East. Besides, there used to be

unrestricted travel and communication between the two sides. The borders were open borders. Of course, this meant that the German Democratic Republic also had the opportunity to send agents against the Federal Republic of Germany, but the Western countries took the most advantage of the situation.
Therefore, the issue of how to combat Western influence arose. The best and most logical way to fight it was to try to win the minds of the people by using culture and politics to create better living conditions. That way people would really have the opportunity to exercise free choice.
However, given the conditions that developed in the two German states, there was no real freedom of choice to speak of. That is because West Germany was richer, with more industrial potential, more natural resources, and more production capacity. It was hard for East Germany to compete.
Schecter, Jerrold. Trans & Ed. Khrushchev Remembers: the Glasnost Tapes. Boston: Little, Brown, c1990, p. 163

Moreover, West Germany was supported by the United States' industrial and financial might. The GDR was fighting not only against the opportunities that existed within West Germany, but also against the added material incentives of the United States.
The West's goal was to turn West Berlin into what is called a mirror of Western life, a showcase for the capitalist world, in order to attract the people of East Berlin into resisting the steps toward socialism being taken in the GDR. These tactics might have seemed perfectly acceptable: let each person make up his or her own mind. There was no contradiction in this. It was a war for people's minds, not an armed conflict. In fact, we Communists also wage a war for people's minds all over the world when we demonstrate the advantages of the socialist system of production and when we talk about how socialism is a more democratic system that gives more opportunity to the people. Socialism makes better use of the resources accumulated by the people and provides better distribution of riches among the people.
Yet if you looked at the situation that way, the picture was not quite right. The GDR's natural resources and its production capabilities were significantly less than those of West Germany. West Germany had the support of the United States, a rich country that you could say had robbed the entire world and grown fat off the first and second world wars. Thanks to more than one war, the United States had expanded its production capabilities. The Soviet Union, by contrast, had suffered more than any other country in the war and had a greater need than any other for the basic necessities: food, clothing, and housing. The Soviet Union's cities and towns, its technology, its machine-building factories and steel mills, and its housing had all been destroyed.
The Soviet Union never had a chance to compete fairly, to pit its material resources against those of the West. While the Soviet Union bled during World War II, the United States prospered and developed its power.
Schecter, Jerrold. Trans & Ed. Khrushchev Remembers: the Glasnost Tapes. Boston: Little, Brown, c1990, p. 164

For this reason, after the war the Americans had accumulated enormous military resources, including clothing and rations. When they reduced the size of their own armed forces they threw their surpluses to West Berlin and West Germany. In this way the competition was uneven from the very start.

The historical role of Marxist-Leninist teachings and the opportunities these teachings afford the working people of all countries are understood only by the most forward-looking segment of society, the most advanced portion of the working-class and intelligentsia. Unfortunately, at a certain stage, ideological issues are decided by the stomach, that is, by seeing who can provide the most for the people's daily needs. Therefore, the attraction of one or the other system is literally decided by the shop windows, by the price of goods, and by wages. In these areas, of course, we had no chance of competing with the West, especially in West Berlin, where capitalism gave handouts to sharply contrast the material wealth of West Berlin with the living conditions in East Berlin.
Also, dividing a single people, making them live under different sociopolitical conditions, created enormous difficulties. West Germany had the chance to make itself more appealing, especially to professionals such as engineers, doctors, teachers, and highly skilled workers. This category of people was particularly attracted to move to the West. Naturally, workers tended to follow their employers.
Schecter, Jerrold. Trans & Ed. Khrushchev Remembers: the Glasnost Tapes. Boston: Little, Brown, c1990, p. 165

By 1961 an unstable situation had been created in the GDR. At the time, there was an economic boom in West Germany. West Germany needed workers badly and lured them from Italy, Spain, Turkey, Yugoslavia, and other countries. Numbers of the intelligentsia, students, and people with higher education, left the GDR because West Germany paid office workers more than they were paid in the GDR and other socialist countries. The question of whether this or that system is progressive ought to be decided in political terms. However, many people decide it in the pit of their stomach. They don't consider tomorrow's gains but only today's income– and today West Germany industry pays you more.
Schecter, Jerrold. Trans & Ed. Khrushchev Remembers: the Glasnost Tapes. Boston: Little, Brown, c1990, p. 168

Walter Ulbricht even asked us to help by providing a labor force. This was a difficult issue to face. We didn't want to give them unskilled workers. Why? Because we didn't want our workers to clean their toilets. I had to tell Comrade Ulbricht: "Imagine how a Soviet worker would feel. He won the war and now he has to clean your toilets. It will not only be humiliating–it will produce an explosive reaction in our people. We cannot do this. Find a way out yourself."
What could he do? He had to appeal for stronger discipline; but they still kept on running away because qualified workers could find better conditions in West Germany.
I spoke to Pervukhin, our ambassador in Germany, about the establishment of border control. He gave me a map of West Berlin…. I asked Pervukhin to share the idea with Ulbricht…. Ulbricht beamed with pleasure. "This is the solution! This will help. I am for this."
Schecter, Jerrold. Trans & Ed. Khrushchev Remembers: the Glasnost Tapes. Boston: Little, Brown, c1990, p. 169

Of greater interest to me personally were the opportunities I had of observing life in Berlin. In West Berlin a great deal of the rubble and ruins which I had seen in 1945 had been cleared way, and instead of half-demolished houses there were now open spaces with paved streets going through them, which still bore their former names on signposts, but new buildings were going up and the less damaged houses were being restored. Familiar shops and large stores had been reopened in temporary premises; there were many flourishing restaurants

and bars; theaters had been rebuilt and were well attended. Street traffic was normal, and people were going briskly about their business. West Berlin was still very much alive.
East Berlin was a sad contrast. War damage had probably been no greater than in West Berlin, but the pace of restoration was infinitely slower. With the exception of one long street, the Stalin Allee, consisting of blocks of newly-built houses in the Soviet style, it looked as if the war had ended overnight. On every hand stood streets of ruined houses and shells of churches and large public buildings. At night the streets were badly lighted compared with the brilliantly illuminated streets of the West. Traffic was meager, and people moved about in a listless way…. It was a depressing picture, and immediately revealed the difference in living conditions between the two zones.
Birse, Arthur Herbert. Memoirs of an Interpreter. New York: Coward-McCann, 1967, p. 226

Nowhere was the conflict of the powers more intense than in Germany; and nowhere was it more sharply focused than in Berlin. There the contrast between American affluence and Russian destitution was brutally exposed for everyone to see. While the United States and Britain were already pumping economic aid into western Germany, Russia was still draining the resources of East Germany which she needed for her reconstruction. It was only too easy for anti-Russian propagandists to present this outcome of the war, and of long and complex preceding historic developments, as the test of the opposed socio-political systems; and to a claim that western capitalism brought prosperity and freedom while Russian Communism could live only by spoliation and slavery.
Of that condominium [the joint condominium over Germany] hardly a trace was now left: Stalin had refused the western powers any say in the conduct of East German affairs just as they had denied him any share in the control of western Germany…. In the spring of 1948 the issue was brought to a head. The western powers, anxious to hasten the economic rehabilitation of their parts of Germany, proposed to introduce a currency reform under which the old depreciated Mark was to be replaced by a new one. The reform put a seal upon Germany's division; and it posed at once the question of Berlin's currency. Russia could not allow the city to become financially incorporated into West Germany; nor could the western powers permit it to be financially absorbed by East Germany. If two different currencies were to circulate in Berlin, the result would be a chronic conflict, for while a growing volume of goods in the West was bound to assure the stability of the new Mark, the value of the eastern currency would be undermined by a continued scarcity of goods. To forestall this, Stalin ventured a desperate gamble. He ordered a blockade of those sectors of Berlin that were held by the Americans, the British, and the French. Soon all traffic heading for West Berlin, whether by land or by water, was brought to a standstill.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 588-589

STALIN ATTACKS MAO FOR RELYING ON PEASANTS ONLY AND NON-MARXISM

Stalin was always fairly critical of Mao Tse-tung. He had a name for Mao, and it describes him accurately from a purely Marxist point of view. Stalin used to say that Mao was a "margarine Marxist".
When Mao's victorious revolutionary army was approaching Shanghai, he halted their march and refused to capture the city. Stalin asked Mao, "Why didn't you take Shanghai?"

“There’s a population of 6 million there,” answered Mao. “If we take the city, then we’ll have to feed all those people, and where do we find food to do it?”
Now, I ask you, is that a Marxist talking?
Mao Tse-tung has always relied on the peasants and not on the working-class. That’s why he didn’t take Shanghai. He didn’t want to take responsibility for the welfare of the workers. Stalin properly criticized Mao for this deviation from true Marxism. But the fact remains that Mao, relying on the peasants and ignoring the working-class, achieved victory. Not that his victory was some sort of miracle, but it was certainly a new twist to Marxist philosophy since it was achieved without the proletariat. In short, Mao Tse-tung is a petty-bourgeois whose interests are alien, and have been alien all along, to those of the working class.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 462

On 10 February 1948 Stalin said, “I also doubted that the Chinese could succeed, and advised them to come to a temporary agreement with Chiang Kai-shek. Officially, they agreed with us, but in practice, they continued mobilizing the Chinese people. And when they openly put forward the question: Will we go on with our fight? We have the support of our people. We said: Fine, what do you need? It turned out that the conditions there were very favorable. The Chinese proved to be right, and we were wrong.
Dimitrov, Georgi, The Diary of Georgi Dimitrov, 1933-1949. Ed. Ivo Banac. New Haven: Yale University Press, c2003, p. 443

SU BUILT UP AUSTRIAN ECONOMY AFTER THE WAR

Like Germany, Austria was divided up between the United States, England, France, and the Soviet Union. And, like Berlin, Vienna was divided into zones.
We owned things in Austria. We had factories, and we were running them. We set up management systems and established an economic network among the factories. They probably belonged to German capitalists, but we confiscated them and assumed ownership.
Schecter, Jerrold. Trans & Ed. Khrushchev Remembers: the Glasnost Tapes. Boston: Little, Brown, c1990, p. 73

Austria was a first step for us, a demonstration that we could conduct negotiations and conduct them well…. Austria became a neutral country.
So we celebrated a great international victory. It was the European debut for a country bumpkin, and it did us a lot of good. The bumpkin had learned a thing or two. We could orient ourselves without directives from Stalin.
Schecter, Jerrold. Trans & Ed. Khrushchev Remembers: the Glasnost Tapes. Boston: Little, Brown, c1990, p. 80

STALIN WAS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR GOMULKA’S IMPRISONMENT

In connection with Gomulka’s imprisonment, I cannot agree that Stalin was responsible. I knew for a fact, I heard it from Stalin, that he did not order Gomulka’s arrest; on the contrary, he even voiced doubts about the arrest. He trusted Gomulka.
After Gomulka was restored to power, relations between our two countries improved. Anti-Soviet slander began to die out, and for this Gomulka needs to be recognized. He was

in a very good position; you might say, he had suffered. He had been in prison several years and people said it was at Stalin's request, although I categorically deny that in this case.
Schecter, Jerrold. Trans & Ed. Khrushchev Remembers: the Glasnost Tapes. Boston: Little, Brown, c1990, p. 116

MOLOTOV SAYS CHURCHILL WAS THE SMARTEST 100% IMPERIALIST

MOLOTOV: I knew them all, the capitalists, but Churchill was the strongest, the smartest among them. Of course he was a 100 percent imperialist.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 45

To my mind, Churchill, as an imperialist, was the cleverest among them.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 47

"…And Churchill? Churchill is the kind who, if you don't watch him, will slip a kopeck out of your pocket. Yes, a kopeck out of your pocket! By God, a kopeck out of your pocket! And Roosevelt? Roosevelt is not like that. He dips in his hand only for bigger coins. But Churchill? Churchill–even for kopeks."
He underscored several times that we ought to beware of the Intelligence Service and of English duplicity, especially with regard to Tito's life. "They were the ones who killed General Sikorski in a plane and then neatly shot down the plane–no proof, no witnesses."
Djilas, Milovan. Conversations with Stalin. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962, p. 73

Churchill was an imperialist to the core.
Goebbels was the first one to use the "iron curtain." It was often used by Churchill, that's for sure.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 59

The overriding truth is that Churchill is an imperialist to the core of his being–which indeed Churchill was, unabashedly so–and could never understand how important it is for me, Roosevelt, to respect Stalin's wishes and views wherever possible because of the need of the U.S. and the USSR to co-operate in the postwar world to wipe out imperialism, colonialism, and other forces antagonistic to democracy.
Nisbet, Robert A. Roosevelt and Stalin. Washington, D.C. : Regnery Gateway, c1988, p. 67

MOLOTOV JUSTIFIES DECLINING MARSHALL PLAN AID

There was much turmoil. But if Western writers believe we were wrong to refuse the Marshall Plan, we must have done the right thing. Absolutely. We can prove it now as easily as two times two is four. At first we decided in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to propose to all the socialist countries that they participate; but we quickly realized that was wrong. The imperialists were drawing us into their company, but as subordinates. We would have been absolutely dependent on them….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 62

MOLOTOV AND STALIN SUPPORT THE CREATION OF ISRAEL

MIKHAILOVICH: One point is not clear to me…. In the formation of the state of Israel, the Americans were opposed.
MOLOTOV: Everyone objected but us–me and Stalin. Some asked me why we favored it. We are supporters of international freedom. Why should we be opposed if, strictly speaking, that meant pursuing a hostile nationalist policy? In our time, it's true, the Bolsheviks were and remained anti-Zionist. We were even against the Bund, though it was considered to be a socialist organization. Yet it's one thing to be anti-Zionist and antibourgeois, and quite another to be against the Jewish people…. Otherwise we favored a separate Israeli state. But we remained anti-Zionist.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 65

Israel has turned out badly. But Lord Almighty! That's American imperialism for you.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 66

This seems mainly to have been due in part at least to his current maneuvers to use Israel, whose statehood he had been the first to recognize, against the West.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 291

I have met Israelis who received military training in the Soviet Union, certainly with Stalin's approval. But Stalin later abandoned the Jewish policy advocated by my father [Beria], which he had supported at the outset.
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 208

The Jewish Committee continued [after the death of Mikhoels], and Stalin would be the first to recognize Israel.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 574

As Israel defended itself against an invasion by five Arab armies, Stalin authorized arms supplies through Czechoslovakia, an infusion of substantial support that proved essential to Israel's success in the war.
Naumov & Teptsov. Stalin's Secret Pogrom. New Haven, London: Yale Univ. Press, 2001, p. 40

MOLOTOV SAYS MAO WAS NEVER A MARXIST AND HAD IMPRACTICAL IDEAS

I talked with Mao and then suggested to Stalin that he receive him. He was a clever man, a peasant leader, a kind of Chinese Pugachev. He was far from a Marxist, of course–he confessed to me that he had never read Marx's Das Kapital….
When I was in Mongolia talking with the Chinese ambassador–he was nice to me–I said, "You want to create a metals industry quickly, but the measures you have planned–backyard blast furnaces–are improbable and won't work." I criticized the Chinese, and our people reproved me later. But it was such obvious stupidity!… Backyard blast furnaces to produce worthless metals–nonsense.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 81

CHOU EN-LAI WAS PRACTICAL AND CLEVER BUT NO THEORIST

I had to deal with Chou En-lai. He was a courteous, well-read man, a practical worker rather than a theorist. But very clever.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 82

MOLOTOV SPOKE AGAINST TITO BUT NO ONE SUPPORTED HIM

In 1953-54 I spoke out [against reconciliation with Tito's] Yugoslavia at the Politburo. No one supported me, neither Malenkov nor even Kaganovich, though he was a Stalinist! Khrushchev was not alone. There were hundreds and thousands like him, otherwise on his own he would not have gotten very far. He simply pandered to the state of mind of the people. But where did that lead? Even now there are lots of Khrushchev's….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 83

MOLOTOV SAYS TITO IS A PETTY-BOURGEOIS OPPOSED TO SOCIALISM

Tito is not an imperialist, he is a petty bourgeois, an opponent of socialism.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 84

STANDARD OF LIVING IS HIGHER IN SOCIALIST EASTERN EUROPE THAN THE SU

MOLOTOV: I agree with you (Golovanov) that the standard of living in the socialist countries (of Eastern Europe) is higher than ours, but by 1 1/2 times, not twice ours…. I believe the standard of living is higher in the socialist countries; they consume more meat, have more footwear per capita. As to how much, I assume one and half times more. But I also believe this serves our interests. Take another example. Our Baltic peoples live at a higher level than Muscovites. We need this. It is a policy that is in keeping with the interests of Moscow.

Central Asia has rapidly industrialized in the period of Soviet power and the standard of living of its people raised to approximate Southern European levels. This contrasts sharply with the acute differential between the U.S. and Puerto Rico, the colonial character of whose relationship with the U.S. is manifested in a much lower standard of living.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 295

STALIN GETS SERIOUS ABOUT BUILDING AN ATOMIC BOMB

Stalin was fascinated by the potential of the bomb. In late October 1942, he had suggested that the plan for our offensive to surround the Germans at Stalingrad be called Uranium.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 203

On July 20th, 1945, 10 days after the information on the imminent explosion of the American nuclear bomb was reported to Stalin, he made up his mind to set up the Special State Committee on Problem No. 1, making it a more powerful, Politburo committee. On August 20th, 1945, two weeks after the Americans dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima, we

once again reorganized our atomic project. Beria was appointed chairman of the new Special State Committee.
[Footnote] By upgrading it to the status of a Politburo committee, under the aegis of the Communist party, Stalin stressed the urgency of its task and increased its power to complete the bomb.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 202

Meetings were usually in Beria's study; heated discussions erupted from time to time. I remember Pervukhin, deputy prime minister, indignantly reprimanding and attacking Voznesensky, a member of the Politburo and his superior, for his reluctance to consider allocations of supplies of nonferrous metals for the needs of chemical processing plants that were engaged in the project. I had always assumed that members of the bureaucratic structures were subordinated to each other in accordance with their status. A member of the Politburo was always beyond criticism, at least by a person in a lower rank. It was not so in the special committee, where Politburo members and key ministers behaved almost as equals. It also startled me that Pervukhin was Beria's deputy in this committee, in which Voznesensky & Malenkov, members of the Politburo and far outranking Pervukhin, were ordinary members.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 204

For me, Kurchatov remains a genius, the Russian Oppenheimer, but not a scientific giant like Bohr or Fermi. He was certainly helped by the intelligence we supplied, and his efforts would have been for naught without Beria's talent in mobilizing the nation's resources.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 211

STALIN'S ATOMIC DIPLOMACY

Just as Fuchs enabled us to determine that the United States was not ready for nuclear war against the Soviet Union, Penkovsky told the United States that Khrushchev was not prepared for nuclear war against the United States.
Stalin pursued a tough policy of confrontation against the United States when the Cold War started; he knew he did not have to be afraid of the American nuclear threat, at least until the end of the 1940s. Only by 1955 did we estimate the stockpile of American and British nuclear weapons to be sufficient to destroy the Soviet Union.
That information helped to assure a communist victory in China's civil war in 1947-1948. We were aware that President Truman was seriously considering the use of nuclear weapons to prevent a Chinese communist victory. Then Stalin initiated the Berlin crisis, blockading the Western-controlled sectors of the city in 1948. Western press reports indicated that Truman and Attlee, the British Prime Minister, were prepared to use nuclear weapons to prevent Berlin's fall to communism, but we knew that the Americans did not have enough nuclear weapons to deal with both Berlin and China. The American government overestimated our threat in Berlin and lost the opportunity to use the nuclear threat to support the Chinese nationalists.
Stalin provoked the Berlin crisis deliberately to divert attention from the crucial struggle for power in China. In 1951, when we were discussing plans for military operations against American bases, Molotov told me that our position in Berlin helped the Chinese communists. For Stalin, the Chinese communist victory supported his policy of confrontation with America.

He was preoccupied with the idea of a Sino-Soviet axis against the Western world. Stalin's view of Mao Tse-tung, of course, was that he was a junior partner. I remember that when Mao came to Moscow in 1950 Stalin treated him with respect, but as a junior partner.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 210

HISS WAS NOT A PAID OR CONTROLLED SOVIET AGENT

One of the officials we had established confidential relations with was Alger Hiss, a member of the American delegation. I had the feeling that Hiss was acting under the instructions of Hopkins. In conversation, Hiss disclosed to Oumansky, and then Litvinov, official U.S. attitudes and plans; he was also very close to our sources who were cooperating with Soviet intelligence and to our active intelligence operators in the United States. Within this framework of exchange of confidential information were references to Hiss as the source who told us the Americans were prepared to make a deal in Europe.
On our list of psychological profiles, Hiss was identified as highly sympathetic to the interests of the Soviet Union and a strong supporter of postwar collaboration between American and Soviet institutions. However, there was no indication that he was a paid or controlled agent, which I would have known or would have been marked.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 227

TIMASHUK'S LETTER REGARDING THE DOCTOR'S PLOT

It is generally believed that the Doctors' Plot began with a hysterical letter to Stalin accusing Jewish doctors of plans to murder the leadership by means of maltreatment and poisoning. The notorious letter of Lydia Timashuk, a doctor in the Kremlin PolyClinic, was written and sent to Stalin not in 1952, just prior to the arrest of the doctors, but in August 1948. To her letter, which charged that Academician Vinogradov was maltreating Zhdanov and others and caused Zhdanov's death, Stalin's reaction had been: "Absurd." Her letter remained on file for three years without action and was only dug up at the end of 1951….
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 298

STALIN PROMOTES ZHUKOV

Zhukov continued to be commander of the military districts in Odessa and Siberia, and in 1952 Stalin made him a candidate member of the Central Committee.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 314

MOLOTOV'S WIFE WAS CAUGHT UP IN THE ANTI-ZIONISM EFFORT

What startled me most was that Zhemchuzhina, Molotov's wife, had maintained clandestine contacts through Mikhoels and Jewish activists with her brother in the United States. A letter to her brother dated October 5th, 1946, before she was arrested, was purely Communist in outlook but otherwise nonpolitical…. In her testimony she had denied that she had attended a synagogue service in Moscow in March 1945 devoted to Jews who had died in the war. Four independent witnesses placed her there. The diplomatic corps was also represented. Surely Molotov encouraged her to go because it was useful to have American observers see his wife there after the Yalta conference, but as she was his wife, his instruction was oral,

without record. Later, she did not want to implicate him so she denied that episode, but it was used against her and against him in the anti-Semitic campaign and in ousting him from power.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 343

In February 1949 the initiative for the arrest of Molotov's wife came not from Stalin but from people who were competing for his succession.
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 169

EAST GERMAN RIOTS CAUSED BY DISAGREEMENT IN GOVT

Ulbricht, together with other GDR leaders, was called to Moscow in early June 1953, and we informed them of our policy, approved by the Presidium on June 12….
While I did not attend the meeting with the East German delegation–at which Beria, Malenkov, Khrushchev, Molotov, Semyonov, and General Grechko (commander of Soviet troops in Germany) were present–I later learned that Ulbricht strongly disagreed. Therefore, Beria, Malenkov, and Khrushchev decided to remove him.
The outburst of strikes and riots that occurred on June 17 may have resulted from the rebel leaders thinking that the government could not respond. Another theory is that Ulbricht provoked the uprising by refusing to meet the demand for increased pay for the striking workers. I believe both factors were involved.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 365

STALIN IS VERY UPSET WHEN GOES OUT AND SEES THE WAR'S DESTRUCTION

He [my father] went south in the summer of 1946 on his first vacation since 1937. He traveled by car…. The procession stopped in towns along the way…. My father wanted to see for himself how people were living. What he saw was havoc wrought by the war on every side.
The housekeeper Valechka, who accompanied my father on all his journeys, told me recently how upset he was when he saw that people were still living in dugouts and that everything was still in ruins. She also told me how some party leaders who later rose very high came to see him in the south and report on agricultural conditions in the Ukraine. They brought watermelons and other melons so huge you couldn't put your arms around them. They brought fruits and vegetables and golden sheaves of grain, the point being to show off how rich the Ukraine was.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 189

STALIN DID NOT BELIEVE THERE WAS SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE FOR A DOCTOR'S PLOT

The "case of the Kremlin doctors" was underway that last winter. My father's housekeeper told me not long ago that my father was exceedingly distressed at the turn events took. She heard it discussed at the dinner table. She was waiting on the table, as usual, when my father remarked that he didn't believe the doctors were "dishonest" and that the only

evidence against them, after all, was the “reports” of Dr. Timashuk. Everyone, as usual, remained silent.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 207

The sensational episode of the “Doctors Case” is also put on Stalin’s shoulders. The theory is that Stalin wanted to get rid of the doctors and thus, get rid of Beria. This was not the truth at all. The newspaper “Russian Vestnik” printed my interview with the journalist Leontiev. When you read this interview, you can see by which methods the “comrades-in-arms” of Stalin tried to take over the government.
LEONTIEV: Rybin, please tell us, how the “Doctors episode” came on the scene. How come the KGB was involved in medicine?
RYBIN: In 1952, Stalin was not feeling well. To take medicines, Stalin did not like to indulge in this, and did not altogether believe in them, knowing full well that sometimes there are side effects on the organs of a person. The difficulty of doctors is that sometimes they do not make a proper diagnosis. There are many cases of a wrong diagnosis, since each person has a different organism that does not always behave the same when taking medicine….
LEONTIEV: Dr. Timashchuk, did she work with the KGB? Why did this doctor write a letter to you? How were the relations between doctors and the KGB?
RYBIN: Doctor-cardiologist Timashchuk did not work with the KGB, but she analyzed the situation in the Kremlin with the doctors correctly, how these doctors are treating the government personnel. Thereafter, she brought this material, in which the KGB got interested in her revelations. This was not a spy, not a complaint, but actual research into the prescriptions and diagnostic analysis of what the Kremlin doctors were doing…. What made this Soviet patriot, Dr. Timashchuk, suspect what was really going on?
In 1945, Shcherbakov died; in 1948, Zhdanov; in 1949 Dimitrov; in 1952 Choibalsan. Before, on personal command by Yagoda, Menzhinsky was “cured” and Gorky and his son were also “cured.” All this pointed to the problem that all was not well with the “Kremlin doctors.” I, during the 1930s, was working in the Secretariat of Ordjonikidze, who was also ailing with an irregular heartbeat. The head of the Secretariat, Semushkin, called in the doctors. Dr. Levin also “cured” Menzhinsky and Gorky. That Ordjonikidze shot himself –is only a legend.
LEONTIEV: But why did the KGB get involved with the doctors of medicine?
RYBIN: This was caused by an observation of Dr. Timashchuk, who was concerned about the health and life of our government leaders. Putting her on the pedestal was the work of our press in 1952. The high death rate of the leadership of our country was a signal that all was not well in the Kremlin with the doctors! This situation made the KGB very wary and concerned.
In August of 1952, a very important meeting on this problem was held, in which I took part. Some persons immediately demanded the arrest of the doctors, pointing to the facts already established as to the guilt of some diagnosticians and wrongly prescribed medicines… tied into the sudden death of Dimitrov. Others suggested that a loyal Commission be appointed to look into this question thoroughly… composed of impartial doctors and medical experts. Only then should this question be decided upon and steps taken to remedy the situation and sentence the guilty doctors. During this heated debate, the calm voice of the Government Security Organ, Vlasik, Major General, stated the following: “All the diagnostic machinery, apparatus used by the Kremlin doctors, should be analyzed, looked into by experts. We found out that the apparatus was in order.” Could Vlasik present such a statement, if Stalin was only interested in the wholesale arrest of all the Kremlin doctors? Of course not. But the diagnosis by some doctors was suspect.

Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 87-89

LEONTIEV: Was there any reaction on the part of Stalin to this “Doctors Case”?
RYBIN: Colonel Tukov stated, “Once, Stalin in the car as we were riding, asked, ‘ ‘what must we do? They died one after another, Shcherbakov, Zhdanov, Dimitrov, Choibalsan, but before this, Menzhinsky…Gorky…. It is impossible that this should happen… that one after another, State leaders die so quickly! It looks like we must replace the old doctors in the Kremlin and get younger doctors to take their place.’
I replied, “Comrade Stalin, older doctors have more experience, practice, while younger ones are still green without practice.”
“No, we must replace them. There are too many things that are unexplainable, too many complaints from families. The NKVD demands the arrest of these doctors which ‘cured’ Dimitrov, Zhdanov, and others?”
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 91

According to Sudoplatov, who at that time headed one of the departments of the MGB, Stalin was extremely critical of the “Doctors’ plot” case as prepared by Ryumin, regarding it as primitive and unconvincing. Ryumin was removed on Stalin’s orders and transferred to reserve duty on 14 November 1952.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 32

“I am not sure at what point she [Valya Istomina] was promoted to housekeeper. Nor do I know how much he could trust her and tell her, although she told me once that he said to her that he didn’t believe that the doctors plot was actually a plot, that the doctors had been set out, they were innocent.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin’s Shadow. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994, p. 247

STALIN FORESAW A RAPID RECOVERY OF GERMANY

Someone expressed doubt that the Germans would be able to recuperate within fifty years. But Stalin was of a different opinion. “No, they will recover, and very quickly. That is a highly developed industrial country with an extremely qualified and numerous working-class and technical intelligentsia. Give them 12 to 15 years and they’ll be on their feet again. And this is why the unity of the Slavs is important.”
Djilas, Milovan. Conversations with Stalin. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962, p. 114

SU DID NOT FORCE SOCIALISM ON EASTERN EUROPE BUT IT AROSE INTERNALLY

The common notion in the capitalist world that the countries of Eastern Europe had a kind of regimented socialization thrust upon them by Soviet bayonets is, of course, a myth, again based ultimately on the bourgeois view of the workers as robots. True, as the Soviet armies, in pursuit of the Nazi armies, moved through Eastern Europe, this very action involved the overthrow of the pro-Nazi governments, in, for example, Rumania and Bulgaria. Revolt

would have come anyway, however, once the Nazi political power behind those governments crumbled. And it is true also that in some of these nations Soviet representatives later helped–as they should have–to develop socioeconomic bases for socialist construction. The real power and initiative, however, had to come from, and did come from, the peoples of those countries themselves. Furthermore, in two of these nations, Albania and Yugoslavia, the Soviet armies were not directly involved. The revolutions there arose almost entirely from internal actions. In Yugoslavia, for instance, a partisan army of 80,000 was mustered to fight the German invasion; by the end of the war this army and grown to 800,000 and was holding down more German divisions than the combined U.S.-British forces in Italy. Furthermore, Yugoslavia before the war had had a strong Communist Party, with a bloc of deputies in the national parliament. And Czechoslovakia had had powerful Socialist and Communist Parties from the 1920s on.
In short, in many of these countries there had been a considerable socialist-oriented political movement, which, although suppressed by the Nazis, managed to survive and form a core when the Nazi and native reactionary forces were defeated. For instance, in Bulgaria, one of the most economically backward of these countries–a poor, partly feudal nation in contrast to capitalist Czechoslovakia–the Communist Party in 1932 elected 19 of 35 members to the city council of Sofia. When the Nazi dictatorship was overthrown, following the war, an election was held by “direct, secret, and universal suffrage” (according to the Statesman’s Yearbook for 1955), in which the anti-fascist Fatherland Front of Communist, Socialist, and peasant parties won 364 seats to the opposition’s 101. Clearly this movement grew mainly out of the situation within Bulgaria. We might note, too, that in Czechoslovakia in 1946, the Communist Party won 38 percent of the vote in a national election.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 99

Nor did Stalin yet give any clear impression that he would sponsor revolution in the countries of the Russian zone. Communist propagandists there spoke a nationalist and even clerical language. King Michael of Romania was left on his throne; and he was even awarded one of the highest Russian military orders for his part in the coup in consequence of which Rumania had broken away from Germany. The Soviet generals and the local Communist leaders did honor to the Greek Orthodox clergy in the Balkan countries. In Poland they courted the Roman Catholic clergy. There was no talk yet of socialization of industry. Only long overdue land reforms were initiated.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 519

The old Bolshevism, in other words, believed in revolution from below, such as the upheaval of 1917 had been. The revolution which Stalin now carried into eastern and central Europe was primarily a revolution from above. It was decreed, inspired, and managed by the great power dominant in that area. Although the local Communist parties were its immediate agents and executors, the great party of the revolution, which remained in the background, was the Red Army. This is not to say that the working classes on the spot did not participate in the upheaval. Without their participation the venture would have been only a flash in the pan. No revolution can be carried out from above only, without the willing cooperation of important elements in the nation affected by it. What took place within the Russian orbit was, therefore, semi-conquest and semi-revolution. This makes the evaluation of this phenomenon so very difficult. Had it been nothing but conquest it would have been easy to denounce it as plain Russian imperialism. Had it been nothing but revolution, those at least who recognize the right of the nation to make its revolution–a right of which every nation has

made use–would have had no scruples in acclaiming it. But it is the blending of conquest and revolution that makes the essence of ‘socialism in one’s zone’.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 554

SU AIDED RATHER THAN EXPLOITED EASTERN EUROPE AFTER WWII

As a result of dislocations from the war, particularly in those economies already at a low, partly feudal level, all possible assistance was needed to move the whole bloc of nations toward socialism. And this the USSR, although devastated by the war, provided as best it could, giving both economic aid and political assistance; within the bloc the better-off nations, such is Czechoslovakia, aided the weaker ones. In 1949 the whole bloc formed the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON). That these efforts soon paid off is clear from the economic figures. For instance, Hungary, which had produced a yearly average of 600,000 tons of steel in the years 1936-38, produced 1,540,000 in 1953. It has, as we have noted, been contended that Stalin used these nations as virtual colonies to supply raw materials for the USSR. But although the USSR certainly needed all the help it could get, there is no evidence of a colonial-like exploitation. On the contrary, the evidence indicates that the USSR often gave material and professional aid that it could well have used itself. The relationship in essence was that of the proletarian alliance that Stalin had earlier described, a relationship between a socialist country and a group of countries trying to move toward socialism.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 100

In Poland and Hungary the Communist-inspired land reform fulfilled, perhaps imperfectly, a dream of many generations of peasants and intellectuals. All over eastern Europe the Communists, having nationalized the main industries, vigorously promoted plans for industrialization and full employment such as were beyond the material resources and the wit of native ‘private enterprise’, notoriously poor in capital, skill, and enterprise. With fresh zeal and ambition they took to hard educational work, trying to undo the age-old negligence of previous rulers. They did much to calm nationalist vendettas and to promote cooperation between their peoples. In a word they opened before eastern Europe broad vistas of common reform and advancement. It was as if Russia had imparted to her neighbors some of her own urge for trying out new ways and methods of communal work and social organization. It ought perhaps to be added that, considering the vastness and the radical character of the upheaval, it is remarkable that Stalin and his men brought it off not without terror, indeed, not without indulging in a long series of coups, but without provoking in a single country within the Russian orbit a real civil war, such as that waged in Greece.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 535

It is the Soviet Union that has supplied the heavy machinery, modern equipment, raw materials, that have permitted the so rapid industrialization of the People’s Democracies and the so rapid rise in the living standards of their peoples. It is the USSR that has sent them Soviet technicians, not to spy on them in the old Western tradition, not to take over their economies like the Nazi and American “experts,” but to help them to train their own advanced technicians in the most modern techniques perfected in the Socialist Soviet Union. Soviet long-term credits have been used by the People’s Democracies to obtain from the Soviet Union metallurgical, chemical, machine-building materials. The USSR has sent them

whole large-scale modern industrial installations–machine-tool factories, power plants, hydro-electric stations. With the help of Soviet equipment, the People's Democracies are now able, themselves, to produce heavy and complex industrial goods previously imported, to manufacture many machines for the first time in their history, including the machines that will lay the basis for the development of socialist agriculture.
Klugmann, James. From Trotsky to Tito. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1951, p. 183

While the most rapid improvement in economic conditions, social welfare and cultural development has generally occurred in the Asiatic Republics of the USSR, the various European national minorities, especially those of the Baltic Republics and the Jews have achieved the highest level of economic development and social welfare in the entire USSR. The three Baltic Republics, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, are respectively the wealthiest of all Republics. In 1970, the average income in rubles per capita for the three republics was 1500–13 percent higher than in the Russian Republic….
During pre-1917 Czarist rule, and its independence period before 1940, Lithuania was a relatively backward, largely agricultural economy. Since it became part of the Soviet Union its rate of industrial output has been the most rapid of all the Republics, increasing 54 times between 1940 and 1978, compared to 20 times for the Soviet Union average and 17 times for Russia proper.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 72

Economically, in general, the European republics have fared very well under Soviet power. Six of them have had a more rapid rate of industrialization than has Russia proper, and two of them less rapid; three of them are more developed than the Russian Republic, and five somewhat less developed. In general, there is no evidence that the economic relationship between the non-Russian European Republics and the Russian Republic is either exploitative, or of a type in which industrial production is concentrated in Russia. All eight European national minority Republics appear to have derived considerable benefit from their association in the Soviet Union.
Szymanski, Albert. Human Rights in the Soviet Union. London: Zed Books, 1984, p. 74

STALIN AIDED ALBANIA WHILE KHRUSHCHEV STABBED HOXHA IN THE BACK

In this situation, the Albanians, although relying mainly on their own efforts, at first received some help from Yugoslavia, but aid from the USSR became of major importance when difficulties developed with Yugoslavia. And it was forthcoming. In 1947 Albania entered into a trade agreement with the Soviet government. By 1951, 57% of Albania's foreign trade, imports and exports, was with the USSR. Albania was able to import machinery, chemicals, textiles, and building materials while exporting the products of its mining and oil industries. Soviet assistance was given for the construction of industry in all areas, including oil. And trade agreements were also made through COMECON. Hoxha paid particular tribute to Stalin for this aid (1948): "We owe the extension of our light and heavy industry to the great aid of the Bolshevik Party, to Comrade Stalin and the Soviet state, who helps us unsparingly in this respect as in all other respects." But with the death of Stalin in 1953 and the subsequent rise of Khrushchev, the situation began to change, and Hoxha wrote:

“However, in this field of our relations and contacts with the post-Stalin Soviet leadership, too, we very soon saw the first signs that things were no longer going as before. There was something wrong, there was no longer that former atmosphere, when we would go to Stalin and open our hearts to him without hesitation and he would listen and speak to us just as frankly from his heart, the heart of an internationalist communist. More and more each day, in his successors, instead of communists, we saw hucksters.”
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 100

Certainly in the relations of the USSR with Albania or of Stalin with Hoxha, there is no hint of Soviet exploitation. In fact, just the contrary. The atmosphere in the interviews, as Hoxha indicates, was warm and friendly; Stalin’s interest in the Albanian people and their construction of socialism, sincere; and the trade and other economic agreements were of mutual benefit. There is no reason to believe that this was not generally true of Stalin’s relationships with the communist leaders of other nations, although, of course, there were exceptions…. What has happened is that Stalin’s differences with other leaders have been played up, often in a malicious gossip-column style, as by Djilas, and the basic comradeship pervading these relations has been obscured. That Stalin made mistakes is true, and indeed, inevitable. However, they were not his alone but of the leadership of the International, and there is no evidence that anyone else could’ve done better. In fact, when we consider Trotsky’s narrow leftism and Bukharin’s “thesis” that world capitalism had “stabilized” itself–on the brink of the Great Depression–it is clearly fortunate for the world proletariat that in these years the International had Stalin’s guiding hand behind it.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 102

STALIN CARRIED OUT SENSIBLE COLD WAR PREPAREDNESS

Our armed forces after the war weren’t weak–they were strong in spirit. But unless supported by good equipment and the latest armaments, their spirit would quickly evaporate. We had to assess the situation soberly.
Stalin drew the correct conclusion: he saw that the reactionary forces of the West were mobilizing against us, that they had already accumulated hundreds of atomic bombs, and that the prospect of a military conflict with the United States was all too possible and not at all encouraging for our side.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 62

Although the new western regions were not adequately prepared for defense, the first echelons of the forces of the western military districts were transferred to them and joined by other units still in the formative stages. Stalin ordered a strong fortified line to be built along the new border, just as there was along the old one.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 742

STALIN WANTED TO HEAL WITH THE POLES THE RUSSO-NAZI TREATY WOUND

Stalin was especially pleased that we had been able to help the Poles; he knew our assistance would make good marks for us with the Polish people. The treaty of 1939 had deeply wounded the Poles, and the wound was still fresh. Stalin wanted to do everything he

could to heal that wound as soon as possible. Naturally, he didn't say so to me outright, but I could sense what he was thinking.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 193

STALIN TELLS CHURCHILL HE WANTS ELECTIONS IN POLAND TO HEAL THE WOUNDS

Stalin wrote to Churchill that elections were the only way to solve the problem of what political course Poland would follow.
…The elections were a success for us and a failure for Churchill. The essence of his policy had been to promote Mikolajczyk to a position from which he could determine both the internal and foreign policies of the Polish state. When the results were in, however, Mikolajczyk's party had been defeated. The Polish Workers' Party and the parties allied with it received an absolute majority of the votes.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 194-196

ALBANIAN ECONOMIC POLICY WAS SUCCESS WITHIN STALIN'S LINES

The Editor [of this book, Jon Halliday] says, "Overall, Albanian economic policy has been a success, within rather rigid traditional Stalinist lines. Food self-sufficiency, in particular, has allowed the state considerable political leeway."
Hoxha, Enver. The Artful Albanian. London: Chatto & Windus, 1986, p. 13

VYSHINSKY TELLS HOXHA THAT TITOISM IS NOT SOCIALISM

"The object of this meeting," said Vyshinsky in general outline, "is to exchange our experience and reveal our joint knowledge about the betrayal of the Yugoslav Titoites, about their undermining activity against our countries, parties and socialism, and to define the method of combating and unmasking their deviation which is dangerous for communism in general and for the Yugoslav Communist Party and socialism in Yugoslavia in particular."
Hoxha, Enver. The Artful Albanian. London: Chatto & Windus, 1986, p. 119

[Vyshinsky said to Hoxha,] "…Their activity is identical with the activities of the Trotskyites, Bukharinites and agents of world capital whom we have unmasked in our trials."
Hoxha, Enver. The Artful Albanian. London: Chatto & Windus, 1986, p. 120

"Stalin personally criticized Tito for this impermissible act which he wanted to commit against you," said Vyshinsky.
Hoxha, Enver. The Artful Albanian. London: Chatto & Windus, 1986, p. 122

HOXHA DESCRIBES THE CHANGES OF THE CHINESE LINE FROM ANTI TO PRO TO ANTI MARXIST

… This Mao's theory of 100 flowers, widely proclaimed in May 1956 by Lu Dingyi, constituted the Chinese variant of the bourgeois-revisionist theory and practice about the

“free circulation of ideas and people”, about the co-existence of a hotch-potch of ideologies, trends, schools and coteries within socialism. (It turned out later that Mao’s utterly revisionist decalogue “On the Ten Major Relationships” belongs precisely to this period of the “spring” of modern revisionism.)

Many a time later I have turned back to this period of history of the Communist Party of China, trying to figure out how and why the profoundly revisionist line of 1956 subsequently seemed to change direction, and for a time, became “pure”, “anti-revisionist” and “Marxist-Leninist”. It is a fact, for example, that in 1960 the Communist Party of China seemed to be strongly opposing the revisionist theses of Khrushchev… . It was precisely because China came out against modern revisionism in 1960 and seemed to be adhering to Marxist-Leninist positions that brought about that our Party stood shoulder to shoulder with it in the struggle which we had begun against the Khrushchevites.

However, time confirmed…that in no instance, either in 1956 or in the ’60s did the Communist Party of China proceed or act from the positions of Marxism-Leninism.

In 1956 it rushed to to take up the banner of revisionism, in order to elbow Khrushchev out and gain the role of the leader in the communist and workers’ movement for itself. But when Mao and his associates saw that they would not easily emerge triumphant over the patriarch of modern revisionism, Khrushchev, through the revisionist contest, they changed their tactic, pretended to reject their former flag, presented themselves as “pure Marxist-Leninists”, striving in this way to win those positions which they had been unable to win with their former tactic. When this second tactic turned out no good, either, they “discarded” their second, allegedly Marxist-Leninist, flag and came out in the arena as they had always been, opportunists, loyal champions of a line of conciliation and capitulation towards capital and reaction.
Hoxha, Enver. The Artful Albanian. London: Chatto & Windus, 1986, p. 183

HOXHA DESCRIBES THE UNDERMINING OF HUNGARY

As was becoming apparent, Hungary had many weak points. There the party had been created, headed by Rakosi, around whom there were a number of veteran communists like Gero and Munnich, but also young ones who had just come to the fore, who found the table laid for them by the Red Army and Stalin. The “construction of socialism” in Hungary began, but the reforms were not radical. The proletariat was favored, but without seriously annoying the petty-bourgeoisie. The Hungarian party was allegedly a combination of the illegal communist party (Hungarian prisoners of war captured in the Soviet Union), old communists like Bela Kun and the social-democratic party. Hence this combination was a sickly graft, which never really established itself….

I have been closely acquainted with Rakosi and I liked him…. Rakosi was an honest man, an old communist and a leader in the Comintern. His aims were good, but his work was sabotaged from within and from without. As long as Stalin was alive everything seemed to be going well, but after his death the weaknesses in Hungary began to show up.
Hoxha, Enver. The Artful Albanian. London: Chatto & Windus, 1986, p. 187

HOXHA TOLD SUSLOV THAT IMRE NAGY WAS A TRAITOR

“He [Imre Nagy] is a traitor,” I told Suslov, “and we think that you are making a great mistake when you hold out your hand to a traitor.”
Hoxha, Enver. The Artful Albanian. London: Chatto & Windus, 1986, p. 192

HOXHA SAYS SUSLOV WAS A DEMAGOGUE

… Suslov was one of the greatest demagogues of the Soviet leadership.
Hoxha, Enver. The Artful Albanian. London: Chatto & Windus, 1986, p. 199

HOXHA ARGUES WITH KHRUSHCHEV ABOUT WHO IS A MARXIST

“You Albanians astound me,” he [Khrushchev] said, “You are stubborn.”

“No,” I said, “we are Marxists.”
Hoxha, Enver. The Artful Albanian. London: Chatto & Windus, 1986, p. 208

HOXHA SAYS KOSYGIN IS A REVISIONIST MUMMY

We walked away from that revisionist mummy [Kosygin].
Hoxha, Enver. The Artful Albanian. London: Chatto & Windus, 1986, p. 233

TIMASHUK SAYS SHE SAID ZHDANOV’S HEART WAS BAD BUT THE DOCTORS IGNORED HER

[Letter from Dr. Timashuk to the Presidium of the 23rd Communist Party Congress, March 31, 1966, asking to have her name cleared of any responsibility for the “Doctors’ Plot”]

Zhdanov died on August 30, 1948. The results of the postmortem examination, performed…by the pathologist Fedorov, confirmed the diagnosis of myocardial infarction that I had put forward while the patient was alive, but which the professors had rejected.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 128

Perhaps nothing could have saved Zhdanov’s life, but the intent of this August 31 meeting in Moscow appears to have been to achieve a unanimous medical opinion to deflect Timashuk’s criticism, rather than to deal with the concrete facts of his illness.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin’s Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 36

Zhdanov ‘s doctors never exhibited the sense of urgency while he lived that they showed now on his death.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin’s Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 63

Stalin charged that Vlasik did not verify the Timashuk letter in order to protect Yegorov. Yegorov and Vlasik were drinking buddies, as Maslennikov noted in his testimony, and their friendship may well have gone beyond this.

Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 163

In early 1949 she [Timashuk] wrote once more to Kuznetsov. Again she received no reply. The implication was obvious: Kuznetsov took no interest in saving Zhdanov's life.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 208

STALIN TRIES TO GET ALONG WITH THE WEST AFTER WWII

At Dumbarton Oaks the Soviet government had demanded that the republics of the Soviet Union should be founding members [of the United Nations], each with a vote. Britain and the United States had questioned this demand as excessive. Now in Yalta, Molotov announced that the Soviet government would be content if three of the republics–namely, the Ukraine, Byelorussia, and Lithuania–or at any rate two became founding members. On these and several other major issues Stalin showed his readiness to compromise.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 413

POLISH UNDERGROUND FOUGHT THE SU BUT ITS LEADERS WERE TREATED LENIENTLY

In January 1945 the Armija Krajowa [Polish underground] was converted into an underground army on the orders of the Polish government in London. General Okulicki headed this Polish underground which waged guerrilla war against Russians in Poland. The London government and the church in Poland worked to intensify anti-Russian feeling. In the early postwar months the Polish underground assassinated more than 100 Red Army officers and men. Indeed Alexander Werth, who was one of a large group of Western press correspondents who visited Poland at this time, witnessed a special anti-Russian demonstration, staged for their benefit by the underground, in which two unfortunate Russian soldiers were shot outside their hotel. In March, Okulicki and 15 other underground leaders were arrested and taken to Moscow. An outcry was aroused in the West.

On his arrival in Moscow Hopkins interceded with Stalin on behalf of the Polish underground leaders. In June 1945 they were tried in Moscow for assassinating Red Army personnel and were given lenient sentences.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 428

TITO WAS THE HERO OF THE SUBVERSIVES AND RIGHTISTS

Nevertheless, there have established themselves in every corner of the Soviet Empire groups of "bourgeois nationalists," "revolutionary democrats," "Bukharinists" and "true Communists," who have gone to earth; the most vital of these in terms of resistance are the "bourgeois nationalists" and nationalist Communists, whom in a general way we might call Titoists…. But the example of Marshall Tito has been a powerful psychological stimulus. If anybody since the annihilation of the Bukharinist opposition has earned the highest order for anti-Stalinist achievement, it must be the leadership of the Yugoslav Communist Party, and it is to Marshall Tito that any wind which in the Soviet Communist Party may blow up from the Right owes its inspiration.

Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 210

STALIN TELLS THOREZ TO HIDE THEIR WEAPONS RATHER THAN SURRENDER THEM

Soon after the liberation of France, the leader of the French Communist Party, Maurice Thorez, came to Moscow and asked Stalin when they met:
“De Gaulle is demanding that the resistance fighters hand in their weapons to the authorities. What shall we do?”
“Hide your weapons!” was the response of the leader of the peoples. “It may happen we will need your help.”
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin’s Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 310

STALIN SAYS HE DOES NOT KNOW WHY THE WIVES OF PARTY LEADERS ARE IN PRISON

And so, although Molotov still remained a Politburo member, his wife, whom he, of course, loved, found herself in the Lubyanka prison. As far as is known, Molotov had the guts to ask Stalin why Paulina had been arrested. Stalin answered tongue in cheek:
“I haven’t the slightest idea, Vyacheslav. They have put all my relatives in prison, too.”
It was true. Almost all the relatives of Stalin’s first wife, Svanidze, and his second spouse, Alliluyeva, were either in prison are had been shot. Molotov had nothing to answer to the quip of his all-powerful boss. All the more so since the wives of our president, Kalinin, and Stalin’s main assistant, Poskryobyshev, were also in prison.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin’s Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 340

SOVIET ALLIES WANT A BIGGER PIECE OF EASTERN EUROPE AFTER WWII

The fact that the President and Prime Minister were keen to discuss Eastern Europe at length, while saying nothing about Western Europe, gave Stalin justified grounds for concern. When he raised the issue of the Fascist regime in Spain, he was met by incomprehension. The Western Allies expressed concern over the position in Bulgaria and Romania, but saw nothing wrong in giving help to one side in the Greek civil war that had flared up. At times Stalin felt he was talking not to allies but long-standing rivals who wanted a bigger piece of the pie they had all had a hand in baking. And he was not mistaken.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 501

STALIN CALLS OFF ATTACKING NORTHERN JAPAN IN 1945

On the eve of the Soviet campaign against Japan, Stalin ordered Vasilievsky, commander of Soviet forces in the Far East, not only to liberate the southern half of the island of Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands, but also to occupy half the island of Hokkaido to the north of a line

between the towns of Kusiro and Rumoi, deploying two infantry divisions, one fighter and one bomber wing. When Soviet forces had reached the southern half of Sakhalin, on August 23, 1945 Stalin ordered the demarcation of the 87th Infantry Corps for a landing on Hokkaido. This order had not yet been carried out when, on the 25th, southern Sakhalin was already liberated. Stalin paused: what would he gain by a landing? It would probably spoil his already deteriorating relations with the Allies. He canceled the order for the landing on Hokkaido. The Far East chief of headquarters staff, General Ivanov, passed on his instructions: 'In order to avoid conflict and misunderstanding with our Allies, the launching of any ships or aircraft in the direction of Hokkaido is strictly forbidden.'
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 502

COST TO THE SU OF WWII

Voznesensky, who was a candidate member of the Politburo, had a deeper awareness than any full member of that body of the enormity of the task [assessing the war damage and what recovery would entail]. Stalin had long had ambivalent feelings about him, recognizing that he was undoubtedly the ablest of the entourage, but finding his independence and his tendency to utter brusque judgments unacceptable. Nevertheless, at the February 1947 plenum of the Central Committee he surprised everyone by making Voznesensky a full member of the Politburo.
Voznesensky's summary, and a first report compiled by the Extraordinary State Commission on the damage caused by the Nazis, enumerated 1710 towns and townships destroyed, 70,000 villages and hamlets burned to the ground –albeit many of them by Soviet hands–32,000 factories blown up or rendered unusable, 65,000 kilometers of railway track destroyed, around 100,000 collective and state farms laid waste, along with thousands of machine and tractor stations, 25 million people were homeless and were now sheltering in dugouts, barns or cellars. The direct cost of the invasion was assessed at about 700 billion rubles, at pre-war prices. In effect, the country had lost 30 percent of its national wealth. The people's standard of living was the lowest imaginable.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 504

STALIN LOWERS CONSUMER PRICES IN 1949 WHICH HELPED THE ELDERLY GREATLY

During his anniversary year [1949], on the other hand, Stalin introduced a measure that is still popular with elderly citizens who can recall it. He reduced prices on a range of consumer goods: 10 percent off bread, flour, butter, meat and meat products and wool, 28% off vodka, 20 percent off toiletries and bicycles, 25 percent off television sets and 30 percent off clocks and watches. Prices in restaurants, tea-rooms and other public eating places were to be reduced correspondingly.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 517

POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE SU AFTER WWII WAS PRETTY GOOD AND STABLE

[After the war] the country had quickly licked its wounds. The internal situation appeared to be secure. No one was making oppositional speeches. The national solidarity around the

political leadership, embodied in Stalin, was real. International relations seemed stable. The party's ideological influence was undivided.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 523

BOTH SIDES WANTED TO TAKE OVER ALL OF KOREA

After elections in South Korea on May 10, 1948, legislative and executive bodies were created, and on Aug. 25 of the same year elections took place in North Korea. Two states came into being, thus artificially dividing the Korean nation in two. Soviet troops withdrew from the North to be followed by the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the South. Each side believed that in each case the government was supported by a majority of the population. Unfortunately, it seems clear that the conflict arose because each side wanted to extend its authority over the entire peninsula.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 540

STALIN AGREED TO A KOREAN COMPROMISE TO END THE WAR

Stalin acknowledged that the only way out of the stalemate was by some form of compromise. Agreement was reached, however, only in July 1953, six months after his death.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 541

SU AND THE US BOTH GOT 3 VOTES IN THE UNITED NATIONS

Heads of governments, ministers, ambassadors had haggled for months over the Ukrainian and Byelorussians votes, as if the future of the peace had really hung on them. At Yalta, Stalin obtained what he wanted. But even from his own viewpoint he gained nothing except perhaps the satisfaction of a capricious ambition, because, as a quid pro quo he agreed that the United States should also have three votes in United Nations a right of which the United States was not to avail itself.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 527

Stalin at Yalta capitulated to American designs for the United Nations, reducing his claim from 16 seats to 3 and stating repeatedly that he would support any claim put forth by Washington for parity. The Soviet leader appeared to accept the American formula for use of the veto power in the Security Council.
Rose, Lisle Abbott. After Yalta. New York: Scribner, 1973, p. 24

STALIN SEES NO POSSIBILITY OF SOCIALIZING GERMANY AFTER THE WAR

Had he [Stalin] reckoned on the chance of a Communist revolution in Germany he would have seen no need for the punitive peace he advocated.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 538

When, at last, they hoisted the red flag over the ruins of the Reichstag, this was to symbolize the triumph of revolutionary Russia over Germany, not the triumph of revolution in Germany.

Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 539

MANY SOVIET LEADERS OBJECTED TO PRESERVING CAPITALISM IN LANDS THEY FREED

The editorial silence of the Moscow Press about the civil war in Greece and the extraordinary moderation of the French and Italian Communists may have puzzled many a Bolshevik; but these were still relatively remote affairs. What was going on nearer home, in the Russian-occupied countries, was much more vital. To the occupying troops, at least to many politically minded officers and men, and to active members of the party and the Komsomol at home, it must have been an intolerable thought that the capitalist order should survive in the lands that the Red Army alone had freed–and at what prodigious cost!–from the Nazis. Should they, the people who had, in spite of all recent traditionalism, been bred on and for socialism, now become the guardians of capitalism there?–they asked themselves. Of that same capitalism which had ushered Europe into the Nazi era and which, if allowed to recover, would again lead Europe to nothing better, because nazism and fascism had not been just accidental aberrations of European history, but had expressed the very nature of capitalist society in extremis. That they, the victors, should now preserve an order from which they had experienced nothing but hostility, and could expect nothing but hostility, was not only unnatural to them–it would have been the most miserable anti-climax to their great 'war of liberation'.

Stalin could not ignore such moods. At first he apparently wished to meet them half-way only. He sponsored the idea of the 'peoples democracy'. The order to be established in the countries neighboring with Russia was to have been neither capitalist nor socialist, it was to stand between the two. In the light of later events it has often been assumed that the slogan was but dust thrown in the eyes of the bourgeoisie, and that Stalin had from the outset aimed at sovietization. Yet the concept of a people's democracy, as distinct from the Soviet system and the proletarian dictatorship, was for a time taken very seriously by the leaders of the Communist parties; and it was earnestly discussed by leading Russian political theorists. Stalin himself, it will be remembered, had been brought up on the notion of a system that was to have been neither fully capitalist nor socialist. This had been the idea behind the formula of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, to which he had stuck until 1917, and which he had put forward again in 1925-27, in the debate over the Chinese revolution. Towards the end of the war and some time later that idea was apparently back in his mind.

From his viewpoint, the main justification for the intermediate system, with which he was experimenting, was the chance that this would help to preserve the condominium of the 'Big Three'. This hope was to be dashed. The 'people's democracy' had too much of the revolutionary flavor and it bore its maker's stamp all two distinctly to win the approval of the western powers. It generated all the tension and friction with Stalin wanted to prevent. This suggested to him that the western powers were out to reinstall the old anti-Russian parties and groupings on Russia's borders and eventually to squeeze Russia out of Europe. That this should be their intention appeared equally plausible to the Russian traditionalist and to the Bolshevik. Exactly so had the western powers after the Napoleonic wars been eager to deny Russia the position of influence she had just gained….

That the controversies between Russia and her allies widened and grew bitter, Stalin inclined more and more to give up his experiments with the intermediate regimes and to reduce the ‘people’s democracy’ to a mere facade for the Communist monopoly of power.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 542-543

ALLIED POWERS COULD NOT AGREE ON WHAT SYSTEM WAS TO PREVAIL IN GERMANY

The longer they were to stay on, performing the functions of a German government, which in the absence of any German government they had to do, the more would each occupying power be inclined to mould in its own image the economic and political life of its part of Germany. It was as unnatural for the officers of the Soviet military administration to administer a capitalist economy in eastern Germany as it was for their counterparts of the American military government to reorganize western Germany on Socialist lines. Thus, the prolonged presence of the allied armies in Germany tended to split the country economically and politically as well as militarily.
… The conclusion which Stalin must have drawn from the behavior of the allies was that they had reconciled themselves to a position in which they were to have no influence on matters concerning eastern Germany. That Russia was to have no influence on western Germany became evident when the western powers categorically rejected the proposals, repeatedly made by Stalin and Molotov, for Russia’s participation in control over the economy of the Ruhr.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 545

SU MADE RAPID INDUSTRIAL ADVANCEMENTS AFTER WWII

On February 9, 1946, in an ‘electoral’ speech, he [Stalin] proclaimed the first post-war Five-Year Plan and outlined the major purposes of ‘three or more Five-Year Plans’….
To many, this ambitious program seemed unreal. The workers to whom Stalin was appealing were hungry–urban consumption had shrunk to about 40 percent of what it had been in the very lean year of 1940. In the coal-mines of the Donetz Basin men were still pumping water out of the shafts; every ton of coal brought up to the pithead had to be cherished. The steel mills, rattling with wear and tear, turned out only 12 million tons of ingot, a fraction of the American output. Engineering plants were worked by adolescent semi-skilled labor. People were dressed in rags; many were barefoot. It seemed almost a mockery to urge them to ‘catch up’ with United States. Yet the USSR was to attain the major industrial targets Stalin had set; and it was to do so ahead of time. The coal-mines yielded 500 million tons a year after 12 years only. The output of oil was stepped up to 60 million tons after nine years. And the steel industry produced its 60 million tons at the end of the 1950s. Within the same period the production of cement, and industrial construction, expanded more than four times; the industrial use of electricity per worker increased three-times; and the output of machines and machine tools was raised seven or eight times. THE GREATER AND THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF THIS ADVANCE WAS MADE IN THE LAST YEARS OF THE STALIN ERA.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 573

At most, reparations, in whatever form they were taken, can hardly have done more than help to offset the looting and destruction to which Russia had been subjected by the Germans and their allies during the war. The postwar reconstruction, like the evacuation of factories and workers and the remarkable increases in productivity during the war, was above all due to the efforts of the Soviet people themselves.
The huge country was still so disorganized in 1945 and 1946 that, despite the fall in arms production, overall industrial production also fell, and the food situation was so bad that there was famine in the Ukraine and other areas. But after 1946 the targets of the fourth Five-Year Plan were exceeded in all the main industries except textiles, footwear–and, of course, agriculture. The Ukraine, which had suffered more heavily than any other part from the destruction of its industries, was able to report by 1950 that its flooded mines were restored and the great Dnieper dam rebuilt, while its output of coal, electricity, and the products of its metallurgical and engineering industries had risen above the levels of 1940, the last full year of peace. Since the productive capacity of the Urals and Siberia had not been interrupted and continued to grow, this meant that the overall figures were well above those for 1940. This result had been achieved by a concentration of investment (88 percent) in heavy industry and the production of capital goods. Consumer goods, housing, and food (the second in particular) remained in short supply. Between 1947 and 1952 there was a surprising and very welcome improvement in real wages for workers (peasants always excepted)–43 percent over the figure for 1940–but still too little to spend them on, a poor distribution system, and waiting lines a familiar feature of Soviet life.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 948-949

POST WWII AGRICULTURAL SITUATION WAS TERRIBLE & MORE WIDESPREAD THAN 1921 FAMINE

Simultaneously, the foundations of Russia's nuclear industry were laid. This undertaking claimed a large part of Russia's reduced resources. The capital invested in all branches of industry between 1946 and 1950 was as large as all the investments made in the 13 years of the pre-war investment drive, from 1928 up to the moment of the nazi invasion. As always, Stalin was bent on developing heavy industry and armament plants; he set extremely modest targets for consumer industries; and even these were not attained. And it was once again on a most shaky agricultural foundation that the huge construction rested. During the war, after the enemy had seized the nations richest granaries, farm output in the rest of the country fell to less than half of normal. The first post-war harvest yielded in the whole country not more than 60 percent of pre-war crops. The reserves were exhausted; many cattle had been slaughtered; machines and tractors were in poor repair; and there were not enough of them; and even the stocks of seed had been either depleted or completely eaten up. Nor was there enough labor available to bring under the plough fields that had lain fallow for years.
Such was the situation when, in 1946, a terrible drought hit the country. This was, as an official announcement put it, the worst disaster agriculture had suffered for over half a century, since 1891. It was far more widespread than the droughts and storms of 1921 that had destroyed all crops in the Volga lands and had brought to 36 million peasants a famine that led to outbreaks of cannibalism. People listened to this announcement with a shudder, for the calamity of 1891–an event which hastened the decline of Tsardom–had haunted popular memory ever since. The crisis of 1946 revealed and aggravated the rickety condition

of the entire agricultural structure. The collective farms were in a state of semi-dissolution. The peasants cared more for the tiny plots they still owned privately than for the fields they owned in common;…
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 574

Worst of all was the condition of agriculture. In the last four years of Stalin's rule the average grain harvest amounted to only 80 million tons–it was 95 millions in 1940 and 86 millions in 1913. The cattle stock was also less than in 1913. And so, although the government confiscated or bought at less than nominal prices nearly half the grain crops, the feeding of the urban population was exposed to terrible hazards. The city dwellers consumed less than half a pound of meat and a quarter pound of fat per week. The farms lacked manpower, tractors, machinery, transport, and fertilizers.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 602

WEST SEEKS TO REDUCE SOVIET GAINS IN EASTERN EUROPE AFTER WWII

It was an open secret that American influence had been active and decisive in bringing about the exclusion of the Communists [from the French and Italian governments]. Presently, General Marshall, the American foreign secretary, launched his Plan, offering American economic assistance to all governments whose countries were struggling with the poverty and chaos bequeathed by war. The Plan appealed greatly even to Communists in eastern Europe. Stalin himself must have hesitated for a moment; and before the end of June he dispatched Molotov and a large number of experts to Paris to ascertain what benefit, if any, the Plan might hold out to Russia. It turned out that to obtain aid the Soviet Union was required, in the first instance, to draw up a balance sheet of its economic resources; and, according to the Soviet experts, the Americans attached to the aid conditions that would hamper the USSR in its economic planning, and the governments of eastern Europe in nationalizing their industries. Moreover, the Americans were now determined to rehabilitate the economy of western Germany and disregard Russian, Polish, and Czechoslovak claims to German reparations.
Stalin could not but reject these terms. He could not agree to submit to the West a balance sheet of Soviet economic resources, in which he would have had to reveal Russia 's appalling exhaustion and the frightful gap in her manpower that he was concealing even from his own people. And he was not only bent on disguising Russia's weakness; he was afraid of American economic penetration into eastern Europe and even into Russia which might have given an impetus to all anti-Communist forces there and promoted counter-revolution. He decided to close eastern Europe to western penetration.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York : Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 582-583

SU HAD TO KEEP LARGE MILITARY AFTER WWII TO DETER US NUCLEAR THREAT

Meanwhile, the United States had demobilized; its people had clamored for a return of the troops from Europe; and its generals and diplomats had relied on their nuclear monopoly to assure them lasting superiority vis-a-vis Russia . The assumption that Russia , unable to

break that monopoly in the near future, would have to yield to American pressure also underlay the Truman Doctrine. Stalin countered by his determination to break the American monopoly at any cost and as soon as possible. But before he could achieve this, he had reduced his armed forces from 11 1/2 million men to less than three million. From the beginning of 1948 he began to increase the size of this military establishment until he had in the early 1950s, more than 5 1/2 million men under arms. That this mobilization was a tremendous drain on the Soviet economy and its manpower is obvious. But Soviet superiority in conventional arms was the only answer Stalin could give to American nuclear supremacy. He staved off any possible threat of a nuclear attack on Russia by an implied counter-threat of a Soviet invasion of western Europe, an invasion the powers of the North Atlantic Alliance would not be in a position to stop. Thus the bogy the West had invoked to justify the Truman Doctrine–the Red hordes threatening Europe –assumed some reality; but it did so only in consequence of the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine. Stalin had no intention of moving his armies beyond the agreed demarcation line in Europe . But he established a relative equilibrium of power, or, to use a term that became fashionable later, a balance of deterrents. At this early stage the balance was attained between two different elements of military force, nuclear weapons on the one hand and conventional ones on the other.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York : Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 584

STALIN REACTS TO EJECTION OF MARXISTS FROM WESTERN GOV'TS BY DOING THE SAME

Behind his military shield Stalin accelerated the revolution in eastern Europe. If America 's economic power enabled Washington to exercise an indirect and discrete political control over its western European allies, Russia could prevail in eastern Europe only by means of direct political control and naked force. The impression which the offer of Marshall Aid had made even in eastern Europe showed how favorable the ground there was for American penetration. The remnants of the Polish, Hungarian, and East German bourgeoisie and large parts of the individualistic peasantry were praying for the nuclear annihilation of Russia and Communism. The working classes were starving. Counter-revolution could still rally considerable strength. True, in Yugoslavia , Czechoslovakia , and Bulgaria Communism was still overwhelmingly popular; but in the rest of eastern Europe it was weak or, at least, unable to hold its ground by its own strength. Stalin now resolved to establish it irrevocably; and so, while the Communists were being ejected from the governments of Italy and France , he saw to it that the anti-Communists should be squeezed out of the governments of eastern Europe and–suppressed. He installed the single-party system all over the Soviet sphere of influence.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York : Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 585

CONSUMERS AND CONSUMER INDUSTRY WERE IN BAD SHAPE AFTER WWII

The basic sectors of the Soviet economy, having reached their pre-war level of output in 1948-49, rose 50 percent above it in Stalin's last years. The modernization and urbanization of the Soviet Union was accelerated. In the early '50s alone its urban population grew by about 25 million. Secondary schools and universities were giving instruction to twice as many pupils as before 1940. Out of the wreckage of the world war the foundations had been

relaid for Russia ‘s renewed industrial and military ascendancy, which was presently to startle the world.
Yet the miseries of Russian life remained almost as shocking as they had been during the primitive accumulation of the 1930s and were even more unbearable. The mass of the people were living on cabbage and potatoes; were dressed in rags; and were housed in wretched hovels. While the most advanced machine-tool plants of the USSR were as efficient as those of the USA , it’s grossly under-developed consumer industries were at least half a century behind. The Soviet citizen consumed less than one-third, perhaps even less than 1/4, of the goods the American enjoyed. With the continuous swelling of the urban population, the housing situation was desperate. It was quite common in capital cities for several families to share a single room and kitchen.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York : Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 601

STALIN GAVE IN TO THE ALLIES BUT KNEW WHERE TO DRAW THE LINE

Stalin, playing from terrible weakness, decided to bluff his way out by a show of calm, self-assurance, and power. He had already withdrawn, under Anglo-American pressure, from northern Persia which his troops had occupied on the basis of a war-time agreement with Britain . He had failed to obtain a naval base in the Turkish Straits, the prize that Russia ‘s western Allies had always promised her in war and denied her in peace. It now looked as if those Allies were seeking to reduce or to eliminate Russian influence from the Balkans and eastern Europe as well….
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York : Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 581

Stalin had repeatedly halted at the very brink of armed conflict with his ex-allies. He had stopped at the Turkish Straits; he had stopped in Persia ; he had stopped before attacking Tito with armed force; he had stopped before turning the blockade of Berlin into ultimate disaster. It was not so clear how far he was prepared to go in the conflict engendered by the Korean War. ‘Does he still know where to stop?’ the men around him now wondered.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York : Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 624

ROSA KAGANOVICH IS A FRAUD

Koba has a new passion: the sister…. Perhaps she will tone down his anti-semitism…. Kaganovich is said to be shocked by the affair. His sister is very fond of power….
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 159

It means that the “outflanking” moves against Alliluyeva continue, and that the odds are on Rosa Kaganovich….

Alliluyeva came to see me. She told me Mossina had been banished to the Urals and reproached me for not having vouched for her. I suggested that she should have approached the Party’s district committee, or Melnikov at the city committee. She replied that she had a long talk with Koba and asked him to intervene. Koba said in reply, “Comrade Litvinov, her immediate superior, has refused to vouch for her. In these circumstances I cannot interfere…” She left crying. I had never seen her in such a state. She said that if anything

happened to Mossina she wouldn't survive it. She had told this to Molotov…. The motive behind Molotov's intrigue is quite clear. Rosa Kaganovich is said to have been very friendly with him in 1929 at Piatigorsk in the Caucasus, where they were both on a cure…. If she has an affair with Koba too we shall have adopted that Austrian aboriginal custom described in an ethnological study which I once read in London.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 169

And Rosa Kaganovich has become Georgian…. She is learning the Georgian language….
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 280

From Rosa Kaganovich-Stalin, his third wife, I [Hutton] obtained further confirmation of her husband's character,…
Fishman and Hutton. The Private Life of Josif Stalin. London: W. H. Allen, 1962, p. 12

As a teenager, Svetlana became even more like her dead mother and she was adored by everyone. She showed great affection for her step-mother Rosa (both Svetlana and Vasili called her "Mamochka"–Mummy),…
Fishman and Hutton. The Private Life of Josif Stalin. London: W. H. Allen, 1962, p. 80

This vitally and personally concerned Stalin, because he had married Rosa Kaganovich, sister of his protege, Lazar, and was, therefore, a member of the Kaganovich family.
Some four and a half years earlier, Molotov had brought Stalin and Rosa together, and soon after the death of his second wife Alliluyeva, he had married Rosa.
Fishman and Hutton. The Private Life of Josif Stalin. London: W. H. Allen, 1962, p. 114

… According to various rumors published under glasnost, Stalin and his wife had quarreled bitterly the evening before her death at a reception given by Voroshilov. Stalin either had killed her or drove her to suicide by his rudeness. These rumors date back to 1932, and there is no way of corroborating them. The same is true with regard to Stalin's alleged liaisons (for example, with Rosa Kaganovich); they seem to belong to the realm of fantasy.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 152

His [Kaganovich] sister is–or was–an intimate of Stalin's, not an unimportant point.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 541

Rumors had other candidates as his lovers in the late 1930s; it was even said that he secretly married again. The person said to have been his wife was named as Rosa Kaganovich. This allegation was peddled by the German Nazi media. Supposedly Rosa was Kaganovich's beautiful sister. It was a pack of lives. Kaganovich had only one sister, Rakhil, who died in the mid-1920s.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 436

"There was a rumor that he remarried, to Rosa Kaganovich. But he couldn't; twice his marriages had ended in tragedy, and that was enough. He would not try again."
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 133

Statement of the Kaganovich Family: The fall of the USSR has revealed that a number of ‘authoritative’ works on the Soviet Union published in the West are in actual fact forgeries. In 1987 the United States publisher, Morrow, published a book by one Stuart Kahan under the title ‘Wolf of the Kremlin: First Biography of L.M. Kaganovich, the Soviet Union’s Architect of Fear”.
The following are our particular observations and disproofs to the whole set of materials displayed in the book.
The author claims that LMK supposedly placed his sister by Stalin’s side as a home doctor and at the same time, according to the author’s expression, as the “dictator’s wife”, and with her assistance to several Politburo members the step-by-step poisoning of Stalin was carried out. All this is a wicked calumny.
The absurdity and falsity of this version is proved by the fact that LMK’s only sister, by mistake named in the book as Rosa (her name was Rachel), died in 1926 and was buried in Kiev at the Baykov Cemetery. She was married, and she brought up five children. She had never been a doctor, she never went either to Arzamas, or to Nizhny Novgorod or Moscow, so she could not have taken part in the actions so zealously ascribed to her by the author (pp. 238-245). It goes without saying that the dialogue described in the book (pp. 219-223) which supposedly LMK had with his already late sister is fictitious.
THUS SPAKE KAGANOVICH by Feliks Chuyev, 1992

STALIN SAYS MAO UNDERSTANDS MARXISM WELL

[In 1950] All the members of the Instantsia were present…. Stalin took the floor and declared that Mao had a profound understanding of Marxism.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 313

STALIN ADHERES TO THE POST WWII AGREEMENTS BUT HIS SUPPORTERS OBJECT

Churchill and Truman adhered religiously to the Yalta Agreement, as did Stalin, but Molotov, Bulganin, Khrushchev, and the rest of their followers were determined to end Stalin’s “appeasement of the Anglo-American Imperialists.”
The ambitious Molotov supported by Bulganin, Khrushchev and others, tried to force on Stalin a more aggressive attitude, but Stalin managed to convince his lieutenants the time was not ripe for risking conflict with the Western Powers.
Fishman and Hutton. The Private Life of Josif Stalin. London: W. H. Allen, 1962, p. 158

STALIN WAS LESS HARD TOWARD THE WEST AFTER WWII THAN HIS SUPPORTERS

Despite a show of truculence Stalin was determined to avoid war. He called a meeting [in 1948] of all his closest associates, to try to retrieve the situation [the Berlin blockade]. He had never whole-heartedly agreed with Molotov’s foreign get-tough policy, but he had not intervened too strongly in the Molotov-Bulganin moves, because he was not against the Allies’ feeling the Soviet’s strength. But, he had from time to time and unknown to the Allies intervened, and one of his personal directives had been that the air-corridor was never to be closed and that Allied aircraft were not to be pursued.

Fishman and Hutton. The Private Life of Josif Stalin. London: W. H. Allen, 1962, p. 171

PRAVDA ARTICLE CONTENDS THE DOCTOR'S PLOT IS REAL

As published by Pravda on Jan. 13, 1953…. The full text of the story follows:
"Some time ago agencies of State Security discovered a terrorist group of doctors who made it their aim to cut short the lives of active public figures of the Soviet Union through sabotage medical treatment.
Documentary evidence, investigations, the conclusions of medical experts, and the confessions of the arrested have established that the criminals who were secret enemies of the people, sabotaged the treatment of patients and undermined their health.
Investigation established that the participants in the terrorist group, taking advantage of their positions as doctors and abusing the trust of patients, by deliberate evil intent undermined patients' health, deliberately ignoring the data of objective examination of the patients, made incorrect diagnoses which did not correspond to the true nature of their illnesses, and then doomed them by wrong treatment.
"The criminals confessed that, taking advantage of Comrade Zhdanov's ailment, incorrectly diagnosing his illness and concealing an infarct of his myocardium, they prescribed a regimen contraindicated for this serious ailment and thereby killed Comrade Zhdanov.
Investigation established that the criminals likewise cut short the life of Comrade Shcherbakov by incorrectly employing strong drugs in his treatment, prescribing a regimen which was mortal to him and thus brought him to his death.
The criminal doctors sought above all to undermine the health of leading Soviet military personnel, to put them out of action and to weaken the defense of the country. They sought to put out of action Marshal Vasilevsky, Marshal Govorov, Marshal Konev, General of the Army Shtemenko, Admiral Levchenko and others, but arrests disrupted their evil plans, and the criminals did not succeed in attaining their aim.
It has been established that all these murderer-doctors…were enrolled by foreign intelligence services as hired agents.
[On Jan. 13, 1953 Pravda stated], Most of the participants in the terrorist group (Vovsi, Kogan, Feldman, Grinshtein, Etinger, and others) were connected with the international Jewish bourgeois nationalist organization "Joint," established by American Intelligence for the alleged purpose of providing material aid to Jews in other countries. In actual fact this organization, under the direction of American Intelligence conducts extensive espionage, terrorist, and other subversive work in many countries, including the Soviet Union. The arrested Vovsi told investigators that he had received orders "to wipe out the leading cadres of the USSR"–received them from the USA through the "Joint" organizations, via a Moscow doctor, Shimeliovich, and the well-known Jewish bourgeois nationalist Mikhoels.
Other participants in the terrorist group (Vinogradov, Kogan, Yegorov) proved to be old agents of British Intelligence.
Deriabin, Peter. Inside Stalin's Kremlin. Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, c1998, p. 102-104

"In this way, and it was then already clear to me [Vovsi] that the name 'Jewish Antifascist Committee' was only a smokescreen under which Jewish nationalists realized their anti-Soviet, nationalistic goals; and this fact that the Committee directed to the US various kinds of information about the Soviet Union directly shows that he [Mikhoels] essentially served the interests of Zionist circles in the US."

Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 271

STALIN ORDERED SECRET POLICE ARRESTED WHO WITHHELD INFO ON ZHDANOV'S DEATH

With one exception, Soviet media have yet to disclose that seven of Abakumov's deputy ministers went to jail with him in August 1951, that the head of his personal bodyguard detail and dozens of Sled-Chast' [the MBG unit to investigate especially important cases] officers were arrested later, or that the arrests resulted from Stalin's discovery of information being withheld from him on allegations about the cause of Zhdanov's death. It was Stalin who ordered the arrests, and it was Stalin who set free the single deputy minister whose arrest has been made public under glasnost. The deputy minister was Pitovranov, but glasnost has not revealed the actual reason for Pitranov's release:…
Deriabin, Peter. Inside Stalin's Kremlin. Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, c1998, p. 176

TITO CAN THANK THE RED ARMY FOR THE LIBERATION OF YUGOSLAVIA

For what could be more distorted than a picture of the liberation of Yugoslavia from Axis occupation and of building socialism in Yugoslavia apart from and "independent" of the USSR?
Could the Yugoslav national-liberation movement ever have taken the form that it did and reached the proportions it did, if the main Nazi forces had not been contained and then driven back and defeated by the Red Army?
Could the Yugoslav Partisan forces that were scoring such successes in the hills and forests ever have driven out the Nazis from the main cities without the Red Army? Would Belgrade and other great Yugoslav cities have been freed without the Red Army?
The Soviet troops of the Second and Third Ukrainian Fronts crossed the rivers Drava and Tisza in the latter half of 1944, liberated Serbia and the Vojvodina and on October 20, 1944, fighting alongside the First and Twelfth Corps of the Yugoslav People's Liberation Army, liberated Belgrade, the Yugoslav capital.
Klugmann, James. From Trotsky to Tito. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1951, p. 28

Was it not the Soviet Union that sent in without delay, and despite the devastation of its own territories, food and economic aid of all kinds in the most critical period in 1944-45, when the West was still trying to extort from Yugoslavia political concessions in return for food for its starving population?
Klugmann, James. From Trotsky to Tito. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1951, p. 29

CONTRARY TO TITO'S CLAIMS THE SU DID NOT EXPLOIT EASTERN EUROPE AFTER WWII

The Titoites proclaim that the "satellite Cominform states of Eastern Europe" have allowed themselves to become the "victims of Soviet imperialism." Yugoslavia, "heroically led by Tito, has escaped from the red net," while the other countries of Eastern Europe "groan under the Soviet yoke." "The Soviet Union," proclaim the Titoites, "tried to stop the industrialization of Yugoslavia and of the satellite states." Let us now turn the light of facts and figures on to the

countries of People's Democracy, which have remained in peace, friendship, and close economic relations with the USSR and with each other. We know what the Titoites claim, let us now seek the truth.
The People's Democracies of Eastern Europe– Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Rumania, Albania–existed in the two decades between the wars as semi-colonies of the Western capitalist states. They were deprived of heavy industry. They exported mainly foodstuffs and industrial raw materials. Their economies were unbalanced, lop-sided, developed according to the needs of Western capitalism and not to the needs of their own people. Foreign capital dominated their economies. The masses of their people–workers, peasants, professional people, those who did the useful work–lived in the most dire poverty in countries of great potential wealth, but whose resources were either untapped and undeveloped or developed in the interests of the rich of the Western capitalist world. Theirs, in those years between the wars, was the same hard fate as that of the peoples of Yugoslavia.
Western capitalism owned and controlled the material resources of these countries. In Poland, foreign capital (principally British, French and German), invested in the different branches of industry, made up from 50 to 85 percent of the total invested capital according to the industry. More than half the Industrial shares in Bulgaria were, before liberation in 1944, held by foreign capitalists. British, French, German, and American capital dominated the main industries of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Rumania. In Albania the whole financial and credit system was controlled by a few Italian, British and American monopolies. An enormous tribute was extracted every year from these lands. Between 1922-44 in Bulgaria, for instance, 20 percent of the total national income during that period, went to capitalists abroad.
Klugmann, James. From Trotsky to Tito. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1951, p. 176-177

Never has any anti-Soviet slander been more false than the Titoite–Wall Street cry that the Soviet Union tries to prevent the industrialization of the People's Democracies of Eastern Europe! A study of the facts shows that exactly the reverse is true [under Stalin in the postwar period]. The Titoite tactic, like that of Goebbels, is to turn truth on its head!
Klugmann, James. From Trotsky to Tito. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1951, p. 181

CAPITALISTS WANTED TO REINSTALL THE SAME RIPOFF SYSTEM IN EAST EUROPE AFTER WWII

…industrialization remained impossible under Western imperialist domination.
Non-Communist economists who honestly examine the post-war developments in Eastern Europe are bound to admit this:
"What Eastern Europe primarily needed was the Industrial Revolution, and without the shift in the European balance of power resulting from Soviet victory it would never have come. Western Europe, so far as it was interested in Eastern Europe at all, was interested in keeping it backward as a source of cheap food and cheap labor…. Had the Western powers been able to influence the course of events [after the Second World War], they would have put back into power the same kind of Governments which existed before, and whose failure led to fascism." (Dr. Doreen Warriner, Lecturer at the London School of Slavonic Studies, in Revolution in Eastern Europe, 1950)
Klugmann, James. From Trotsky to Tito. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1951, p. 182

MAO DOES NOT THINK YOU CAN BE A LEFTIST IF YOU HAVE NEVER SUFFERED

Looking at his nephew, Mao added the harsh judgment: “You grew up eating honey, and thus far you have never known suffering. In the future, if you do not become a rightist, but rather a centrist, I shall be satisfied. You have never suffered, how can you be a leftist?”
Spence, Jonathan D. Mao Zedong. New York: Viking, 1999, p. 157

STALIN’S POST WWII DEMANDS WERE REASONABLE AND MODERATE

The president’s achievement was the more remarkable when one recalls that the most substantial victory which American diplomacy won at Yalta–save that of Soviet commitment to the United Nations Organization–had to be kept a secret. Stalin agreed to enter the war against Japan no later than three months after the defeat of Germany and for limited concessions. Roosevelt was aware of Stalin’s Asian demands as early as 1943 and was impressed with their modesty, for they simply involved the restoration of possessions and privileges taken by the Japanese from the Russians in the war of 1904-1905. At Yalta Stalin told Roosevelt that if Russian conditions for entry into the Pacific war “were not met it would be very difficult to explain to the Russian people why they must go to war against Japan.” So the bargain was struck. In return for the promised Soviet entry Roosevelt and Churchill (who was not a party to the Asian discussions) agreed that Russia should have restored to it southern Sakhalin, Dairen, and Port Arthur, plus joint operating rights with the Chinese of the two major Manchurian railroads. In addition “the Kurile islands shall be handed over to the Soviet Union.”
Rose, Lisle Abbott. After Yalta. New York: Scribner, 1973, p. 24

Then came the problem of Peace. Hard as this was to Europe and America, it was far harder to Stalin and the Soviets. The conventional rulers of the world hated and feared them and would have been only too willing to see the utter failure of this attempt at socialism. At the same time the fear of Japan and Asia was also real. Diplomacy therefore took hold and Stalin was picked as the victim. He was called in conference with British Imperialism represented by its trained and well-fed aristocracy; and with the vast wealth and potential power of America represented by its most liberal leader in half a century.
Here Stalin showed his real greatness. He neither cringed nor strutted. He never presumed, he never surrendered. He gained the friendship of Roosevelt and the respect of Churchill. He asked neither adulation nor vengeance. He was reasonable and conciliatory. But on what he deemed essential, he was inflexible. He was willing to resurrect the League of Nations, which had insulted the Soviets. He was willing to fight Japan, even though Japan was then no menace to the Soviet Union, and might be death to the British Empire and to American trade. But on two points Stalin was adamant: Clemenceau’s “Cordon Sanitaire” must be returned to the Soviets, whence it had been stolen as a threat. The Balkans were not to be left helpless before Western exploitation for the benefit of land monopoly. The workers and peasants there must have their say.
Statement by W.E.B DuBois regarding COMRADE STALIN on March 16, 1953

DESPITE DEVASTATION THE SU EMERGED FROM WWII AS THE 2ND STRONGEST NATION

The destruction of the war years had been devastating, yet the Soviet economy stood up to the strains of the war and the Soviet Union emerged as a superpower, surpassed only by the United States in military and economic strength.
Medvedev, Roy. On Stalin and Stalinism. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 142

ROOSEVELT SUPPORTS MOVING THE PRUSSIANS OUT OF EAST PRUSSIA

The President [Roosevelt] said he thought we should make some arrangements to move the Prussians out of East Prussia the same way the Greeks were moved out of Turkey after the last war; while this is a harsh procedure, it is the only way to maintain peace and that, in any circumstances, the Prussians cannot be trusted.
Sherwood, Robert E. Roosevelt and Hopkins. New York: Harper, 1948, p. 710

STALIN JUST WANTS A FRIENDLY POLISH GOVT THAT WILL NOT SERVE THE GERMANS

[In meetings between Stalin and Harry Hopkins at the end of May 1945 Stalin stated]: it may seem strange although it appeared to be recognized in United States circles and Churchill in his speeches also recognized it, that the Soviet government should wish for a friendly Poland. In the course of 25 years the Germans had twice invaded Russia via Poland. Neither the British nor American people had experienced such German invasions which were a horrible thing to endure and the results of which were not easily forgotten. He said these German invasions were not warfare but were like the incursions of the Huns. He said that Germany had been able to do this because Poland had been regarded as a part of the cordon sanitaire around the Soviet Union and that previous European policy had been that Polish Governments must be hostile to Russia. In these circumstances either Poland had been too weak to oppose Germany or had let the Germans come through. Thus Poland had served as a corridor for the German attacks on Russia. He said Poland's weakness and hostility had been a great source of weakness to the Soviet Union and had permitted the Germans to do what they wished in the East and also in the West since the two were mixed together. It is therefore in Russia's vital interest that Poland should be both strong and friendly. He said there was no intention on the part of the Soviet Union to interfere in Poland's internal affairs, that Poland would live under the parliamentary system which is like Czechoslovakia, Belgium, and Holland and that any talk of an intention to Sovietize Poland was stupid. He said even the Polish leaders, some of whom were communists, were against the Soviet system since the Polish people did not desire collective farms or other aspects of the Soviet system. In this the Polish leaders were right since the Soviet system was not exportable –it must develop from within on the basis of a set of conditions which were not present in Poland. He said all the Soviet Union wanted was that Poland should not be in a position to open the gates to Germany and in order to prevent this Poland must be strong and democratic…. He said it was contrary to the Soviet policy to set up Soviet administrations on foreign soil since this would look like occupation and be resented by the local inhabitants.

Sherwood, Robert E. Roosevelt and Hopkins. New York: Harper, 1948, p. 899

STALIN ALLOWED MULTIPLE PARTIES IN EASTERN EUROPE CONTRARY TO CHURCHILL CLAIMS

Churchill wanted war [in 1946]. He denigrated Russia's East European allies. What he said about the current regimes in Poland, Hungary, etc., was "not only slanderous but vulgarly tactless," since those countries had exemplary democratic regimes–more so, in fact, than Great Britain. In England the Labor Party was in power, with other parties "deprived of the right of participation in government," whereas in Poland, for example, Socialist, Peasant, and many other parties had joined in government coalitions with the Communists. "And that is called by Churchill totalitarianism, tyranny, the police state." As before, Stalin was a great master of logic. To be sure, the Communists played a leading role in the People's Democracies, but they deserved it.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 639

Czechoslovakia was ruled by a coalition which, though headed by the Communist Party, left considerable scope for free political life. Elsewhere–except in Yugoslavia, where the local Communists on their own were eager to mold their country in the Soviet image–shreds of democratic freedoms persisted, and the more strenuous Soviet policies, such as forced collectivization, had been avoided.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 659

…in Czechoslovakia a Soviet-controlled regime did not come into being until 1948. After three years of a more or less normal, Western-type parliamentary democracy.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co.,1971, p. 53

STALIN WAS A BETTER LINGUIST THAN MARR

To give the Devil his due [when it came to Stalin's dispute with Marr as to whether language is part of the superstructure or, on the contrary, of basic social relations], most professional linguists would wholeheartedly agree with Stalin: Marr had written a lot of nonsense; his followers bullied and persecuted linguists who tried to point this out.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 716

Nevertheless it must be admitted that Stalin's contribution to the linguistics debate had on the whole a positive affect.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 218

STALIN SAID HE WOULD LIKE VOZNESENSKY TO BE HIS SUCCESSOR

On several occasions Stalin emphatically and openly remarked that he considered Voznesensky to be his most appropriate successor as head of the government.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 55

It was Malenkov who wanted the heads of Kuznetsov and Voznesensky, not because he saw in them the successors of Stalin but because he resented the support they enjoyed…. Voznesensky was not a target, originally, but as he supported the Leningraders he went down with them. Malenkov used his Leningrad origin in order to condemn him along with the rest, deceiving Stalin on this point. The latter thus abandoned Voznesensky despite his regard for him.
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 216

STALIN TOOK POLITICS OUT OF SCIENCE AND VIEWED IT OBJECTIVELY

In 1991-93 two researchers from the Institute of History and the Institute of the History of Natural Science and Technology, Yesakov and Rossiyanov, found the original document [Lysenko's report with Stalin's handwritten corrections] in the archives and published an analysis of what Stalin had written. It should be noted that Stalin did a good job as an editor, improving Lysenko's text, modifying the stridency and softening the anti-Western tone, and he also removed the false dichotomy between Soviet and Western science….
Stalin removed the word "Soviet" from the title of the report [which was On the Situation in Soviet Biological Science]; in his view, "On the Situation in the Biological Sciences" was a more correct formulation of the subject in question. All 49 pages had been examined meticulously. He struck out the second section of the report, "The False Basis of Bourgeois Biology," and where Lysenko had claimed that "any science is based on class," Stalin wrote: "ha, ha, ha…and mathematics? and Darwin?"….
Throughout the text, Stalin crossed out the term "bourgeois." For example, "bourgeois world view" became "idealist world view"; "bourgeois genetics" became "reactionary genetics." …Stalin's changes and additions to the text signaled a decisive departure from the doctrine that had dominated all the debates during the 1920s and 1930s–that science was based on class. He clearly had been influenced by the enormous advances in nuclear physics in the United States and Britain as well as the subsequent creation of the atomic bomb. By the end of the war Stalin had come to realize that progress in science and technology was less a matter of ideology than a question of substantial material support for scientists.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 195

COLD WAR BEGAN IN 1917 NOT 1945

When one examines carefully the origins of the Cold War, one almost inevitably comes to the conclusion that it began not at some relatively recent date, but simply in 1917, the year the Soviet regime was established in what had been the Tsar's Russian empire.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co.,1971, p. 37

CONDITIONS AFTER WWII WERE PRETTY BAD & AGGRESSION DEFINITELY WAS NOT CONSIDERED

No one who lived in Russia in 1946 and 1947 could take the threat of Russian "aggression" seriously. Not only did the country have ahead of it a vast reconstruction program which it

had to carry out without much outside help; but living conditions were getting not better, but worse than they had been during the last stages of the war and in 1945.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co.,1971, p. 148

The truth is that in 1946-47 both Eastern and Western Europe were in dire need of food–and everything else.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co.,1971, p. 196

MARSHALL PLAN AID HINGES OR EXPELLING COMMUNISTS FROM THE GOVTS

The political purpose of Marshall Plan Aid–and no one even pretended that it was pure charity–was that Western Europe should put its house in order along pro–American and more or less free-enterprise lines, and eliminate the Communists from public affairs, or at any rate greatly reduce their influence. It was very largely in anticipation of large-scale American aid that both French and Italian governments, soon after the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine, eliminated their communist ministers on one pretext or another. That this was one of the conditions on which aid would be given had already been made perfectly obvious. When Leon Blum went to Washington in 1946 to borrow some money, it was made quite clear to him that France could expect far more, and on better terms, if there were no more communists in her government.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co.,1971, p. 257

The serious trouble started on 5 Jun 1947 when US Secretary of State George Marshall announced economic assistance to European countries which had suffered from Nazi aggression. Marshall intended to undermine Soviet hegemony over the countries of Eastern Europe by providing them with American financial help. The Marshall plan was tied to the geopolitical objectives of the USA and these included the drastic reduction of the USSR's power in Europe. Even Varga, who had suggested the possibility of a parliamentary road to communism in Europe, saw the Marshall plan as a dagger pointed at Moscow. Moderation in Soviet foreign policy came to a halt. Thus began the Cold War, so called because it never involved direct military conflict between the USSR and the USA.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 504

Soviet retaliation against the American initiative was not long in coming. In September 1947 a conference of Communist parties was convoked in Poland. The organizational objective was to form an Informational Bureau (or Cominform) to coordinate communist activity in the countries of eastern Europe as well as in Italy and France. As relations worsened with the USA, Stalin withdrew permission for a diversity of national transitions to communism. The call was made for an acceleration of communisation in eastern Europe; and, in western Europe, the French and Italian parties were reprimanded for their reluctance to drop their parliamentary orientation
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 506

First to form an overt military alliance was the capitalist camp. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) came into existence in April 1949.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 507

In 1936 there had been an Anti-Comintern Pact; in 1949 an Anti-Cominform Pact had been established in all but name.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 507

STALIN DID NOT SET OUT TO DESTROY TITO BUT TRIED TO GET ALONG WITH HIM

Although it is perfectly true that Stalin had an instinctive dislike of Tito, his [Tito] independence, his self-glorification, his insufferable way of treating Stalin almost as an equal, I think it is quite obvious that the Yugoslav story that Stalin had made up his mind long before the actual breach of June 1948 to “destroy” Tito, that the Cominform was merely a “trap” into which the Yugoslav leaders were to fall, etc., is contradicted by the facts. Until January 1948, Stalin was extremely anxious to keep Yugoslavia and Tito inside his East European empire, and the Soviet press praised and flattered Yugoslavia far more than any other country, except the Soviet Union itself.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co.,1971, p. 400

US USED ATOMIC BOMB NOT FOR MILITARY REASONS BUT TO INTIMIDATE THE SU

It emerges clearly from the Potsdam Conference that the Americans would have used the atomic bomb on Japan even if military circumstances had not required this: they wanted to intimidate the Soviet Union and put a break on its appetite in Europe.
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin’s Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 119

“War is barbaric,” reflected Stalin, “but using the A-bomb is a super barbarity. And there was no need to use it. Japan was already doomed!” He had no doubt that Hiroshima was aimed at himself: “A-bomb blackmail is American policy.”
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 502

I do not recall the exact date, but after the end of one of the Potsdam Conference meetings, Truman informed Stalin that the United States now possessed a bomb of exceptional power, without, however, naming it the atomic bomb.
As was later reported abroad, at that moment Churchill pinned his eyes on Stalin’s face, eager to observe his reaction. However, Stalin did not betray his feelings and pretended he saw nothing special in what Truman had said. Both Churchill and many other British and American commentators subsequently surmised that Stalin had probably failed to fathom the significance of the information received.
In actual fact, on returning to his quarters after this meeting Stalin in my presence told Molotov about his conversation with Truman. Molotov reacted immediately: “They are trying to bid up.”

Stalin laughed:
“Let them. I’ll have to talk it over with Kurchatov [Director of Soviet atomic development] today and get him to speed things up.”
I understood they were talking about the development of the atomic bomb.
It was clear already then that the US government was going to use the atomic bomb for reaching its imperialist goals from a position of strength. This was corroborated on August 6 and 9. Without any military need whatsoever, the Americans dropped two atomic bombs on the peaceful and densely-populated Japanese cities of Nagasaki and Hiroshima.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 449

STALIN DID NOT KILL ZHDANOV

If Stalin had really wanted to murder Zhdanov, it would not have taken five heart attacks over years but a quick injection. Zhdanov’s widow and son were convinced he was not killed:
“Everything was simpler,” Yury recalls. “We knew his doctors well. Father was very ill. His heart was worn out.”
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 580

JEWISH NATIONALIST DOCTOR, ETINGER, ADMITS HE KILLED SHCHERBAKOV

…when Ryumin was summoned to the Central Committee to receive his official reprimand, he used the occasion to present his “note” that was then embellished through 11 drafts into the letter to Stalin.
Dated July 19, 1951, this letter deserves to be reproduced in full.
To Comrade Stalin from the Senior Investigator of the MGB of the USSR, Lieutenant Colonel, Ryumin.
“In November 1950, I was commissioned to conduct the investigation in the case of the arrested doctor of medicine, professor Etinger….”
At the interrogation, Etinger acknowledged that he was a confirmed Jewish nationalist and in consequence of this bore hatred toward the Party and the Soviet government.
…Further, speaking in detail about his hostile activity, Etinger acknowledged that when he was commissioned to cure Comrade Shcherbakov in 1945 he acted so as to shorten his life.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin’s Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 115

STALIN SUPPORTS RYUMIN

In the March 1953 letter to Beria, Ignatiev recalled these portentous words of Stalin from the summer of 1952:
“I have continually said that Ryumin is an honorable man and a communist, he helps the [Central Committee] uncover serious crimes in the MGB, but he, the poor fellow, has not found support among you and this is because I appointed him despite your objections. Ryumin is excellent, and I demand that you listen to him and take him closer to yourself. Keep in mind–I don’t trust the old workers in the MGB very much.”
Naumov and rent. Stalin’s Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 135

As a reward for his [Ryumin] faithful service Stalin admonished Ignatiev that he must “take Ryumin closer to himself.”
Naumov and Brent. Stalin’s Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 206

Stalin said: “I have always said that Ryumin is an honorable man and a Communist, he helps the Central Committee uncover serious crimes in the MGB, but he, poor fellow, has not found support among you and this is because I appointed him despite your objections. Ryumin is excellent, and I demand that you listen to him and take him closer to yourself.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin’s Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 207

On the 18th of March 1953, Ryumin offered his first confession in which he claimed that Yegorov worked at the order of Kuznetsov, who was a paid American agent.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin’s Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 324

ABAKAMOV WAS GUILTY OF HIDING AND NOT INVESTIGATING CRIMES

According to this document, the Central Committee appointed a commission, consisting of Malenkov, Beria, Shkiryatov, and Ignatiev, to “verify” Ryumin’s charges. Their verification, which was concluded by July 4, produced five allegedly inarguable “facts”:

1. The Jewish nationalist Etinger was arrested in November 1950, and, without any pressure confessed that during the treatment of Comrade Shcherbakov, he had a terrorist intention toward him and took practical measures in order to shorten his life. Consequently, the Central Committee concluded, a “conspiratorial group” undoubtedly existed among the doctors dedicated to murdering Kremlin leaders, which Abakumov refused to investigate.

2. In August 1950 one Salimanov, the former general director of “Vismut,” was arrested; and despite the fact that he had betrayed the fatherland, Abakumov hid the case from the Central Committee.

3. In January 1951 the participants of a Jewish anti-Soviet youth organization were arrested. Despite the fact that they had “terrorist plans” against the leaders of the party and the government, Abakumov concealed their terrorist designs from the Central Committee by falsifying the protocols of their interrogation.

4. The MGB “crudely violated” the procedures established by the Central Committee for reporting the interrogations of prisoners by means of composing so-called general protocols based on interrogation notes and draft memoranda, instead of truthfully transmitting all that a prisoner might have said.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin’s Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 137

Abakumov’s crime was that he protected Kuznetsov and the Jews by not revealing the extent of their crimes, by conducting a “superficial” investigation that would not disclose the full dimensions of the threat to the USSR. The Jews were protected because the few members of the Jewish Anti-fascist Committee were nothing but scapegoats for an immense

Jewish plot against the government. By eliminating individual scapegoats, Abakumov allowed the underground to continue to flourish.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 311

ETINGER ADMITS A CONSPIRACY TO MURDER HIGH SOVIET OFFICIALS WHICH ABAKAMOV HID

The Central Committee "decree" [of July 11] stated:
The Central Committee has concluded that the testimony of Etinger deserves serious consideration. Among the doctors there undoubtedly exists a conspiratorial group of individuals intending through medical treatment to shorten the life of leaders of the party and the government.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 138

Ryumin took charge… [producing] signed confessions from Likhachev and Leonov acknowledging that Etinger had confessed to murdering Shcherbakov and that Abakumov had in fact conspired with the enemy to conceal the confession.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 146

EVIDENCE PROVES SHCHERBAKOV WAS MURDERED BY DOCTORS

On October 29, 1952, Ignatiev wrote to Stalin that a special medical examination of Shcherbakov's heart had been completed in the summer of 1952 by an elite group of medical examiners, which confirmed the charges against the doctors. The internal organs of all deceased Soviet government leaders were customarily preserved in the Kremlin, and Shcherbakov's heart was among them, kept in a jar of formaldehyde during the previous seven years [he died in1945]….
This expert commission secretly "investigated the heart, studied the history of the illness and the analysis and protocols of the autopsy of the body of Comrade Shcherbakov. In addition to this, another group of medical experts had been appointed in April 1952 to verify the drug prescriptions ordered by the doctors who had cared for Shcherbakov. Both commissions came to the same conclusion that the medical treatment of Comrade Shcherbakov had been "criminal."
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 193

On October 29, 1952, the day he [Kitaev] sent his memorandum to Stalin, the MGB managed to extract a full confession from Busalov, the former chairman of the department of surgery of Yaroslavsky Medical Institute and former Head of the Kremlin Hospital before Yegorov. He, too, had participated in the treatment of Shcherbakov and had been responsible for recruiting Etinger for the case. Busalov confessed that:
"Lang behaved criminally, he did not attribute serious significance to the illness of Shcherbakov and did not want to think about the danger threatening the patient… As a rule, Lang supported Etinger….
Prescribing an active regime to Shcherbakov did not accord with the functional condition of the patient's heart, Etinger, Lang, and Vinogradov shortened the life of Shcherbakov.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 196

VOVSI ADMITS HE AND KREMLIN DOCTORS SET OUT TO KILL SOVIET LEADERS

A cousin of the great actor and head of the Jewish Anti-fascist Committee, Solomon Mikhoels, murdered in 1948, Vovsi had been the chief therapist of the Red Army. His confessions would soon lead the investigation to a consideration of the military, thus potentially widening the net of terror and purges. Because of his connection to Mikhoels, who had gone to America on his famous trip in 1943, Vovsi was particularly useful in demonstrating that American intelligence directed the actions of the entire conspiracy. On November 25, 1952, Vovsi told his interrogators that he wanted to make a full confession and "set out everything in order."
…"Yes, we had a terrorist group. In this group were doctors including a number of Jewish nationalists–Kogan, Borisovich, and Temkin, Yakov Solomonovich….
"I, Vovsi, was the inspiration of the group. The terrorist group from the group of Kremlin doctors Temkin, Kogan, and myself was nationalistic, formed as an enemy to Soviet power, from the first; that is, before the participants had decided to use in their struggle against Soviet power these extreme means such as terror by means of criminal methods of treatment with the aim of destroying the health of leading workers….
I earlier confessed that Shimeliovich gave the first directions, approximately in 1948. From that time, without question, we set out on subversive work, intending to shorten the lives of specific leading workers."
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 212

The interrogators wanted to know for whom Shimeliovich worked….
"I [Vovsi] am convinced that all the nationalistic work of the ringleader of the Jewish Anti-fascist Committee, hiding under this name its subversive work against the Soviet state, was directed by Anglo-American imperialistic circles."
…But this was not enough. For whom did Vovsi himself work?
"The Anglo-American bourgeoisie, which was actually our boss. Such is the logic."
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 213

[Vovsi continued] "Shimeliovich gave me clearly to understand that the criminal work of specific leaders of the Jewish Antifascist Committee was directed by imperialist circles in the US.
The best proof of this declaration might be the information that Shimeliovich collected about the Soviet Union…. I [Vovsi] can't deny the fact that I provided Shimeliovich with espionage information."
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 215

On November 14, 1952, Vovsi, for instance, told the investigators the following:
"Thinking it all over, I came to the conclusion that despite the rottenness of my crimes, I must disclose the terrible truth to the investigation of my villainous work conducted with the aim of destroying the health and shortening the life of specific, leading state workers of the Soviet Union….
Having become one of the executors of these rotten criminal plots, I must in the first instance talk about myself…

I am an opponent of Soviet power. In the postwar years my hostility and hatred to the Soviet order gained strength.
From my enemy motives, from my hatred toward the leaders of the party and the Soviet government, I turned to the profession of medicine not to improve their health but to destroy it, to shorten the lives of specific, leading Soviet and party workers.
This was accomplished using the rottenest and most villainous means. I strove to accomplish my criminal objectives by means of incorrect, depraved methods of treatment, not observing prophylactic measures during treatment or the detection of the illness, and even by means of covering up the criminal activities of other doctors that were known to me. …Knowing all my responsibility for my villainous activity, and aiming to cover up the traces of my crimes I had recourse to various kinds of tricks."
He then confessed to having mistreated Andreyev with a cocaine solution while conspiring with both Yegorov and Vinogradov.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 250-251

"During interrogation, Vovsi and Kogan confessed that both of them, being Jewish nationalists, supported enemy ties with the leaders of the Jewish nationalist underground, operating under the cover of the Jewish Antifascist Committee."
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 265

Unceasing rounds of new interrogations of the doctors and MGB operatives ensued after this December 4 decree. Vovsi, Vinogradov, and Yegorov admitted everything their persecutors put before them.
… and eventually Vovsi confessed:…
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 271

Vovsi had already confessed to ties with Mikhoels, the Jewish Anti-fascist Committee, and the Joint. This was an important confession because it demonstrated that the Jews, through the JAC, were connected with what had been alleged to be a definite American intelligence organization, the Joint. At his trial, Fefer, one of the members of the JAC, stated that, "The Joint is a bourgeois Zionist organization."
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 307

VINOGRADOV ADMITS HE ENDANGERED THE HEALTH OF SOVIET LEADERS

I [Vinogradov] don't deny that my anti-Soviet convictions, my tie with Etinger and other enemies of Soviet power, whom I have already named, speaks to my treatment of the leaders of the party and the Soviet government. I did not show concern for their health and this question didn't bother me.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 232

SOME JEWS ADMIT WORKING AS ZIONISTS TO EFFECT SOVIET GOVT POLICY

Doron, Itkin, and Palkin were heads of important departments; Broverman was deputy to Abakumov. Together they supposedly exchanged nationalist views, spoke about Palestine

and the creation of the state of Israel, discussed ways of penetrating all the “chinks” of Soviet life in order to influence policy. Why? Because “by their history the Jews were chosen to rule over the world.”
Naumov and Brent. Stalin’s Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 254

SHVARTSMAN SAYS ABAKUMOV KNEW HE & ZIONIST BROVERMAN COOKED ABAKUMOV’S BOOKS

Broverman became famous for “cooking” the documents sent by Abakumov to the Central Committee. He was so skilled at this that his office became known affectionately as “Broverman’s Kitchen.” He cut and pasted dates, facts, testimony, correcting protocols to fit Abakumov’s instructions, embellishing, providing more “colorful representations,” sometimes, according to Shvartsman, going so far as to leave out essential information such as that the prisoner confessed to “terrorist plans and preparations.”
…”But really,” Grishaev [an MGB interrogator] asked him [Shvartsman], “didn’t Abakumov know of your and Broverman’s nationalistic, convictions?”
“Of course, Abakumov saw that both Broverman and I were Jewish nationalists.”
Shvartsman explained that Abakumov allowed Broverman and himself to supervise preparation of the protocols of the investigation into the Jewish Antifascist Committee.
“This means that Abakumov, knowing you to be a Jewish nationalist, entrusted the protocols of the interrogation of the Jewish nationalists to you?”
“So it happened,” Shvartsman replied. In the end, he [Shvartsman] confessed that his impression was that “Abakumov, for some reason, was well-disposed to individuals of Jewish nationality. But after this event, I was finally convinced that he wanted to mask criminals in the ranks of the Jews.” Just as Abakumov had covered up Etinger’s confessions, he was now accused of having shielded Jews throughout the Ministry of Security in their quest for influence and ultimate domination of the Soviet government.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin’s Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 255-256

SHVARTSMAN ADMITS HE AND ZIONIST PLOTTERS TRIED TO KILL MALENKOV SEVERAL TIMES

When Grishaev asked Shvartsman [a leading Jewish member of the MGB] whether he had had any terrorist intentions of his own, Shvartsman readily acknowledged that he had: “In 1948 the nationalists active under the protection of the Jewish Antifascist Committee were crushed, and because of this I decided to commit a terrorist act against Malenkov.”
“What practical measure did you undertake for the realization of your enemy plan?” Grishaev asked.
“In August 1950, I knew that together with Leonov and Komarov, I would have to go on an official mission to Sochi for the drafting and composition of important documents with the Head of the Soviet government who took His vacation in the South. Supposing that Malenkov would be on vacation at the same time as the Head of the government, I decided to use this occasion to commit the terrorist act.”
“Practically speaking, I intended to realize my enemy plot, in accordance with circumstances…. With this aim I took with me from Moscow a personal weapon–the pistol Valter.”

“You have in mind the pistol, “Valter” Number 777602, that was confiscated from you during the arrest?”
“Yes, I wanted to use this pistol.”

Nothing came of this “terrorist” plot. Over the 10 days in which Shvartsman was in Sochi, the right moment never seemed to present itself for shooting Malenkov. Shvartsman claimed that he tried again in 1951 to shoot Malenkov. Again nothing came of the plot. Abakumov, Shvartsman testified, was a co-conspirator, and he concluded this interrogation ominously:
“As I remarked earlier, I knew Abakumov since 1938. From this period, we became participants of a conspiracy directed against the interests of the Russian people.
In order to fully characterize this conspiracy, to speak about its aims, and in addition to name all of the participants and to show their ties with foreign intelligence, I must begin with the leading link of the conspiracy and name names that the investigation would think I was naming with a provocational intent.”

Shvartsman did provide Grishaev with the names of many additional Jewish accomplices that enabled the MGB to extend the “plot” throughout the length and breadth of the security organs.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin’s Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 258-259

BROVERMAN SAYS HE FORGED/FALSIFIED DOCUMENTS ABOUT CATCHING SPIES FOR ABAKUMOV

In his November 27, 1952, interrogation Broverman [deputy head of the Secretariat of MGB] spoke openly about his activities as a forger and falsifier of security documents.
“Thus in 1945 with Palkin, the former head of department “d” of the MGB, and with Utekhin, the former head of the First Directorate of, and with Leonov, the head of the Investigative Unit for Especially Important Cases, at Abakumov’s order, I fabricated a photo album sent to the Central Committee about the subversive work of White emigre organizations active in Manchuria….
I must say that the majority of documents, photocopies of which were placed in the album, related to the 1930s and had nothing to do with 1945. However, Abakumov, wanting to create an impression that the counterespionage organs of “SMERSH” were successful in allegedly completely destroying the White emigre organizations and had seized their documents about their activities in the period of the second world war, ordered us to glue dates onto the documents found in the album.”
“This made it possible for Abakumov to hide from the Central Committee the unsatisfactory situation concerning the search for spies and the authors of anonymous enemy documents.”
“Deceiving the party and the government, Abakumov and we, his associates, hid from the Central Committee the unsatisfactory situation in the MGB and the criminal collapse of the work in the Chekist organs.”
“Who directed your subversive work?” Grishaev wanted to know.
“On whose behalf Abakumov acted, I have no idea,” Broverman told Grishaev. “I executed the criminal orders of Abakumov; I had no other bosses.”
Though he could not tell who, other than Abakumov, directed his subversive work, he was able to provide the investigation with a long list of individuals who were so directed. He

named 14 members of the MGB as his close associates in this conspiracy. Most were Jewish. All were immediately arrested.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 260-262

BROVERMAN SAYS SHVARTSMAN WAS KNOWN TO HIM AS A VICIOUS JEWISH NATIONALIST

"I [Broverman] must say that for several years Shvartsman had already been known to me as the most vicious Jewish nationalist contriving criminal affairs in the organs of state security.
In conversation, Shvartsman and I often poured out our hearts to each other and maliciously slandered the existing Soviet order.
We spoke with scorn about Russians and other nationalities and in every way elevated Jews for their alleged outstanding intelligence and abilities.
Enveloped by the nationalistic poison, we agreed to the blind conviction that Jews by virtue of their alleged special qualities of intelligence were called by history itself to rule the world.
As an example that demonstrated our thinking, we referred to the American Jews who dared to penetrate the sphere of management and political life of the country and directed both foreign and domestic politics of the USA.
In connection with this Shvartsman declared, and I supported this, that the Jews living in the Soviet Union should take as their example the American Jews."
Broverman's "confession" was made November 27, 1952. Obviously the investigation was coordinating the testimony of key witnesses.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 262-263

GOGLIDZE TOLD STALIN OF DOCTORS OUT TO KILL SOVIET LEADERS

On November 24, 1952, Goglidze, who had taken over the investigation of the doctors after Ignatiev became ill, wrote to Stalin:
"The investigation established that Yegorov and Fedorov [a pathologist]–were politically and morally rotten people; Maiorov [Zhdanov's physician] –came from a manor house circle symbol: Vinogradov –in the past was affiliated with the SR's [Social Revolutionaries]; Vasilenko [chief therapist of the Kremlin hospital] –since 1922 hid his expulsion from the party for deviation from party discipline, and connected with him, the Jewish nationalist Karpai (arrested) [head of cardiographic unit of Kremlin hospital] –all of them composed the hostile group, active in the Polyclinic of the Kremlin hospital, that strove to cut short the lives of leaders of the party and government through medical treatment."
"This enemy, terrorist group of physicians worked exactly as did physicians of the people in the past– Pletnev and Levin, insidiously killing Kuibyshev, Menzhinsky, Gorky, and his son, Peshkov. They– Yegorov, Vinogradov, Vasilenko, Fedorov, Maiorov, and Karpai conducted terrorist activity by means of prescribing to the patients such treatment that ruined their health, complicated the illness, and led to their demise."
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 265

SEVERAL DOCTORS ADMIT WORKING TO KILL ZHDANOV

“Yegorov, Vinogradov, Vasilenko, Maiorov and Fedorov acknowledged that they formerly were enemies of the party and Soviet state; that they, making use and the illness of Comrade Zhdanov, in premeditated fashion prescribed for him a categorically contraindicated active regime, they provoked a grave heart attack and in this way killed him.”
Naumov and Brent. Stalin’s Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 265

GROUP OF TERRORISTS DOCTORS WERE WORKING IN THE KREMLIN

“In this way, by means of the collected verifying documents and the confessions of the prisoners it has been established that in the [Kremlin hospital] a group of terrorist doctors was active– Yegorov, Vinogradov, Vasilenko, Maiorov, Fedorov, Lang, and Jewish nationalists, Etinger, Vovsi, Kogan, and Karpai, who strove through medical treatment to cut short the life of leaders of the party and the government.”
…With the exception of Karpai, the doctors had by this point all confessed to murder.
…The Jews in combination with traitorous Russians had fooled the government for many years, but at last they had been caught….
On December for, 1952, the Central Committee issued its declaration:
“Having been apprised of the information of the MGB concerning sabotage in the doctor’s plot, the Presidium of the Central Committee of the party has confirmed that in the [Kremlin hospital] a group of criminals has been acting for a long time; the former heads of the [Kremlin hospital] Busalov and Yegorov entered this group; doctors Vinogradov, Fedorov, Vasilenko, Maiorov, Jewish nationals Kogan, Karpai, Etinger, Vovsi, and others were also a part.”
…”Documentary facts and the testimony of the arrested have established that the enemy group was tied to English and American embassies, worked at the direction of American and English intelligence and had the goal of committing terrorist acts against the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet government.
…Under the weight of the evidence, the participants of the groups have confessed that to commit sabotage they established incorrect diagnoses of illnesses, prescribed and implemented incorrect methods of treatment and by these measures brought their patients to their deaths. The criminals have confessed that by these means they were successful in killing Zhdanov and Shcherbakov….
As far back as 1948 the MGB had at its disposal signals that manifestly spoke of the unsatisfactory situation in the Polyclinic. Dr. Timashuk turned to the MGB with her declaration in which on the basis of her electrocardiograms she confirmed that the diagnosis of Comrade Zhdanov was incorrectly established and did not correspond to the facts of the inquiry, and that the prescribed treatment for the patient did him harm. If the MGB would have conscientiously investigated this exceptionally important statement, it certainly would have prevented the villainous murder of Comrade Zhdanov. It would have exposed and liquidated the terrorist group of doctors. This did not happen because the workers of the MGB dealt criminally with the case, putting the declaration of Comrade Timashuk into the hands of Yegorov who was a participant in the terrorist group.
…Further in 1950, the former minister of state security, Abakumov, having direct facts about medical wrecking, having received from the MGB the results of the investigation of the case of the arrested Dr. Etinger of the [Kremlin hospital], concealed this from the Central Committee of the party and curtailed the investigation into the matter.”
Naumov and Brent. Stalin’s Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 265-268

Vinogradov finally confessed to Zhdanov's murder only on February 12, [1953] but on February 18 at a face-to-face encounter between Karpai and Vinogradov, Karpai continued to refuse to admit any guilt…. By now, Vovsi was clearly cooperating, as had Yegorov, Vinogradov, Vasilenko, and Maiorov. Of the doctors originally arrested only Karpai refused.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 296

ABAKUMOV AND HIS SUPPORTERS ARE ARRESTED AND RYUMIN TAKES OVER

In July 1951, Minister of State Security Victor Abakumov was removed from his post and arrested. Right after that, the leaders of the investigative unit for especially important cases turned up in the cells of the Lefortovo prison. Many investigators who had been involved in the JAC case were dismissed from the MGB. Direction of the investigation fell to Ryumin, the new chief of the investigative unit for especially important cases.
Naumov & Teptsov. Stalin's Secret Pogrom. New Haven, London: Yale Univ. Press, 2001, p. xv

SOME PEOPLE ADMIT BEING IN A ZIONIST/AMERICAN ANTI-SOVIET ORGANIZATION

Only Fefer and Teumin fully admitted their guilt, [to being in a Zionist/American inspired plot against the SU] whereas Lozovsky, Markish, Shimeliovich, and Bregman refused to plead guilty to anything; the others pled guilty "in part." Once the testimonies began, the defendants were permitted to make lengthy statements and to cross-examine each other, an aspect of the trial that resulted in moments of high drama, particularly when outspoken defendants like Lozovsky and Shimeliovich challenged Fefer.
Naumov & Teptsov. Stalin's Secret Pogrom. New Haven, London: Yale Univ. Press, 2001, p. 55

PRESIDING OFFICER: Defendant Teumin, in the indictment you are accused of engaging in espionage and being an active nationalist, while in 1946 you passed along classified materials to Goldberg. Tell us, did you, under Lozovsky's orders, review and correct articles for the Jewish Anti–Fascist Committee that were sent to America?
TEUMIN: …it had been firmly established that I had nothing to do with the Jewish Antifascist Committee, except for providing it with organizational and technical assistance in planning a rally. Lozovsky and my direct supervisors can confirm this.
Naumov & Teptsov. Stalin's Secret Pogrom. New Haven, London: Yale Univ. Press, 2001, p. 435

IMPORTANT PEOPLE ARE SPIED ON BY THE US GOVT

"To my knowledge," Sullivan [assistant to J. Edgar Hoover] recalled, "we never had a surveillance on Eleanor Roosevelt because it wasn't necessary. It was not necessary because we had informants–many informants–in the circles in which she traveled."
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 301

Eleanor Roosevelt was not the only prominent member of the administration to attract the special attention of J. Edgar Hoover. Though he'd once refused to investigate Wendell Willkie or tap Farley, during FDR's last two terms in office the FBI Director, with the chief executive's approval, conducted highly confidential investigations of the vice-president of the United States, the under secretary of state, and the wife of the president's closest adviser.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 306

What Hoover didn't tell [vice-president] Henry Wallace was that…he [Hoover] was monitoring many of the vice-president's telephone conversations, by tapping the wires of his closest friends and associates, including his secretary; that he was also opening their mail and photographing letters Wallace himself had written; or that, even while on official trips, the vice-president was kept under surveillance.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 307

HOOVER INSTITUTED CENSORSHIP

Hoover was not only determined to manipulate the news, deciding what the public should or should not know; he also altered history, in the process exacting revenge against one of his most hated enemies, "that Jew in the Treasury," Henry Morgenthau, Jr.
During his nearly dozen years as secretary of the treasury (1934-45), Morgenthau kept a daily diary, which included not only his own recollections of events but also verbatim transcriptions of his meetings and telephone calls. Moreover, as a member of FDR's "inner cabinet," he was privy to the behind-the-scenes activities of most of the rest of the government. According to the historian Jason Berger, it would be difficult to overstate the importance of the Morgenthau diaries to scholars of the New Deal era. As "the only source of daily happenings in Washington," Berger notes, "they are a researcher's dream." For writers ranging from Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., to Ted Morgan, they had been an indispensable source of raw history.
On leaving office, Morgenthau had given his papers to the National Archives for safekeeping until such time as he decided to make them public. On learning, in 1951, that Morgenthau was discussing publication of the diaries, Hoover struck.
"It was a very covert operation," a senior agent who headed the raiding party has recalled, "damn covert. There were five of us, and we were all sworn to absolute secrecy. We even left the Washington field office by various devious routes. And we'd go in [an out-of-the-way room at the National Archives] at different times so no one would know five agents were in that room. And we were the only ones who had a key."
Their only equipment, which they carried in their brief cases, was scissors. "We literally went through [the diary] with scissors, cutting out any references which would be unfavorable to Mr. Hoover or the FBI. They were just physically excerpted right out of the diary itself. Our job was to cut out everything which, even by innuendo, might indicate that Mr. Hoover had feet of clay. The pages were then retyped and renumbered so that there would be no indication that anything was missing. The whole operation took several weeks. What they left behind for the historians who followed was a history of the New Deal years as approved by J. Edgar Hoover.
Although he was not personally involved, the senior agent heard from the Bureau grapevine that President Roosevelt's papers had been similarly "sanitized." According to librarians at the Franklin Roosevelt library at Hyde Park, NY, many FBI reports are missing. And still

others have been changed. In 1976 Tim Ingram, an investigator for a House subcommittee chaired by Bella Abzug, discovered that a number of FBI documents at Hyde Park did not match FBI carbons of the same correspondence which were obtained by committee subpoena or under the Freedom of Information Act; whole paragraphs and pages were missing from the Hyde Park copies, indicating that these, supposedly the originals, had been edited and then retyped and re-signed. At the time this was done, Hoover had no way of knowing that one day the FBI's own files would be made public, although he knew the Roosevelt papers would be.
It is possible that other presidential libraries have also been sanitized.
Since the 1950s the FBI has assigned a permanent staff to the National Archives, to determine what FBI and Justice Department records will be retained, made public, withheld from examination, or destroyed.
Nor, it would seem, did Hoover overlook his former place of employment, the Library of Congress.
The Supreme Court justice, and Hoover nemesis, Felix Frankfurter also kept a set of diaries. When Joseph Lash edited them for publication, he noted, "In addition to Frankfurter's [own] excisions from the Diaries, some sections were stolen after the justice's papers were turned over to the Library of Congress." To which Lash, who had his own reasons for distrusting J. Edgar Hoover, couldn't resist adding, "Some day the Federal Bureau of Investigation may recover them." Among the items missing from the Frankfurter papers was the only copy of a speech the justice had written, but never delivered, criticizing the director of the FBI.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 389-390

AMERICAN LEFTISTS ARE ILLEGALLY ROUNDED UP AND DEPORTED

The Federation of the Union of Russian Workers was made up, in its entirety, of Russian immigrants. Its platform, adopted in 1907, welcomed "atheists, communists, and anarchists." But after the 1917 revolution most of its radical founders had returned to Russia. According to Coben [the biographer of Attorney General Palmer], "A few members continued to give radical lectures and distribute revolutionary propaganda; but by 1919 the organization served chiefly as a social club for the lonely and an educational institution for the ambitious." The chosen date [for it to be raided], Nov. 7, 1919, was the second anniversary of the Russian Revolution.
The raids occurred at 8 p.m., local time, in 12 different cities. In Manhattan, BI agents, assisted by the New York Bomb Squad, descended en masse on the Russian People's House, at 133 East 15th Street. The union occupied only one room in the building; except for a small cafeteria, the rest were classrooms, where subjects such as English and citizenship were taught. But all were raided.
The people on the ground floor were the most fortunate. They weren't thrown down the stairs.
According to the New York Times, "A number in the building were badly beaten by the police during the raid, their heads wrapped in bandages testifying to the rough manner in which they had been handled.
Altogether 33 men were taken to the immigration office on Ellis Island. Some 150 others had been set free. However, the Times noted, "Most of them also had blackened eyes and

lacerated scalps as souvenirs of the new attitude of aggressiveness which had been assumed by the Federal agents against Reds and suspected Reds."
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 83

The port was New York; the ship, the Buford, a decrepit troop transport ancient even when the United States obtained her from the British during the Spanish-American War. Her destination was Russia, via Finland. And her cargo consisted of "249 blasphemous creatures who not only rejected America's hospitality and assailed her institutions but also sought by a campaign of assassination and terrorism to ruin her as a nation of free men," according to the New York Times, or, as other papers put it, "249 anarchists." Actually there were only 51 anarchists–184 of the passengers were members of the Federation of the Union of Russian Workers, picked up in the November raids, while the other 14 were aliens who had been convicted of the moral turpitude of being public charges….
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 85

The secret sailing of the Buford had been rushed so that the aliens could not appeal their cases in court. Because of this–and also because the ship sailed at 4:15 on a cold December morning–the bon voyage party was not large, consisting of J. Edgar Hoover, Flynn [head of the BI], Caminetti [Commissioner of Immigration], various Army officers, and several members of the House Immigration and Naturalization Committee. No friends or relatives were present. Most of the deportees were so hastily rounded up that they weren't able to obtain adequate clothing for the winter voyage, while dozens of families remained behind without any means of support. Some of the wives did not hear for days what had happened to their husbands.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 86

Apparently convinced that the Constitution did not apply to aliens–or citizens, for that matter–Burke [Chief assistant to the BI Chief] in his instructions violated one after another of its provisions.
In addition to raiding the meeting halls, agents were to search the residences of party officials and to seize all literature, books, papers, membership lists, records, and correspondence, plus "anything hanging on the walls." (The walls themselves were to be sounded and, if believed hollow, broken down.) "I leave entirely at your discretion as to the methods by which you gain access to such places," Burke instructed. "If, due to the local conditions of your territory, you find that it is absolutely necessary for you to obtain a search war for the premises, you should communicate with the local authorities a few hours before the time of the arrests."
Anyone apprehended was to be searched immediately. There was no mention of informing them of their rights, or even an assumption that they had any.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 91

Nineteen twenty was an election-year, and began accordingly. The state's attorney of Cook County, Illinois (a Republican), did not wish the Attorney General of the United States (a Democratic presidential hopeful) to reap all the glory in the great Red hunt, so he conducted his own Communist raids, in Chicago and its environs, on New Year's Day, 24 hours before the federal raids were scheduled to occur.
Although the figures would be much disputed, apparently upwards of 10,000 persons were arrested. Of that number, all but about 4000 were released after a few days, either because

they were American citizens or because there was not even a red card to prove their party membership. Of those remaining in custody, more than half had been arrested without warrants. In many cases, the warrants were obtained only after the arrests had been made. As for search warrants, they were practically never used.
In New York City some 700 persons were seized. According to the Times, “Meetings open to the general public were roughly broken up. All persons present–citizens and aliens alike without discrimination–were arbitrarily taken into custody and searched as if they had been burglars caught in the criminal act. Without warrants of arrest men were carried off to police stations and other temporary prisons, subjected there to secret police-office inquisitions commonly known as the ‘third-degree,’ their statements written categorically into mimeographed question blanks, and they were required to swear to them regardless of their accuracy.’”
Although this became almost standard procedure, there were variations. In Seattle, according to the testimony of an immigration inspector, Justice Department agents didn’t bother to search out radicals and match them with the warrants; “they went to various pool rooms, etc. in which foreigners congregated, and they simply sent up in trucks all of them that happened to be there.” In Boston some 300 men were chained together and paraded through the streets to Deer Island in Boston Harbor, where conditions were so intolerable that one man dove five stories to his death and another had to be committed as insane. In Detroit 800 persons were held six days in a small, airless corridor on the top floor of the Federal Building, with a single clogged toilet and only occasional water and food.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 93

“Revolution Smashed,” read the front-page headline of the New York Times, while its editorial page heaped praise on the attorney general. Featured prominently in all the papers was BI Chief Flynn’s claim that the raids had been necessary to smash an imminent uprising.
If the claim was true, the revolutionaries were amazingly ill prepared. What Flynn didn’t tell reporters was that in searching hundreds of meeting places and residences, the agents found only four guns (three of them rusty pistols confiscated in an antiques shop) and no dynamite. Four “bombs” were found in Newark. Despite their owners’ claim that they were bowling balls, the raiders took one look at them and, seeing no holes, hastily immersed them in buckets of water. None of the agents had ever heard of the game boccie.
In the aftermath of the raids, J. Edgar Hoover stayed busy. In addition to making sure that the Justice Department had an agent at each of the immigration hearings, he barraged Caminetti with memos, urging either that no bail be permitted or that it be set at an unmeetable amount, such as 10 or $15,000. Allowing the aliens out on bail, where they could contact their lawyers, “defeats the ends of justice,” Hoover argued. Also, he contended, if kept in custody, they would be unable to propagandize.
Propagandizing was much on Hoover’s mind. Initially there had been little public outcry, probably because two to three weeks passed before most of the prisoners were allowed to see their families or attorneys, while friends who went to the jails and other detention centers looking for them were arrested also.
[Footnote:] Palmer later justified these secondary arrests by asking who would be friends with a radical other than another radical.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 94

AMERICAN SECRET POLICE COMMIT ILLEGAL ACTS

Hoover and Garvan organized a propaganda section within the GID [General Intelligence Division]. The forerunner of the FBI's vast Crime Records publicity mill, it supplied newspaper and magazine editors with packets containing carefully edited samples of the most inflammatory radical literature; metal plates with prepared articles, editorials, and cartoons endorsing Palmer's anti-Red crusade; plus a personal letter from the attorney general in which he offered to furnish the editors " with details, either general or in specific cases."
Palmer's offer to open the files of still-unresolved cases to favored newsman was in itself an illegal act; it apparently bothered him no more than it did the FBI's Crime Records Division in future years.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 94

The reaction was slow in coming, but when it came it grew in momentum. As more details of the raid became known, a number of church groups and civic organizations protested the harsh treatment accorded the prisoners. "I was sent up to New York later by Assistant Attorney General Garvan and reported back that there had been clear cases of brutality in the raids," Hoover told the writer Fletcher Knebel in a Look interview 35 years later, at which time he also admitted, "They arrested a lot of people that weren't Communists."
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 95

But there do exist several other memos, to Caminetti, in which Hoover urged that aliens be held even if there was no proof of radical affiliation, on the chance that evidence be uncovered at some future date "in other sections of the country."
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 96

… according to Hoover, Louis Post [Assistant Secretary Labor, in the Matter of Deportation of Aliens] claimed "that the Department Of Justice had broken all the rules of law in its activities against the Reds and… that these acts were committed with the knowledge and approval of the Attorney General."
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 97

It was now Attorney General Mitchell Palmer who was under fire. And it did not let up. On May 25 the National Popular Government League released its study of the raids, in the form of a 67-page pamphlet, which began:
"For more than six months, we, the undersigned lawyers, whose sworn duty it is to uphold the Constitution and the Laws of the United States, have seen with growing apprehension the continued violation of that Constitution and breaking of those Laws by the Department of Justice of the United States Government."
There followed a carefully researched catalog of illegal acts committed during and after the raids, documented with sworn affidavits and photographs. Yet it was not the contents which gave the pamphlet its greatest impact but its sponsor and signers.
The League was a prestigious urban reform group that not even the GID would have dared call radical; the 12 signers of the pamphlet included some of the most illustrious figures in American jurisprudence.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 98

By June 1920 it appeared that the Red scare, if not over, was at least on the wane, while few were any longer defending the hundreds of illegal acts authorized by the nation's chief law enforcement officer.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 101

Dated October 18, 1924, and directed to William Donovan, assistant attorney general, Criminal Division, from J. Edgar Hoover, acting director of the Bureau of Investigation, the memorandum's key paragraph read:
"It is, of course, to be remembered that the activities of the Communists and other ultra-radicals have not up to the present time constituted a violation of the Federal statutes, and consequently, the Department of Justice, theoretically, has no right to investigate such activities as there has been no violation of Federal laws."
Despite the qualifying phrases, Hoover had been forced to admit, on paper, that most of his actions as head of the GID had been illegal.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 136

By 1942 the FBI was committing so many illegal acts that the "do not file" system had to be expanded to hide their paper trail.
In early December 1941, while still temporary director of censorship, Hoover asked the telegraph and cable companies– Western Union, RCA, and ITT–to delay the transmission of all messages to some half dozen countries for 24 hours, so that they could be copied and examined by the FBI. This "drop copy" program didn't end with the war. As James Bamford notes in his book The Puzzle Palace, it only grew. "By the fall of 1946, the FBI was covertly obtaining, direct from the cable companies, cable traffic to and from some 13 countries." With only brief interruptions, the FBI continued to read foreign cables both to and from the United States until at least 1975.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 281

These were not the only targets. Even though the USSR was now an ally, the Bureau's interest in the American Communist party continued unabated, and it was only one of a large number of "domestic subversive organizations" which interested the FBI. Break-ins were also used in ordinary criminal cases, such as bank robberies, kidnappings, and hijackings. Though any evidence thus obtained was inadmissible in court, there were usually ways around this. Often a break-in provided leads to other evidence which was admissible. Also, knowing in advance exactly what they would find upon entering a home or business, agents had little trouble concocting enough "probable cause" to persuade a judge to issue a search warrant. If all else failed, they could always create a "reliable informant."
"Surreptitious entries" and "black bag jobs" were headquarters terms. In the field the SAs [special agents] usually called them "bag jobs." "But they were never "burglaries," one former assistant director heatedly explained "because nothing was taken."
Usually nothing was–except information. Often something was left: a listening device. And, although former FBI officials are loath to discuss it, sometimes, in very special cases, break-ins were used to plant incriminating evidence which would then be "discovered" during a court-authorized search.
Because of this procedure it isn't possible to determine exactly how many break-ins the FBI committed. Queried on this point by the Church committee, the FBI responded, "Since there exists no precise record of entries, we are unable to retrieve an accurate accounting of their

number"; however "at least 14 domestic subversive targets were the subject of at least 238 entries from 1942 to April 1968.
These figures are suspect for a number of reasons. Perhaps the best was supplied by Swearingen, a former SA with 25 years service. "I myself actually participated in more than 238 while assigned to the Chicago office," Swearingen stated. "The Chicago office committed thousands of bag jobs." This was only one field office.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 283-284

Buggings, wiretapping, break-ins, mail opening, and telegraph and cable monitoring–these were only some of the illegal acts which, adopted under the guise of "wartime necessity" and found to be highly useful shortcuts, became standard, albeit secret, investigative tools of Hoover's FBI.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 287

Emboldened, Hoover decided to test McGrath [the new Attorney General] to see how far he could go, and asked the attorney general to approve the installation of microphone surveillances involving trespass. McGrath responded that he couldn't give his approval, because to do so might violate the Fourth Amendment, but he didn't say Hoover couldn't do it, so the FBI went right on committing break-ins to plant its bugs.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 393

As far as is known, no postmaster general was ever officially informed that the FBI was opening mail. Most did know that the FBI was collecting "mail covers," copying addresses off envelopes, which was deemed legal, but they left the details to their subordinates, usually the chief postal inspector and his assistants, and even they were unaware of the immense scope of the FBI's spying–that the Bureau ran eight separate programs, one lasting 26 years, which resulted in the opening of millions of pieces of mail. But for Hoover even this wasn't enough. On learning, in 1957, that the CIA had its own mail-opening program (HTLINGUAL) which had been in operation for five years, the FBI Director blackmailed the agency into sharing its "take."
The closest possible liaison was also maintained with the Internal Revenue Service, again on the lower, working levels, although at least some of the IRS commissioners did know what was going on. Beginning in the Eisenhower administration, and continuing well into that of Lyndon Johnson, there is no evidence that any FBI requests for tax returns were ever refused. On the contrary, during the Bureau's COINTELPROs, the counterintelligence programs which began during the Eisenhower era, the IRS supplied the FBI with tax information on well over a half-million people and more than 10,000 organizations, many of which were "targeted" for investigation or audit not because of any suspected criminal activity but simply for the sake of harassment.
To Hoover, as to Machiavelli, knowledge was power, and the chief source of that knowledge was, and remained throughout his long tenure as director of the FBI, his informants, who infiltrated every part of the federal government.
Name a bureau or department or regulatory agency or office, William Sullivan [a Hoover assistant] once said, "and we had one or more informants in it, usually a lot more.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 412

…In August 1956 Hoover authorized the first of what would grow into 12 separate COINTELPROs, counter intelligence programs whose aim was “to disrupt, disorganize, and neutralize” specific chosen targets.
The COINTELPROs were a huge step across the line separating investigations from covert action. Like all counter-intelligence, these programs had as their stated goal nothing less than the destruction of enemies, be they individuals or ideologies.
The tactics weren’t new; agents had been using many of them since the 1940s. The change was that Hoover now felt so secure in his power that he could grant official sanction to actions which went well beyond the law.
The first target was the Communist Party USA.
[Footnote]: The second COINTELPRO, against the Socialist Workers party, was almost as extensive, resulting in hundreds of surreptitious entries and thousands of other illegal acts.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 442

In January 1959, entirely on his own and without officially opening a security investigation, J. Edgar Hoover ordered FBI agents to burglarize the SCLC [Southern Christian Leadership Conference] offices. It was the first of 20 known break-ins between that date and January 1964. According to a Justice Department study after Dr. Martin Luther King’s death, “Some of these entries had as one purpose, among others, the obtaining of information about Dr. King.”
It would be standard operating procedure–and more to the point, considering the unlikelihood that damaging materials were lying around the premises–for the Bureau to take these opportunities to install bugs. Certainly, wiretaps were installed. Former Assistant Director Sullivan later admitted that the FBI “had been tapping King’s telephone in Atlanta since the late 1950s.”
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 501

With the announcement on May 3, 1972 [right after Hoover’s death] that the new FBI director would be an “outsider” and not “one of us,” the activity became even more frenetic. It was CYA time. There wasn’t an assistant director, or a special agent in charge, who didn’t have some documents that he didn’t want to have to explain.
But there were oversights. “Do not file” memos that were filed, or put in special folders and forgotten…. A nearly complete record of “surreptitious entries” committed by the New York field office between 1954 and 1972 remained, unshredded and unburned….
Hoover’s FBI had generated so much incriminating paper that it was impossible to destroy it all.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 728

AMERICAN SECRET POLICE RETALIATE AGAINST THOSE WHO CHALLENGE THEIR ILLEGALITIES

The corruption of the Harding administration was revealed in bits and pieces, few of which seemed significant in the themselves. But Thomas Walsh, the senior senator from Montana, thought he discerned a pattern, particularly in the leasing of the Elk Hills, California, and Teapot Dome, Wyoming, oil reserves. The more bits and pieces Walsh collected, the more “coincidences” he found, and the more he thought the Senate should investigate.

Walsh discussed the matter with his friend Burton Wheeler, Montana's newly elected junior senator, who agreed something smelled bad. But Wheeler was itching for a fight of his own. What if he took on Attorney General Daugherty and his Department of Easy Virtue?
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 118

It would, they agreed, be a hell of a fight, a pair of " Montana boys" against more or less the entire administration. The odds didn't bother them–both would have been uncomfortable if they hadn't been the underdogs–and they'd fought, and won, just such a battle before, breaking the Anaconda Copper Mining Company's domination of the state.
Information on their intentions quickly reached Daugherty, and counter-measures were taken. Even before the hearings began, BI Chief Burns sent three special agents to Montana to dig up any dirt they could find on Wheeler. The fourth man, employed by the Republican National Committee, went along to do the same job on Walsh.
Back in Washington, Bureau agents placed the two senators, their families, and their friends under surveillance. Wheeler would recall, "Agents of the Department…stationed men at my house, surrounded my house, watched persons who went in and came out, constantly shadowed me, shadowed my house, and shadowed my wife."
They also, according to evidence presented before the committees, tapped telephones, intercepted mail, broke into offices and homes, and copied correspondence and private papers, looking for anything which might be used for blackmail.
[Footnote]: In addition to Wheeler and Walsh, at least two other senators (Robert LaFollette and Thaddeus Caraway) and one representative (Roy Woodruff) got the same treatment. All five had dared criticize the Justice Department.

Burns tried to frame Wheeler with the standard props, a woman and a hotel room. That he failed proved only that Wheeler had been forewarned. That he tried proved Burns knew his man. He knew Walsh, too, and didn't bother trying.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 119

Even after the hearings were under way, Burns and Hoover did not let up. Immense pressure was exerted on possible witnesses in both the Teapot Dome and the Justice Department probes. Many fled the country, or as Wheeler put it, "simply disappeared," while "some witnesses who co-operated with the committee were notified that their employment with the government was terminated."
Samuel Hopkins Adams recalled such a case. One of the Bureau's female employees was served with a committee subpoena. Given a choice between testifying or receiving a contempt citation, she testified. "The next day," according to Adams, "she received a letter from J. Edgar Hoover…peremptorily demanding her resignation."
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 120

AMERICAN SECRET POLICE RIDDLED WITH BAD PEOPLE

Leaving the White House after his confirmation by the Senate, the new Attorney General, Stone, asked a policeman, "Where is the Department of Justice?" Had the wind been right, he wouldn't have needed to ask. "When I became Attorney General, "Harlan Fiske Stone later recalled, "the Bureau of Investigation was… in exceedingly bad odor." But so was the rest of the Justice Department, he quickly discovered. Although he was determined that [the

Current BI Chief], Burns, would have to go, other matters had priority and it was a month before he called the BI chief into his office.
In the interim, he jotted down notes on what he thought wrong with the Bureau: “filled with men with bad records…many convicted of crimes…organization lawless…many activities without any authority in federal statutes…agents engaged in many practices which are brutal and tyrannical in the extreme…Felix Frankfurter says key to my problem is men… I agree.”
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 124

HOOVER BECOMES DICTATOR OVER THE SECRET POLICE

… the president [FDR] signed still another executive order, extending civil service to most of the departments of the federal government. Hoover, supported by Attorney General, Cummings, fought to keep the Bureau of Investigation exempt. Promotion should be based on ability, Hoover argued, not seniority. Also, he stated quite bluntly that he would resign before being forced to accept Communists and other undesirables. Although the battle raged over many years, hearings, and court decisions, Hoover eventually succeeded in keeping the Bureau civil service exempt.
This meant that he could hire or fire, promote or demote, anyone he chose, without having to justify his actions or have them subject to review. Few others, no matter how high in government, had such unlimited power. J. Edgar Hoover would retain and use it until the day he died.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 156

Far stronger was the response of Collier’s magazine. In its August 19, 1933, issue, Ray Tucker, its Washington bureau chief, ridiculed Hoover and his immature gumshoes and gave advice on how easy it was to shake their “tails.”
“Despite all this burlesque and bombast,” Tucker continued, “there is a serious and sinister side to this secret federal police system. It had always been up to its neck in personal intrigue and partisan politics.” Under Hoover, Tucker charged, this miniature American Cheka [a slander of the Cheka] was run in a Prussian style as Hoover’s “personal and political machine. More inaccessible than presidents, he kept his agents in fear and awe by firing and shifting them at whim; no other government agency had such a turnover of personnel.”
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 158

With an arrogant disregard for the criticisms of the past, J. Edgar Hoover had resurrected the despised GID, complete with indices and lists of alleged subversives. He hadn’t even changed the name.
Nor was this all he had done. Though he kept its existence secret from Congress, and the public, Hoover had also–on his own initiative and without any statutory authority–set up a Custodial Detention list, of persons to be rounded up and imprisoned in concentration camps, should the need arise. The list included–in addition to “both aliens and citizens of the United States [of] German, Italian, and Communist sympathies”–radical labor leaders, journalists critical of the administration, writers critical of the FBI, and certain members of Congress.
[Footnote]: although Hoover ordered the preparation of the list on November 9, 1939, it was not officially designated the Custodial Detention list until June 15, 1940. Periodically revised

to include new enemies, it was later renamed the Security Index (SI) and the Administrative Index (ADEX), and it eventually spawned such other specialist lists as the Reserve (or Communist) Index, the Agitator Index, and the Rabble Rouser Index.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 213

ROOSEVELT AND HIS ATTORNEY GENERAL SET UP PROCEDURE TO SMEAR THOUSANDS

Franklin Roosevelt suggested Dies [Chairman of the House Un-American Activities Committee] meet with Attorney General Jackson to see if something could be done to eliminate such misunderstandings. Dies did meet with Jackson, and a deal was struck. The committee agreed not to publicize any information it might obtain until after it had been cleared by the Department of Justice, so as not to interfere with any secret FBI investigations. In return, the Department of Justice agreed to furnish the committee with information on cases which it felt could not be successfully prosecuted.
Thus FDR, and his liberal Attorney General Robert Jackson, set up the machinery which would be used, in the coming years, to smear thousands upon thousands of Americans.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 241

AMERICANS KILL SUBVERSIVES WHO HAVE NOT ACTUALLY DONE ANYTHING

On June 20, 1942, two days after George Dasch [a German agent landed on Long Island by a German submarine] surrendered to the FBI in Washington, Ernst Burger [another German agent landed by the same submarine] and two other members of the [same Long Island group] were arrested in New York City. Burger [like Dasch] also proved cooperative. Acting on the information he provided–which included descriptions, real names, cover names, and a list of possible contacts–the Bureau was able to track down and apprehend all four of the saboteurs who had also landed near Jacksonville, Florida, [from another submarine] arresting the last member of the group in Chicago on June 27.
It was a tremendous accomplishment. Exactly two weeks after the Long Island landing, all eight of the German agents were in custody. They hadn't even had time to commit a single act of sabotage.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 290

It was a quick trial. As Attorney General Francis Biddle put it, "It was obvious that the reliance of the public on their government would be immeasurably strengthened if these would-be saboteurs were disposed of promptly." It took exactly one month to try the eight men, find them guilty, sentence them to death, and execute six out of the eight, by electrocution, in the District of Columbia jail.
The public first learned of the verdict, and the deaths, in a brief presidential statement issued a few hours after the last execution took place. Acting upon "a unanimous recommendation, concurred in by the attorney general and the judge advocate general of the Army," the president had commuted the sentences of two of the men, the statement said.
"The commutation directed by the President in the case of Burger was to confinement at hard labor for life. In the case of Dasch the sentence was commuted by the President to confinement at hard labor for 30 years."

Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 292

AMERICAN LEGAL SYSTEM AND JUDGES ARE ROTTEN

And ex parte communication–private contact between a judge and only one side of a legal proceeding–is forbidden under Canon 3A (4) of the American Bar Association's Code of Judicial Conduct, adopted in 1972. However, in 1951, when the above took place [during the Rosenberg case], such conduct was not prohibited. It was, however, considered permissible only in case of an extreme emergency (such as a death threat). There was no emergency, extreme or otherwise, in this and the numerous other ex parte conversations Kaufman held with the prosecution.
[Footnote]: Judge Kaufman [judge in the Rosenberg case] was "dying" to preside over "the trial of the century" and, learning this, Roy Cohn [assistant to Joe McCarthy] had gone straight to the clerk in charge of assigning judges to criminal cases and pulled the right strings. Cohn also said that he and Judge Kaufman had secretly communicated throughout the trial. He claimed, "Kaufman told me before the trial started that he was going to sentence Julius Rosenberg to death."
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 422

[Footnote]: Cohn later claimed that he persuaded Kaufman to give Ethel Rosenberg the death sentence. In The Autobiography of Roy Cohn, written with Sidney Zion, Cohen states, "Judge Kaufman has said that he sought divine guidance in his synagogue before deciding upon the sentences. I can't confirm or deny this. So far as I know, the closest he got to prayer was the phone booth next to the Park Avenue Synagogue. He called from that booth to a phone I used, behind the bench in the courtroom, to ask my advice on whether he ought to give the death penalty to Ethel Rosenberg. We often communicated during the Rosenberg case in this manner."
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 425

Humphreys, who was known has "the Camel" or "the Hump," was the legal tactician of the Chicago syndicate and one of the mob's greatest political fixers. And it was from Humphrey's own words that J. Edgar Hoover found the solution to an old mystery: how the former Attorney General, and current Supreme Court justice, Tom Clark had been bribed to grant parole to the four Chicago Mafia leaders in 1947.
Never one to let modesty get in the way of a good story, Humphreys admitted having masterminded the fix, observing that the attorney general had been "100 percent for doing favors," but that after the parole scandal broke, "you couldn't get through for nothing."
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 457

HOOVER WAS A CROOK

In reality, the FBI Recreational Association [FBIRA] was a slush fund, maintained for the use of Hoover, Tolson, and their key aides. It was also a money-laundering operation, so the director would not have to pay taxes on his book royalties. The FBI director's charity went right back into his and other pockets. According to William Sullivan, who oversaw the writing of Masters of Deceit–by FBI agents, on public time, as many as eight agents working full-time on the book for nearly six months–Hoover "put many thousands of dollars of that

book…into his own pocket, and so did Tolson, and so did Lou Nichols [another Hoover aide]."
Hoover published two other books: A Study of Communism, with Holt, Rinehart & Winston, in 1962, which sold approximately 125,000 copies and earned the FBI director close to $50,000; and J. Edgar Hoover on Communism, with Random House, in 1969, which sold about 40,000 copies and whose total earnings have never been made public. Again, these were written by FBI employees–it was a standing joke among the agents that the Director not only didn't write his own books; he hadn't even read them–and again, to avoid paying taxes, he laundered the royalties through the FBI Recreational Association.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 448

As will be documented in a subsequent chapter, one of the deepest and darkest of all the FBI's secrets was that America's No. 1 law enforcement officer was himself a crook.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 449

[Forcefully delivered in the U.S. House of Representatives the following words came from Representative Cornelius Gallagher of New Jersey]: "Mr. Speaker, this is corruption at its worst and its central figure is J. Edgar Hoover. It is he whose unchecked reign of absolute power has intimidated this Congress to the extent that a serious question has not been asked about his management of the FBI for 10 years–maybe longer. He has become the American Beria, destroying those who threaten his empire, frightening those who should question his authority, and terrorizing those who dissent from his ancient and anachronistic view of the world."
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 588

Strange things happened after J. Edgar Hoover died.
Discovering that the former special agent [Carpenter] had also been Hoover's gardener and houseman might have prompted curiosity about what other services the late director had had performed at public expense. For example, the Exhibits Section (basically the Bureau's carpentry shop, which designed and constructed courtroom mock ups, training aids, and the like) had channeled thousands of dollars into improvements on Hoover's home. Some, such as the burglar alarms and the 10-foot stone wall which closed off the backyard, could be justified as necessary security, but not the new front portico, fishpond, flagstone courtyard, sidewalks, Astroturf, landscaping, sun deck, bar, liquor cabinet, recreation room murals, valet, ornamental tables, stereo, speakers, cabinets, and wallpaper, or the annual paint job, or the powerful fan that Exhibits had installed in Hoover's kitchen because the Director had once mentioned that he did not like the smell of bacon frying. The Exhibits Section also built special gifts each year for the director's birthday and service anniversaries, maintained all his electrical appliances, and kept men on call 24 hours a day in case his TV went out.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 725

Questions about the misappropriation of government time, money, equipment, and services would inevitably lead to the sensitive subject of what had really happened to the royalties from the director's best-selling books, the profits from the sale of their movie rights, and ABC's per-episode payments for the TV series "the FBI," and would almost certainly bring attention to the tax-exempt FBI Recreational Association, the Imprest Fund, the Confidential Fund, the Library Fund, and the Special Agents Mutual Benefit Association.

Altogether, thousands of dollars were missing, misused, misappropriated, and/or unaccounted for.
One of the special agents who handled Hoover's and Tolson's taxes once told William Sullivan that if the truth about the director's stock purchases, oil well leases, and income tax returns ever came out, Mr. Hoover would spend the rest of his life on Alcatraz. He said it in such a way, Sullivan recalled, as to indicate that he feared he'd probably be occupying an adjoining cell.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 726

The chief casualty was the reputation of J. Edgar Hoover, already badly battered by the 1975-76 revelations of the Church committee. That the director of the FBI, Mr. Law Enforcement himself, the man most often voted America's most respected public official, had been a petty thief during most of his years in office seemed to shock the public more than the 15-month-long probe into FBI wiretaps, bugging, burglaries, COINTELPROs, and other illegal acts.
"It was, as corruption goes," the Los Angeles Times editorialized, "pretty piddling stuff, almost embarrassingly so. But that's not the point. The point is that the most powerful law-enforcement official in the world, who would severely discipline or fire underlings for the least infraction of the FBI's rigid rules of personal conduct, could not himself resist the temptation to embezzle from the public purse with routine and unblushing regularity. And because Hoover was corrupt, some of those around him in the upper echelons of the Bureau felt that they too had the right to be corrupt."
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 746

FBI AGENTS ARE THE BIGGEST OF THE MOBSTERS

In April 1963 [an FBI agent attending the funeral of a crime boss] was jumped by 4 mourners and badly beaten [outside the funeral home].
The incident, which was unprecedented, had major repercussions. Hoover passed down the word that the agents were free to reciprocate.
All over the United States crime families discussed this sudden, astonishing turn of events…and agreed there should be no recurrence. But mob leaders in Youngstown, Ohio, didn't get the message. The agents overheard them discussing which of their three available hit men to use to kill an FBI agent they particularly disliked. Some 20 of the area's biggest and baddest-looking agents barged into the Mafia chieftain's penthouse apartment, "accidentally" knocked over expensive vases, dropped cigarettes and still-lit matches on the Oriental carpets, urinated on a favorite potted palm. "You may have three hit men," they told him, "but Mr. Hoover has thousands."
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 530

AMERICAN LEADERS SPY ON THEIR OWN SUBORDINATES AND HIGH OFFICIALS

Saturday morning the Kissinger aide Col. Haig came to Sullivan's office and requested wiretaps on four people, three National Security Council staff members and an assistant to the Secretary of Defense. The request was made on "the highest authority," Haig stated (by

which Sullivan presumed he meant Kissinger or the president), and involved “a matter of most grave and serious consequences to our national security.”
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 635

[Later] when Sullivan suggested to Haig that the taps had failed in their purpose–there was still no clue as to the source of the New York Times leak– Haig, after checking with Kissinger, insisted the taps be kept on, so “a pattern of innocence” could be established. In all there would be 17 wiretaps, ranging in duration from five weeks to 21 months, the longest being that of Morton Halperin, who was tapped for a year and a half after he left the NSC and no longer had access to classified documents. Those tapped included seven NSC staff members, four newsman, two White House advisers, a deputy assistant secretary of state, a State Department ambassador, a brigandier general with the Defense Department, and one of Nixon’s speech writers. Henry Kissinger ordered 14 of the wiretaps, John Mitchell two, and H.R. Haldeman one.
[Footnote]: those tapped were: Morton Halperin, Helmut Sonnenfeldt, NSC; Daniel Davidson, NSC; Brigandier General Robert Pursley, Department of Defense; Richard Sneider, NSC, Richard Moose, NSC; Henry Brandon, London Sunday Times; Hedrick Smith, New York Times; John Sears, White House; William Safire, presidential speech writer; Marvin Kalb, CBS News; Ambassador William Sullivan, State Department; William Beecher, New York Times; Richard Pederson, State Department; Winston Lord, NSC; Tony Lake, NSC; and James McLane, White House.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 637

By putting taps on two of their closest aides, Henry Kissinger was able to spy on defense Secretary Melvin Laird and Secretary of State William Rogers.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 638

From the start, there was an “atmosphere of duplicity.” Here was the president of the United States [Nixon], asking for a comprehensive report on intelligence-collecting methods that could be used against domestic radicals, and sitting across the table from him were the nation’s four intelligence chiefs, not one of whom saw fit to inform him that most of these techniques were already being used against the same groups. They just silently sat there–Hoover, Helms, Gayler, and Bennett–each with his own secrets. Nixon didn’t know about the CIA’s mail-opening program, or the FBI’s COINTELPROs, or the NSA’s monitoring of domestic telephone calls, or the DIAs planting informants among campus groups.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 653

The Kissinger wiretaps were one of the most closely held secrets of the FBI. Within the Bureau itself, only the Director, Sullivan, and those who worked on the taps were aware of their existence.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 695

US HAS ADOPTED THE RUTHLESS METHODS OF THE BRITISH & THE NAZIS TO FIGHT SOCIALISM

It is above all American imperialism that has become the main employer of all the filthy methods of labor espionage, not only against its own progressive organizations, but against

working-class and progressive movement's throughout the world. All that was most cunning in British imperialist methods and most ruthless in the methods of the Gestapo has been taken over by the American state.
Klugmann, James. From Trotsky to Tito. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1951, p. 57

It is no secret that the main target of the British Secret Service, whether "foreign" or "other," is the movement of the working-class and the working people for socialism and peace. Far from being foreign to British traditions, the use of spies and provocateurs against the labor movement is part of the long tradition of the British capitalists, and has been brought by them to a fine but very ugly art.
USA–Stoolpigeon State
But if it was in Britain that the employment of spies and provocateurs against the labor movement was first developed on a large-scale; if such activity was taken a stage further by the fascist Ovra and Gestapo; it is American imperialism that has now inherited and carries forward all that is worst and most disgusting in this ugly art. The use of spies, provocateurs, informers has become an integral part of the "American way of life."
In 1798 Edward Livingston, friend of Thomas Jefferson, denounced in these prophetic words the Alien and Sedition Acts about to be enacted by the Federalist Administration of President John Adams:
"The country will swarm with informers, spies, debators, and all the odious reptile tribe that breed in the sunshine of domestic power…. The home of the most unsuspected confidence, the intimacies of friendship, or the recesses of domestic retirement afford no security. The companion whom you most trust, the friend in whom you confide, the domestic who waits in your chamber, are all tempted to betray your imprudent, unguarded follies; to misrepresent your words, to convey them, distorted by calumny, to the secret tribunal where jealousy presides, where fear officiates as accuser, and suspicion is the only evidence that is heard."
And yet how mild and moderate are these stern words of warning when compared to the actual conduct of the corrupt and reactionary American police state in the last 30 years [1920 to 1950]. The "reptile tribe" of spies and stoolpigeons, complemented by a corrupt and brutal police, has become part of the daily life of contemporary America….
It is in the hysterical witch-hunting campaign that followed the First World War that we first make acquaintance with America's stoolpigeon king, J. Edgar Hoover, present head of the FBI. In October 1918, the U.S. Congress, on the crest of a witch-hunting wave, passed the Deportation Act, ostensibly to be used against aliens. In the following year was created the infamous "Radical Division" of the Department of Justice's Bureau of Investigation, under the direction of J. Edgar Hoover.
Soon we see the Division in action. In the words of Attorney-General Palmer himself, we see the establishment of:
"a card index system, numbering over 200,000 cards, giving detailed data not only upon individual agitators connected with the ultra-radical movement, but also upon organizations, associations, societies, publications, and special conditions existing in certain localities."
With the aid of provocateurs and police stooges, a terror campaign was launched against the labor and progressive movement. Towards the end of 1919 (see Albert Kahn's High Treason) the Assistant Chief of the Justice Department's Bureau of Investigation, Frank Burke, dispatched a highly confidential directive to Federal Agents throughout America, informing them that the Department was about to carry out a series of raids in an all-in roundup of "Communists" and "Radicals." They were ordered to mobilize all their

stoolpigeons “within Communist groups” to make every effort to arrange for these organizations to hold meetings on the designated night. As Burke put it:

“If possible you should arrange with your under-cover informants to have meetings of the Communist Party and the Communist Labor Party on the night set…. This, of course, will facilitate in making the arrests.” (Albert Kahn’s High Treason, p. 1)

Throughout the whole preceding spring and summer plans had been worked out for this anti-labor “offensive.” Hundreds of spies, special agents and stoolpigeons had been sent into labor and progressive organizations. Justice Department spies were ordered not only to watch out for “subversive” literature but in a number of cases printed it themselves and then had it seized in police raids.

The offensive culminated in the great raids of June 1920, when in one swoop, on June 2, more than 10,000 arrests were made in 70 cities. Agents played a major role in the preparation of the “offensive”:

“The action, though it came with dramatic suddenness, had been carefully mapped out, studied, and systematised…. For months, Department of Justice men, dropping all their work, had concentrated on the Reds. Agents quietly infiltrated into the radical ranks…and went to work, sometimes as cooks in remote mining colonies, again as steelworkers, and when the opportunity presented itself, as agitators of the wildest type…. Several of the agents, ‘under-cover’ men, managed to rise in the radical movement and became, in at least one instance, the recognized leader of the district….” (New York Times, March 1, 1920)

During this whole period the Bureau of Investigation of the Department Of Justice worked in the closest collaboration with the labor espionage organizations of the great American corporations–two weapons of the same class against the same class enemy. The Commission of Inquiry of the Inter-Church World Movement stated in its report of the steel strike of 1919:

“Federal immigration authorities testified to the commission that raids and arrests, for ‘radicalism,’ etc., were made especially in the Pittsburgh District on the denunciations and secret reports of steel company ‘under-cover’ men, and the prisoners turned over to the Department of Justice.” (Quoted in High Treason, page 37)

A Federal Agent in the Pittsburgh area, giving evidence to this Commission, declared that “90 percent of all the radicals arrested and taken into custody were reported by one of the large corporations, either of the steel or the coal industry.”

The agents and provocateurs organized by the imperialist state to develop a spy scare and a witch-hunt against “the Reds” were used for the attack on all militant trade unionists, and indeed on all liberals, democrats, lovers and defenders of democracy and peace.

The American state, true to the capitalist tradition, combined its covert penetration of and spying on the labor movement from inside with open police repression from outside. The Gestapo did not have to go beyond the confines of Western democracy to learn its methods.

In 1929, President Hoover appointed a National Commission on Law Enforcement and Observance, headed by George Wickersham, former Attorney-General and Wall Street partner of another Republican president. This is how Mr. E. J. Hopkins, veteran police reporter and investigator for the Wickersham Commission, summed up in his book, Our Lawless Police, the findings of this authoritative Commission:

“In various cases which occurred between 1920 and 1930, the Wickersham Commission found that suspected persons had been starved, kept awake many days and nights, confined in pitch-dark and airless cells; had been beaten with fists, clubs, black-jacks, rubber hoses, telephone books, straps, whips; beaten on the shins, under the knee cap (at the point of the patellar reflex), across the abdomen, the throat, the face, the head, the shoulders,

above the kidneys, on the buttocks and legs; kicked on the shins, the torso and in the crotch; had had their arms twisted, the testicles twisted and squeezed; had been given tear gas, scopolamine injections and chloroform; had been made to touch corpses and hold the hands of murdered persons in morgues; that women had been lifted by their hair; in one case, a man had been laid flat upon the floor and lifted repeatedly by his organs of sex.
This in modern America between 1920 and 1930, in the 15th decade of the Constitution and for the purpose of obtaining a 'voluntary' confession of guilt."
In 1937 there took place in the USA the famous hearings on the question of civil liberties and labor espionage before the subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor of the United States Senate, popularly known as the La Follette Civil Liberties Committee. The complete text in some 30 or so volumes was published by the American Government (not at a popular price).
Amongst the witnesses called was Mr. Blankerhorn, industrial economist in the National Labor Relations Board, who for 20 years had studied the question of labor espionage. This gentleman furnished the Committee with a list of agencies whose profitable business it was to supply stoolpigeons to capitalist employers to spy on, disrupt, corrupt, and compromise the trade unions in their plants and factories. As of April 1936, there were 230 such agencies employing something like half a million stoolpigeons and spies at the average price of $175 per spy per month. Three of the biggest agencies, Pinkerton's, Burns, and Thiel, hired out between them 40,000-135,000 agents. During the hearings, General Motors officials, for instance, testified that between January 1934 and July 1936 alone they had paid out $995,000 to Pinkerton's Agency alone. One labor leader reported to the investigating committee that he never "knew of a gathering large enough to be called a meeting and small enough to exclude a spy." "The known total of business firms receiving spy services from these agencies," reported the Commission, "is approximately 2500. The list as a whole reads like a bluebook of American industry."
Unwilling employers and embarrassed agency heads were forced to produce to the Committee records, catalogs, tariffs of their agents and informers. All the craft and craftiness of U.S. advertising had been employed in boosting their own particular brands of spies. "You have a union–we'll bust it. You want spies we have the best." Here is a typical letter from the Foster service to a prospective client:
"First, I will say that if we are employed before any union or organization is formed by the employees, there will be no strike and no disturbance. This does not say there will be no unions formed, but it does say that we will control the activities of the union and direct its policies, provided we are allowed a free hand by our clients.
Second, if the union is already formed and no strike is on or expected to be declared within thirty or 60 days, although we are not in the same position as we would be in the above case, we could–and I believe with success–carry on an intrigue which would result in factions, disagreements, resignations of officers, and general decrease in membership."
Posing as active trade unionists hundreds of these stoolpigeons wormed their way into leading positions in the CI0, AFof L, and the Railroad Brotherhoods–the three main U.S. trade union organizations. And once they had won those positions they use them for disruption. An agent elected secretary of the AF of L Typewriter Workers' Branch in Hartford, Connecticut, "succeeded" in reducing its membership from 2500 to 75 in one-year. Here is a short extract from the testimony of a Pinkerton agent–Barker.
SEN. LA FOLLETTE: Mr. Barker, as a result of your experience as an undercover operator, informant, and spy, what is your impression about the effectiveness, or lack of effectiveness,

of this labor espionage work in breaking up or preventing unions, genuine labor unions, from organizing?
MR. BARKER: It is very effective, especially in the local to which are belonged…. One time at Lansing-Fisher they were almost 100 percent organized. And finally it went down to where, as I said, there were only five officers left.
SEN. LAFOLLETTE: You attribute that to undercover operations?
MR. BARKER: Yes; I do.

The training given by the agencies to their agents is very revealing. Here are a few extracts from a 24-page Correspondence Course of Training for an Industrial Operative from the National Manufacturers' Syndicate:
From the First Instruction Sheet:
"Our work is most honorable, humanitarian, and very important, and must be recognized as such."
From the Second Instruction Sheet:
"It is very plain that in order for us to be successful we must conduct our work in an invisible manner, as the ordinary worker, in his ignorance, is apt to misunderstand our motives if he knows of our presence and identity in the plant."
From the Third Instruction Sheet:
"The rules and regulations of our organization exclude even one's close friends and families from any knowledge as to details of any assignment a representative may receive."
From the Fourth Instruction Sheet:
"Remember we are unalterably opposed to all cliques, radicalists, and disturbing elements who try to create discontentment, suspicion, and unfriendliness on the part of the workers towards the employers….
"As our representative you must find out first of all who are the dissatisfied ones; then cultivate their friendship and win their confidence.
"You must be prepared to throw overboard your moral scruples. You must be hard. You must lie easily and often… you must be slippery, shrewd, sharp, sneaky…."
Is it a far step from the work of these agencies and agents, outlined in such detail in the LaFollette Report, to the work of sending agents and spies into the working-class organizations of other countries? Here is the training-ground for Intelligence Operations against the working people of other countries, especially in the lands where the workers rule….
Nor is it a long step to the witch-hunts, spy scares, purges, developing fascism–to the USA of 1950. Take, for example, the trial of the 11 Communist leaders. Of the 13 witnesses for the prosecution, two were "regular" FBI agents, 10 FBI undercover agents or embittered renegade Communists. There were no other witnesses.
Klugmann, James. From Trotsky to Tito. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1951, p. 64-70

MCCARTHY ERA EXHIBITED THE WORST US POLITICAL REPRESSION

Book cover
The McCarthy era was a bad time for freedom in America. Encompassing far more than the brief career of Sen. Joseph McCarthy, it was the most widespread episode of political repression in the history of the United States.

Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998

PEOPLE IN US TRIED FOR THEIR LITERATURE NOT FOR ACTUAL DEEDS

These trials [the trials of socialists, Wobblies, and anarchists opposed to WWI] foreshadowed the anticommunist prosecutions of the Cold War in both their procedures and their outcomes. In the IWW cases, for example, the government, as it was later to do in prosecuting the CP, based its case almost entirely on the organization's literature, rather than on its activities.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 54

Still, the government did have to come up with some more positive evidence that Communists espoused the violent overthrow of the state. It found it in the party's bookstores. Political trials, because they often deal more with words than deeds, can sometimes be literary affairs. In the Smith Act case, because it involved "teaching" as well as "advocating," was especially dense with texts. They included the most incendiary passages in the works of Marx, Lenin, Stalin, and other communist heavies….
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 195

US GOVT OFFICIALS SUPPRESSED PEOPLE REGARDLESS OF THE LAW

There were parallels as well between the outrages that accompanied the Palmer raids and those that took place during the McCarthy period. These similarities were no accident; they occurred because it was not possible either in 1919 or in 1949 to clamp down on political agitation without seriously compromising freedom of speech and the rights of individuals. It was, after all, not against the law to call for a proletarian revolution or, later, to be a Communist. This lack of a clear statutory prohibition against what they wanted to suppress tempted officials like Hoover to operate in the murky area at the margins of legality. Undoubtedly, they sometimes went over the edge, either because they exceeded their own authority or because laws they were trying to enforce did not forbid the activities they considered illegal.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 58

The first raids took place on November 7, 1919, the second anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution. The main target was a left-wing immigrant group, the Union of Russian Workers, but Hoover and his men also picked up Emma Goldman and a few other top anarchists. Neither the violence that accompanied the raids nor such violations of civil liberties as beatings and warrantless arrests diminished the apparent popularity of the measures.
The newly formed communist parties were the targets of the second roundup. Undercover agents got orders to call meetings for the night of January 2, 1920, to facilitate the raids. Again, there were massive violations of human rights and due process. Somewhere between

6000 10,000 people were arrested in New York, Boston, Detroit, and 30 other cities, often without a warrant. As a result, although the raids netted most of the nation's leading communist aliens, they also picked up nondeportable citizens and such innocent bystanders as the curiosity seeker in Newark who was arrested because he "looked like a radical." Some of the detainees were beaten and others were held without hearings for weeks and even months, often in dangerously overcrowded facilities.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 59

So, too, did the illegal behavior and injustice that suffused so much of what happened. The process of destroying Communism seriously deformed American politics. Countersubversion was not good for democracy. The basic illegitimacy of the project tainted everything it touched. From the FBI's illegal break-ins to the secrecy of the entertainment industry's blacklists to the ACLU board's refusal to except its members rejection of an anticommunist referendum, every public and private institution that fought communism resorted to lies and dirty tricks. The hypocrisy was corrosive, laying the foundation for the widespread cynicism and apathy that suffuses contemporary political life.
Nor has the blatant disregard for the rights of individuals that characterized the anticommunist crusade necessarily vanished from the scene. It may in fact have intensified. Certainly during the 1960s, the brutal repression practiced against such dissenting organizations as the Black Panthers built upon the foundations laid during the McCarthy era. And it remains unclear, for example, whether the police state apparatus that J. Edgar Hoover and his allies tried to put into place has been entirely dismantled. During the 1980s, the Bureau was still engaging in COINTELPRO-type operations against opponents of the Reagan administration's foreign policy in Central America. National security, now as then, still cloaks this kind of illegitimate activity.
The contempt for constitutional limitations that McCarthyism bred among its perpetrators has also continued to fester within the American polity. It was, after all, HUAC's most famous alumnus, Richard Nixon, who mounted a COINTELPRO-type of offensive against the very structure of the American government during the Watergate years. Nixon owed his career to the anti-communist crusade. He won elections by red-baiting and gained a national reputation by pursuing Alger Hiss. His political success conveyed respectability on the illicit practices he and his allies employed. By the time he reached the White House, the secrecy and deceit that had marked his early triumphs had become routine. He snooped on aides and rivals, authorized dirty tricks against domestic opponents, and illegally bombed a country (Cambodia) with which the United States was not at war. These crimes were far more serious than the offense artifacts that someone like Clinton Jencks was charged with during McCarthy era.
Nixon's subversive activities were not merely the excesses of an out-of-control politician. They had been nurtured in a system that, from the 1940s on, had justified the illegitimate use of state power against the supposed enemies of the state. Nixon simply identified himself with the state and carried on business as usual. Watergate was, thus, the logical result of the tendency to insulate affairs of state from the Constitution. During the McCarthy era, that tendency nullified the First Amendment; during Watergate it overrode much of the rest of the Constitution. Though Nixon was forced from office, there was no repudiation of the mentality that tempted him to break the law in the name of some greater national purpose.
The equally illegal Iran-Contra operation reveals how deeply engrained that propensity for criminal behavior had become. Ronald Reagan's top advisers–and possibly the president

himself–knowingly contravened Congress's express prohibition on supplying arms to the Nicaraguan Contras and funded the operation by an illegal deal to trade arms for hostages in the Middle East. Like Nixon, they tried to cover it up. And like the protagonists of the McCarthy era, they tried to justify it in terms of national security. To the extent, then, that the secret and illegal use of state power for illegitimate purposes became routinized during the McCarthy era, it is clear that the anticommunist crusade contributed to the undermining of respect for lawful procedures at the very highest levels of government. Ultimately, it may well be that the sleaziness McCarthyism introduced to American politics constitutes its main legacy.
… the process through which McCarthyism came to dominate American politics is infinitely replicable. The demonization of politically marginalized groups and the use of state power to repress them goes on all the time, as does the willingness of so many important individuals and institutions to collaborate with the process.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 413

With the advent of war [World War I] anything German became anathema. Teaching of the language was banned in most schools; Beethoven & Bach disappeared from symphony programs; sauerkraut was renamed liberty cabbage. The fact that most brewers were of German nationality was used by the Anti-Saloon League and its intemperate allies to help push the 18th Amendment through a few more state legislatures, enough to make prohibition inevitable. The suppression of the International Workers in the World (IWW) was given new impetus with the charge (belatedly disproven) that the union had "enemy funding." With the passage, in quick succession, of the Espionage Act (1917), the Sedition Act (1918), and the Alien Deportation Act (1918), pacifism became disloyalty, complaints about wages or working conditions were called "seditious utterances," and neighborhood quarrels or ballroom brawls were elevated to the level of treason.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 70

The May 1917 Selective Service Act required that all males between the ages of 21 and 30 register for the draft. Convinced that many young men had failed to sign up, and aware that a number of others had deserted once they were inducted, Secretary of War Newton Baker and Attorney General Gregory gave Bureau of Investigation Chief, Bielaski, permission to conduct a number of small experimental "roundups" in Pittsburgh, Chicago, and Boston. Pleased with the results, Bielaski decided to try something more ambitious. On Sept. 3, 1918, 35 BI agents, 2000 American Protective League [a kind of right wing vigilante group] operatives, an equal number of military personnel, and several hundred policeman fanned out over New York City, Brooklyn, Jersey City, and Newark. At bayonet point, they confronted men on street corners and streetcars and yanked them from barber chairs, theaters, pool halls, hotel lobbies, and offices, demanding that each produce either a draft-registration card or a birth certificate proving him too young or too old for the draft. Those who didn't happen to be carrying such documentation, the majority, were herded into hastily constructed "corrals" and held until their status was determined. Overly enthusiastic–the New York catch included a 75 year old cripple on crutches–the raiders arrested far more than had been provided for, and many were confined in standing-room-only quarters without food, water, or sanitary facilities for up to two days. [Footnote]: Exactly how many "slackers" were apprehended remains unclear. BI Chief Bielaski having issued various contradictory figures. In his final report he claimed that out of

50,000 arrested, 1,505 had been inducted into military service and 15,000 referred to their draft boards. However, one of his assistants injudiciously admitted that out of every 200 arrests, 199 were clearly mistakes.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 71

It was O'Brian [a progressive Republican from Buffalo, New York, and special assistant to the Attorney General for war work] who prosecuted the most important Espionage Act cases, including that of the Socialist presidential candidate Eugene Debs, who was given a ten-year sentence for an antiwar speech in Canton, Ohio (O'Brian argued that the pacifist's utterances were not the "free speech" mentioned in the First Amendment).
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 74

ROOSEVELT WAS QUITE REPRESSIVE WHEN HE WANTED TO BE

Nonetheless, at those moments when Communists and their allies created problems for his administration, Roosevelt had few reservations about repressing them, especially if they interfered with national security or his own political career. He was not a civil libertarian. He was more than willing to spy on, harass, or prosecute any group or individual that opposed his policies. Though he had refused to send the army into San Francisco to put down the maritime strike of 1934, he was quite prepared to throw its leader Harry Bridges out of the country a year later. At times, especially when the CP turned against his foreign policy, the president could be quite ferocious.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 87

CPUSA LEADER WAS SENTENCED UNJUSTLY

Recognizing that there was nothing to be gained by forcing the party's leader [Browder] to serve out the remainder of his patently unfair sentence, Roosevelt released him from prison on May 16, 1942, on the grounds that it "will have a tendency to promote national unity."
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 103

LITTLE EVIDENCE AGAINST THE ROSENBERGS

Because the Venona documents were too highly classified to be produced at a trial, the government had to build its case against Rosenberg on other evidence–of which there was little.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 177

ILLEGAL ACTIVITY WAS COMMITTED TO CONVICT THE ROSENBERGS

The government's evidence against the Rosenbergs was not overwhelming, but given the political atmosphere in the spring of 1951 the guilty verdict was probably inevitable. Nonetheless, the prosecution left little to chance and fixed the case. Not only did it

encourages witnesses to embellish their testimony, but it also colluded directly (and illegally) with Judge Kaufman to ensure that he would impose the death penalty.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 178

McCarthyism functioned along a spectrum that extended from such relatively minor damages as the withdrawal of a judgeship from Alger Hiss's lawyer to the judicial murder of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 305

TRIAL AGAINST CPUSA LEADERS WAS UNJUST AND RIGGED

The defense attorneys challenged the government's entire case. Time and again they questioned the admissibility of the books and articles that Budenz, Philbrick, and the other government witnesses were introducing. Most of these works had been written long before the passage of the Smith Act and were hardly representative of the party's current thinking. Nor were the selections an accurate sampling of the CP's basic philosophy. But Judge Medina overruled each objection.
Medina was hardly an unbiased arbiter…. Not surprisingly, he handled the party's lawyers and their clients with overt hostility, treating their objections as delaying tactics and openly baiting both attorneys and witnesses…. It was not a decorous proceeding.
Nor was it a fair one. Whether through bugs or informers, the FBI got inside information about defense strategy that it passed to the prosecutors. In the courtroom, Medina cut off cross-examinations when they appeared to be damaging the government witnesses and he refused to let the CP present the same kind of evidence that the prosecution had. The government used the judge's bias to good advantage….
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 198

MCCARTHYISM WAS ACTUALLY HOOVERISM BECAUSE THE FBI RAN IT ALL

Had observers known in the 1950s what they have learned since the 1970s, When the Freedom of Information Act Opened the Bureau's files, "McCarthyism" would probably be called "Hooverism." For the FBI was the bureaucratic heart of the McCarthy era. It designed and ran much of the machinery of political repression, shaping the loyalty programs, criminal prosecutions, and undercover operations that pushed the communist issue to the center of American politics during early years of the Cold War.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 203

Though the bureau often tried to hide its tracks, the evidence that remains makes it clear that the FBI was the single most important component of the anti-communist crusade and the institution most responsible for its successes–and its inequities.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 239

McCarthy was more flamboyant than his fellow crusaders, but the dishonesty, opportunism, and disregard for civil liberties that he practiced were commonplace within the rest of the anticommunist network.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 265

"McCarthyism" was, from start to finish, the creation of one man, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover.
Gentry, Curt. J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets. New York: Norton, c1991, p. 380

THE FBI WAS HIGHLY POLITICAL AND BIASED

It would be hard to exaggerate the importance Hoover and his men placed on maintaining the FBI's reputation as a professional, nonpartisan investigating agency. That perception was the key to its power. By insisting that it was above political considerations, the Bureau insured that it would receive support from all constituencies and that few restrictions would be placed on its activities. That image, of course, was a myth. Far from being an impartial agency that simply looked for facts, the Bureau had a very definite political agenda that it sought to implement in any way it could. And many of the FBI's activities went far beyond what it was authorized to do.
In order to maintain its reputation, therefore, the Bureau had to devote considerable resources to concealing what it was doing.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 218

FBI WORKED HARD TO HIDE ITS CRIMES

The public occasionally caught glimpses of these activities. In 1945, just as the government was preparing its case against the journalists and officials involved in the leaking of classified documents to the left-wing magazine Amerasia, one of the defendants discovered that FBI agents had illegally entered his apartment…
The materials, which described contacts between Americans and Russians, contained nothing that endangered the United States but quite a lot that embarrassed the FBI. They showed that the Bureau was improperly concerned about people's political activities and had investigated and wire-tapped a wide range of private citizens,….
Never again. The FBI immediately took steps to prevent a recurrence. It intensified its efforts both to protect its files and to ensure that they would no longer reveal evidence of its agents' misdeeds. Actually, the Bureau had long been doctoring its records to conceal unauthorized investigations and unlawful practices. Some files were intentionally written to be opaque, others were altered or destroyed. In still other cases, agents simply did not report illegal activities like break-ins to their superiors or, when they did, used complicated filing procedures to hide that information. In response to the Coplon trial, Hoover created even more misleading filing procedures and developed ways to ensure that information about his agency's more questionable activities would not come in court.
The FBI's damage containment was not limited to falsifying its records, however.

Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 222

When it became clear that the administration was not going to act, the National Lawyers Guild mounted its own investigation. It analyzed the FBI materials that had been released at the Coplon trial and issued a report in January 1950 noting the illegalities of the Bureau's operations and again calling on Truman to investigate. "On a strictly numerical basis," the National Lawyers Guild report concluded, "the FBI may commit more federal crimes than it ever detects."
Many of those crimes had been committed against the National Lawyers Guild. The Bureau had a protracted vendetta against the Guild. From 1940 on, FBI agents routinely burglarized its offices and planted illegal wire taps on its phones and on those of its leading members…. the FBI's buggings and burglaries ensured that it had full information about the Guild's strategy.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 223

The Bureau used more intrusive and often illegal methods to keep track of what the people it was investigating did outside the public eye. It rifled through their trash, intercepted their mail, broke into their homes and offices, and planted illegal microphones and wiretaps. These procedures seem to have been routine. Almost every FBI file I saw contained some evidence of an illegal break-in, trash cover, or electronic surveillance.
Illegal entries were common. Between 1947 and 1951 the FBI burglarized the National Lawyer Guild's Washington offices at least 14 times. The Communist party's New York headquarters was broken into so routinely that, as one agent later noted, it had been "burgled more than a fur company in the Bronx."
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 225

FBI USES DIRTY TRICKS IN COINTELPRO

In the mid-'50s the FBI began to use its undercover operations for harassment as well as information gathering. To a large extent, this switch, which was formalized by the August 1956 creation of the Counter-intelligence Program, or COINTELPRO, as it was called, was just a codification and intensification of what the Bureau was already doing. Prompted by a series of recent Supreme Court decisions that had thrown out many of the government's cases against the CP, Hoover and his men decided to use dirty tricks instead of criminal prosecutions to neutralize the party. Informers were to become agents provocateurs, to spread rumors and promote dissension within the ranks. "Snitch jackets," falsified documents that created the suspicion that someone was an FBI informer, were planted on party stalwarts. There were also leaks to the media, anonymous letters, IRS audits, attempts to get people fired, and disruptions of public activities by encouraging building owners to cancel meetings…. As with so many of the FBI's other countersubversive activities, COINTELPRO was secret and unauthorized.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 227

MILITARY PEOPLE WERE TREATED UNJUSTLY

Enlisted men charged with disloyalty and threatened with less than honorable discharges did not always get hearings; and, if they did, were not always told what they were accused of. Sometimes they were not even notified of the outcome of their hearings. The Army had gotten so much negative publicity when it reversed the favorable decisions of a few hearing panels that it simply stopped telling servicemen what those panels had decided. The individuals involved could appeal, but blindly, since they would not know until the moment of their discharge whether or not they have been cleared.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 278

INFORMERS WERE USED ILLEGALLY BY THE FBI

At the insistence of the FBI, which was, of course, hiding its dirty laundry as well as protecting its informants, the identities of informers were invariably withheld. Even the loyalty boards that handled these cases did not get this information. Often all they knew was that the material on which they based their judgments came from, in the Bureau's terminology, a "reliable" source….
The injustices involved were obvious. Without knowing the source of the charges against them, employees who were trying to disprove them could not effectively counter those allegations and demonstrate their falsity.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 279

Few loyalty panels gave employees a chance to confront witnesses against them. Though they recognized that the failure to let people confront their accusers did, in the words of Seth Richardson, the first head of the Truman administration's Loyalty Review Board, "give rise to most serious questions in the minds of the general public," they refused to do so. In their eyes, national security overrode fair play. The 1956 report of the Defense Department's personnel security officials presents the argument in a typically apocalyptic fashion. "No American welcomes the necessity for the non-disclosure of sources of information. But a necessity it is. The necessity is real because the conspiracy is real. The struggle is for the survival of a whole nation. Without the confidential informant that struggle could not be successful."
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 280

The federal attorneys who built their cases on the testimony of professional informers like Matusow may have suspected that these people embellished their stories, but it was so hard to find any usable evidence against Communists that the prosecutors shut their eyes to the perversions of justice that their reliance on such witnesses entailed.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 349

FAIR HEARINGS INVOLVING SERIOUS TOPICS WERE DENIED

In its 2-1 decision early in 1950, the Washington D.C. Court of Appeals ruled, as it and other tribunals were doing in similar employment cases (and in deportation cases as well), that because losing a job was not a criminal punishment, Bailey had no right to a fair hearing.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 281

POLITICS RATHER THAN SECURITY RAN THE LOYALTY PROGRAM

Since the communist threat, such as it was, diminished even as the security measures that were being taken to counter it increased in severity, it was obvious that politics, not security, drove the nation's loyalty programs. Such had been the case from the start.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 287

SUPPRESSION OF FREE PRESS IN USA

… Instead, the government took on the China Daily News and its directors.
The paper's ostensible crime was that it ran ads for the banks that handled these remittances [money sent back by American Chinese to their relatives in China], these ads serving, so the prosecution claimed, as "the instrument used by these defendants…to aid and assist Communist China." The paper's real crime had occurred on its editorial pages, where it continued to support the mainland regime and offer Chinese Americans a more nuanced perspective on East Asia than that of Chiang Kai-shek. Prosecuting it for trading with the enemy long after it had halted the illicit advertisements was simply a useful way to silence what the government called "nothing more than a mouthpiece for Communist China in this country."
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 377

OUSTER OF CPUSA MEMBERS DRAMATICALLY WEAKENED THE LABOR MOVEMENT

Labor's rupture with the left hastened its transformation from a movement to a bureaucracy. The radical organizers who had built and sustained the CIO were ousted, replaced by less imaginative individuals with neither their predecessors' vision nor their drive. Labour also lost its political independence. It operated as a junior partner within the American system, seeking higher wages and benefits for its members and foregoing any attempt to push for major social and economic change…. The passage of the Taft-Hartley Act was only part of a larger corporate effort to destroy the legitimacy and power of American unions. Nonetheless, the ouster of its left-wingers weakened the labor movement by limiting its options and depriving it of just those elements that might have offered a stronger defense of collective action.
The Communists and their allies were, after all, labor's most militant voices. Their ideology encouraged them to champion workers against bosses. They understood how capitalism operated and were often willing to challenge management at every level. They were, for example, among the first labor leaders to raise such crucial issues as deindustrialization and runaway plants. In addition, because they recognized the importance of retaining the loyalty

of their rank-and-file members, they tried to create a broader community that would keep those members involved with the union. A typical left-wing local, like the one Harold Christoffel organized at Allis-Chalmers, ran dances, held classes, and aggressively pursued grievances. Moreover, as long as the CP retained a presence, its opponents also had to work the grassroots.
Once the left-wingers were gone, organized labor lost its dynamism. It became more centralized, corrupt, and distant from its members. Not surprisingly, those members responded in kind. They lost interest in their unions, stopped going to meetings, and no longer viewed belonging to a union as central to their own identity. That apathy forced the labor movement to rely on federal intervention instead of the support of its own members. When the political climate became hostile to organized labor, as it did during the Reagan administration, the AFL-CIO was blindsided.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 382

NOTED PEOPLE ARE BLACKLISTED UNJUSTLY

By the time Paul Robeson became the first person barred from American television early in 1950, the most charismatic black actor and singer of his generation had already become a nonperson.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 397

The anti-communist crusade and the black list that it imposed ended Hollywood's brief flirtation with the real world and ensured that the fledgling television industry would never even begin one.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 398

MEDIA IN MCCARTHY ERA WAS STERILE AND ESCAPIST

McCarthyism did, thus, reach the screen,…
Equally conservative, though less obviously political, were the messages that the ordinary genre films of the period purveyed: the good guy/bad guy polarization of the Westerns, the unthinking patriotism of the war movies, the global triumphalism of the Bible epics, and the constricted sexuality of the romantic comedies. Hollywood was selling an escapist oeuvre that indirectly sanctioned the ostensibly homogenized society of Cold War America by keeping blacks, workers, and uppity women off the screen.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 398-399

Most of the entertainment that reached the nation's living rooms during the 1950s supported the status quo. Quiz shows celebrated capital accumulation. Westerns and crime stories offered simplistic morality tales that got resolved by violence. Sitcoms reinforced traditional gender roles. And what passed for documentaries were often recycled World War II propaganda films produced by the armed forces. The news was equally oversimplified and militaristic. Except when they handled special events like the Army-McCarthy hearings,

networks rarely had the resources to cover stories live. They usually relied on government briefings and official footage, especially when dealing with warfare and foreign policy. Public affairs programming was predictably bland. The networks consciously decided not to run editorials in order to avoid controversy. Though television inherited talk-show panels from radio, it narrowed the range of opinions expressed on them. Moreover, the conviviality that suffused these programs trivialized the issues they dealt with and reinforced the notion that Americans had nothing to disagree about.
Not much has changed. Though the mass media did open up slightly during the 1960s, the patterns of institutional restraint and self-censorship established during the McCarthy era are still around. So, too, are the limitations on the range of issues that receive exposure.
Schrecker, Ellen. Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America. Boston: Little, Brown, c1998, p. 400

ROSENBERGS WERE NOTHING MORE THAN MINOR COURIERS

Semyonov was the case officer of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg after Ovakimian recruited them. The Rosenbergs were never more than minor couriers and were never involved with our major networks, but their later arrest had global repercussions.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 177

Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were recruited by Ovakimian, our resident in New York, in 1938. The irony is that the Rosenbergs are portrayed by the American counterintelligence service as the key figures in delivering atomic secrets to the Soviet Union, but actually they played a very minor role. They were absolutely separate from my major networks gathering atomic secrets.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 213

I first learned of the arrest of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg in 1950 from a TASS report. I was not concerned about it. This might strike some as odd, but it is important to note that as well as being responsible for the thousands of fighters behind German lines during the war, we had hundreds of agents in the United States, not including illegals, sources, and informers. As the director of Department S., I was familiar with our personnel, though not with any but their most important sources; the Rosenbergs were not important or significant sources of information. It occurred to me that they might have been related to our intelligence operations, but they were not major players in my atomic intelligence networks. I considered the whole affair to be routine business.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 213

The involvement of the Rosenbergs in atomic spying was the outcome of our efforts to utilize any and all possible sources of information, but the Rosenbergs were never a significant source. They were a naive couple overeager to cooperate with us, who provided no valuable secrets. I said that I was completely unaware of their providing technological information of high value to Semyonov. They were spies recruited by Ovakimian who worked for us because of their ideological motivations. Their contributions to atomic espionage were minor. It was clear from the very beginning that the case had acquired a political character far out a proportion to their actual role as spies. More important than their spying activities was that the Rosenbergs served as a symbol in support of communism and the Soviet Union. Their

bravery to the end served our cause, because they became the center of a worldwide communist propaganda campaign.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 216

After Stalin

HOXHA ATTACKS REVISIONISTS

The Yugoslav revisionists preached the withering away of the state in socialism, denied the fundamental Marxist-Leninist thesis about the need for the existence of the dictatorship of the proletariat during the whole period of the transition from capitalism to communism.

Sentimentality, liberalism, the tendency to seek numbers in order to give the impression that the ranks of the party are increasing with new members, are harmful and have grave consequences. Such admissions without strictly applying the Marxist-Leninist norms not only do not hinder the influence and pressure of the bourgeoisie from attacking the party from outside but allow the party to be infiltrated by various elements which divide and liquidate it.

Such vigorous revolutionary action ensures two important objectives: on the one ”hand, it tempers the party itself in action together with the masses and raises its authority and influence, and on the other hand, it creates possibilities for the party to see the most politically and ideologically sound and advanced elements of the working class in action, those who will be the best and the most resolute militants of the party in the future. From these elements, the Marxist-Leninist parties secure the new blood for their ranks, and not from a few discontented intellectual elements, or some unemployed workers who demand justice, who are revolted, but are not so stable and do not accept the iron discipline of a Marxist-Leninist proletarian party.
Hoxha, Enver. Eurocommunism is Anti-communism. Toronto: Norman Bethune Institute, 1980.

ACTIVITIES DURING STALIN’S LAST DYING MOMENTS

Another, sadder example. A while after Stalin’s death, I was in Molotov’s study and he told me about Stalin’s last moments.
‘The members of the Politburo went to see Stalin, having heard he was not well. In fact, he was very ill. One day during his illness, we were standing by his bedside: Malenkov, Khrushchev, myself and other members of the Politburo. Stalin kept falling into semi-consciousness, then coming around again, but he was unable to say anything.’
‘At one moment,’ Molotov went on, ‘he suddenly came to himself, and half opened his eyes. Seeing a familiar faces, he then pointed slowly at the wall. We looked where he was pointing. On the wall there was a photograph with a simple subject: a little girl feeding a lamb with milk through a horn. With the same slow movement of his finger, Stalin then pointed to himself. It was his last act. He closed his eyes never to open them again. Those present took it as a typical example of Stalin’s wit–the dying man was comparing himself with a lamb.’
Gromyko, Andrei. Memoirs. New York: Doubleday, c1989. p. 103

We did everything we could to raise Stalin to his feet. We saw he was unconscious and therefore completely oblivious of his condition. But then, while the doctors were taking a urine sample, I noticed he tried to cover himself. He must have felt the discomfort. Once, during the day, he actually returned to consciousness. Even though he still couldn’t speak,

his face started to move. They had been spoon-feeding him soup and sweet tea. He raised his left hand and started to point to something on the wall. His lips formed something like a smile. I realized what he was trying to say and called for attention. I explained why he was pointing with his hand. There was a picture hanging on the wall, a clipping from the magazine Ogonyok. It was a reproduction of a painting by some artist of a little girl feeding a lamb from a horn. At that moment Stalin was being spoon-fed and was trying to say, “I’m in the same position as that lamb which the girl is feeding from the horn. You’re doing the same for me with a spoon.”
Then he began to shake hands with us one by one. I gave him my hand, and he shook it with his left hand because his right wouldn’t move. By these handshakes he conveyed his feelings.
No sooner had Stalin fallen ill than Beria started going around spewing hatred against him and mocking him. It was simply unbearable to listen to Beria. But, interestingly enough, as soon as Stalin showed these signs of consciousness on his face and made us think he might recover, Beria threw himself on his knees, seized Stalin’s hand, and started kissing it. When Stalin lost consciousness again and closed his eyes, Beria stood up and spat. This was the real Beria–treacherous even toward Stalin, whom he supposedly admired and even worshipped yet whom he was now spitting on.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 318

During his [Stalin] last days I had in some sense fallen out of favor…. I had seen Stalin for five weeks before he died. He was absolutely healthy. They called for me when he was taken ill. When I arrived at the dacha some Politburo members were there. Of non-Politburo members, only Mikoyan and myself, as I recall, had been called. Beria was clearly in command.
Stalin was lying on the sofa. His eyes were closed. Now and then he would make an effort to open them and say something, but he couldn’t fully regain consciousness. Whenever Stalin tried to say something, Beria ran up to him and kissed his hand.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 236

CHUEV: Was Stalin poisoned?
MOLOTOV: Possibly. But who is there to prove it now?… But all hell broke out the moment he died.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 237

CHUEV: Beria himself was said to have killed him.
MOLOTOV: Why Beria? It could have been done by a security officer or a doctor. As he was dying, there were moments when he regained consciousness. At other times he was writhing in pain. There were various episodes. Sometimes he seemed about to come to. At those moments Beria would stay close to Stalin. Oh! He was always ready…
One cannot exclude the possibility that he had a hand in Stalin’s death. Judging by what he said to me and I sensed…. While on the rostrum of the Mausoleum with him on May 1st, 1953, he did drop hints…. Apparently he wanted to evoke my sympathy. He said, “I did him in!”–as if this had benefited me. Of course he wanted to ingratiate himself with me: “I saved all of you!” Khrushchev would scarcely have had a hand in it. He might have been suspicious of what had gone on. Or possibly… All of them had been close by. Malenkov knows more, much more, much more.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 237

Instead of the customary deep silence, everyone was bustling and running around. When someone finally told me that my father had had a stroke in the night and was unconscious, I even felt a little relieved. I had thought he was already dead. They'd found him at three in the morning, in the room I was standing in, right there, lying on a rug by the sofa. They decided to carry him to the next room, to the sofa he usually slept on. That's where he was now. The doctors were in there, too.
…Doctors I didn't know, who were seeing him for the first time–Academician Vinogradov, who'd looked after my father for many years, was now in jail–were making a tremendous fuss, applying leeches to his neck and the back of his head, making cardiograms and taking X-rays of his lungs. A nurse kept giving him injections and a doctor jotted it all down into notebook.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 6

They all felt that something portentous, something almost of majesty, was going on in this room and they conducted themselves accordingly.
There was only one person who was behaving in a way that was very nearly obscene. That was Beria. He was extremely agitated. His face, repulsive enough at the best of times, now was twisted by his passions–by ambition, cruelty, cunning, and a lust for power and more power still. He was trying so hard at this moment of crisis to strike exactly the right balance, to be cunning, yet not too cunning. It was written all over him. He went up to the bed and spent a long time gazing into the dying man's face. From time to time my father opened his eyes but was apparently unconscious or in a state of semiconsciousness. Beria stared fixedly at those clouded eyes, anxious even now to convince my father that he was the most loyal and devoted of them all, as he had always tried with every ounce of his strength to appear to be. Unfortunately, he had succeeded for too long.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 7

During the final minutes, as the end was approaching, Beria suddenly caught sight of me and ordered: "Take Svetlana away!" Those who were standing nearby stared, but no one moved. Afterward he darted into the hallway ahead of anybody else. The silence of the room where everyone was gathered around the deathbed was shattered by the sound of his loud voice, the ring of triumph unconcealed, as he shouted, "Khrustalyov! My car!"
He was a magnificent modern specimen of the artful courtier, the embodiment of Oriental perfidy, flattering, and hypocrisy who had succeeded in confounding even my father, a man whom it was ordinarily difficult to deceive…. But I haven't the slightest doubt that Beria used his cunning to trick my father into many other things and laughed up his sleeve about it afterwards. All the other leaders knew it.
Now all the ugliness inside him came into the open–he couldn't hold back. I was by no means the only one to see it. But they were all terrified of him. They knew that the moment my father died no one in all of Russia would have greater power in his grasp.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 8

…I loved my father more tenderly than I ever had before…. Yet even the grandchildren who never saw him loved him–and love him still.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 9

For the last 12 hours the lack of oxygen was acute. His face altered and became dark. His lips turned black and the features grew unrecognizable. The last hours were nothing but a slow strangulation. The death agony was horrible. He literally choked to death as we watched. At what seemed like the very last moment he suddenly opened his eyes and cast a glance over everyone in the room. It was a terrible glance, insane, or perhaps angry and full of the fear of death and the unfamiliar faces of the doctors bent over him. The glance swept over everyone in a second. Then something incomprehensible and awesome happened that to this day I can't forget and don't understand. He suddenly lifted his left hand as though he were pointing to something above and bringing down a curse on us all.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 10

…The members of the government then rushed for the door.
All of them except the utterly degenerate Beria spent those days in great agitation, trying to help yet at the same time fearful of what the future might bring. Many of them shed genuine tears. I saw Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Malenkov, Bulganin, and Khrushchev in tears.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 11

My father's servants and bodyguards came to say goodbye. They felt genuine grief and emotion. Cooks, chauffeurs, watchmen, gardeners, and the women who had waited on the table, all came quietly in. They went up to the bed silently and wept. They wiped their tears away as children do, with their hands and sleeves and kerchiefs. Many were sobbing. The nurse, who was also in tears, gave them drops of valerian….
Valechka, as she was called, who had been my father's housekeeper for 18 years, came in to say goodbye. She dropped heavily to her knees, put her head on my father's chest and wailed at the top of her voice as the women in villages do. She went on for a long time and nobody tried to stop her.
All these men and women who were servants of my father loved him. In little things he wasn't hard to please. On the contrary, he was courteous, unassuming, and direct with those who waited on him…. Men, women, everyone, started crying all over again. . No one was making a show of loyalty or grief…. He never scolded anyone except the top men, the generals and commandants of his bodyguard. The servants had neither bullying nor harshness to complain of. They often asked him for help, in fact, and no one was ever refused.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 12

…Like everyone who worked for my father she'll [Valechka] be convinced to her dying day that no better man ever walked the earth.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 13

No one in this room looked on him as a God or a Superman, a genius or a demon. They loved and respected him for the most ordinary human qualities, those qualities of which servants are the best judges of all.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 14

KHRUSHCHEV SWEARS NOT TO ATTACK THE DEAD BUT ATTACKS STALIN

One shouldn't say unkind things about the dead, so I won't say anything about Shcherbakov except that he was an upper-echelon Party worker for many years and chief of the political directorate of the Red Army during the war.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 203

The minutes of a July 12, 1984, Politburo session revealed a truly nauseating spectacle: the leaders of the party still defending Stalin against Khrushchev's revisionism. At the meeting, the members listened to a report on how Molotov, Stalin's Foreign Minister, was "overwhelmed with joy" at the Politburo's decision to restore him to the Party ranks. Molotov had been expelled during Khrushchev's "thaw."
"And let me tell you," says Marshall Dmitri Ustinov, the head of the armed forces. "If it hadn't been for Khrushchev, they never would have been expelled and there never would have been these outrageous actions regarding Stalin…. Not a single one of our enemies has inflicted so much misfortune on us as Khrushchev did regarding his policies and his attitude toward Stalin."
Remnick, David. Lenin's Tomb. New York: Random House, c1993, p. 518

STALIN TRIED TO HELP PEOPLE WHILE BERIA UNDERMINED THEM

Voznesensky dared to cross Beria's path, and before Beria finished with him, Voznesensky was just a shadow of his former self.
I remember that more than once during this period Stalin asked Malenkov and Beria, "Isn't it a waste not letting Voznesensky work while we're deciding what to do with him?"
"Yes," they would answer, "let's think it over."
Some time would pass and Stalin would bring up the subject again: "Maybe we should put Voznesensky in charge of the State Bank. He's an economist, a real financial wizard."
No one objected, but nothing happened. Voznesensky was still left hanging.
Stalin obviously felt a certain residual respect for Voznesensky.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 251

Apparently even after these arrests, Stalin felt a certain amount of goodwill toward Shakhurin and Novikov. He used to turn to Beria and Malenkov during dinner and ask, "Say, are Shakhurin and Novikov still in jail?"
"Yes."
"Don't you think it might be all right to release them?" But Stalin was asking the question to himself. He was just thinking out loud. No one would say anything, and the matter would be left up in the air until sometime later when he'd bring it up again. Once he even went so far as to say, "You should give serious thought to releasing Shakhurin and Novikov. What good are they doing us in jail? They can still work." He always directed these remarks to Malenkov and Beria because they were in charge of the case against Shakhurin and Novikov.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 253

Beria had many faults and betrayed many hopes, nevertheless it was a blow for me when in 1953 he was suddenly arrested and shot.
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 267

Beria was absolutely insolent. He tried to find the smallest insignificant detail of perceived slight, in order to try and get you fired or arrested… this was in order to make Stalin either nervous or upset. This came to such a state of outright provocation that once while Stalin was away from the Dacha, Beria with his personal entourage started to snoop in the offices of Stalin, rummaging through his papers and documents. After one such "snooping search," Stalin's transistor radio went missing. Needless to say, it was Stalin's own bodyguards who were suspected and blamed. The offices were turned upside-down. Time passed and no transistor was found. Then, the Guard Kuzin who was shoveling snow, came across the transistor. Who else could do something of this caliber? Only Beria and his clique, of well-masked and hidden enemies of Stalin and the Soviet Union!
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 66

KHRUSHCHEV FEARED THE CONSEQUENCES OF STALIN'S DEATH

My own anxiety was growing. Stalin was at an age which put the rest of us in a difficult position. Far from looking forward to Stalin's death, I actually feared it. I was afraid of the consequences. What would happen to the country? Even though I already had my doubts about the campaign against the enemies of the people, I still had confidence in Stalin. I figured that perhaps there had been some excesses, but basically everything had been handled properly. Not only did I not condemn Stalin, I exalted him for being unafraid to purge the Party and thereby to unify it.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 314

UNLIKE STALIN KHRUSHCHEV AND BERIA ADMIRED TITO

Tito has always been a good Communist and a man of principal….
It was very profitable for the capitalist countries then, and it's still profitable for them today, to use tempting trade agreements to try and coax the fraternal countries away from the Socialist camp one by one.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 382

Yugoslavia always took care not to affiliate itself with one block or another…. The Yugoslavs refused to join the Warsaw Pact because they had a special commercial relationship with the West.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 383

Beria offered assurances to Czechoslovakia that the USSR would not continue to interfere in Czech internal affairs, and he wrote a personal letter to Marshal Tito apologizing for the manner in which Stalin had treated him. The MGB officer who would carry the letter to Tito showed it to me. The final sentence said, "Let us cast the past aside and look ahead to the resumption of diplomatic relations between our two nations."
Deriabin, Peter. Inside Stalin's Kremlin. Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, c1998, p. 148

KHRUSCHOV TALKS SOCIALISM BUT DOES NOT PRACTICE IT

Every working-class should be able to choose its own course of development on the basis of local historical and economic circumstances–on the one vital condition, of course, that the means of production and the banks belong to the people, and that the state is run by the dictatorship of the proletariat.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 391

…Molotov claimed that Khrushchev and Brezhnev, intimidated by U.S. atomic weapons, had cravenly abandoned the goal of international communism for that of “peaceful coexistence” with imperialism.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 331

STALIN PREDICTS CAPITALISTS WILL DEFEAT THE LEADERS FOLLOWING HIM

Right up until his death Stalin used to tell us, “You’ll see; when I’m gone the imperialistic powers will wring your necks like chickens.” We never tried to reassure him that we would be able to manage. We knew it wouldn’t do any good. Besides, we had doubts of our own about Stalin’s foreign policy. He overemphasized the importance of military might, for one thing, and consequently put too much faith in our armed forces.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 392

In Khrushchev’s 1956 speech he stated, “Shortly after the doctors were arrested we members of the Politburo received protocols with the doctors’ confessions of guilt. After distributing these protocols Stalin told us, “You are blind like young kittens; what will happen without me? The country will perish because you do not know how to recognize enemies.”
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 601

On the subject of the relations between the Soviet Union and the capitalist world, Stalin took every chance to instill in us the idea that we were mere kittens, calves to be led around by the rest of the world. “The West will wrap you around its finger,” he would warn us. Stalin never expressed any confidence that we were worthy of representing our socialist nation, or defending its interest in the international arena.
Schecter, Jerrold. Trans & Ed. Khrushchev Remembers: the Glasnost Tapes. Boston: Little, Brown, c1990, p. 79

You shouldn’t forget that all during Stalin’s life, right up to the day he died, he kept telling us we’d never be able to stand up to the forces of imperialism, that the first time we came into contact with the outside world our enemies would smash us to pieces; we would get confused and be unable to defend our land. In his words, we would become “agents” of some kind.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 424

Stalin then invited us to supper, but in the hallway we stopped before a map of the world on which the Soviet Union was colored in red, which made it conspicuous and bigger than it would otherwise seem. Stalin waived his hand over the Soviet Union and, referring to what he had been saying just previously against the British and the Americans, he exclaimed, “They will never accept the idea that so great a space should be red, never, never!”

Djilas, Milovan. Conversations with Stalin. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962, p. 74

Some of the more perceptive delegates to whom I [Volkogonov] have spoken sensed that Stalin was thinking about his legacy, and this is borne out by the long speech he made at the plenum that was elected at the 19th Congress. Malevolently and in an accusing tone, he expressed doubt that his comrades would follow the agreed course, and wondered whether they would not capitulate before the country's domestic difficulties, as well as the imperialists' threats. Would they show the courage and firmness needed to withstand the new tests?
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 569

Stalin gave the orders on how the investigation should proceed:… By early January confessions had been obtained. Stalin passed them round the leadership saying, 'You are blind like kittens; what will happen without me? The country will perish because you do not know how to recognize enemies.'
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 309

Sensing their incredulity and unease, he scoffed at them: 'YOU ARE BLIND, LIKE YOUNG KITTENS. WHAT WILL HAPPEN HERE WITHOUT ME? THE COUNTRY WILL PERISH–YOU DO NOT KNOW HOW TO RECOGNIZE AN ENEMY.'
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 620

Koba laughed. "You're the same old joker, Carl Bernardovitch. I know I'm surrounded by a crowd of imbeciles
Alexandrov, Victor. The Tukhachevsky Affair. London: Macdonald, 1963, p. 22

Khrushchev, like several other political figures, recalled in his memoirs that at the end of his life Stalin began to wonder what would happen to all his work after he had gone. At the midnight dinner table he often asked his cronies how they would get on without him, and just as often would say: 'They'll crush you like kittens.'
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Autopsy for an Empire. New York: Free Press, c1998, p. 169

He felt the end approaching and sensed he would be followed by a vacuum, as indeed he was.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Autopsy for an Empire. New York: Free Press, c1998, p. 171

As, today, when we behold the morons and scum who have proliferated on the ruins of the Soviet empire and now govern it, I'm sometimes gripped by a doubt. Perhaps I am wrong to condemn Stalin? Perhaps he knew these people perfectly well and was right to consider that they understood nothing….
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 149

KHRUSHCHEV IS AN ATHEIST WHO DECRIES PRAYER

For centuries people have been droning, "Lord, have mercy upon us; Lord, help us and protect us." And have all the prayers helped? Of course not. But people are set in their ways and continue to believe in God despite all the evidence to the contrary.

Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 471

KHRUSHCHEV CONSIDERS HO CHI MINH A SAINT

Ho Chi Minh really was one of communism's "saints."
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 481

KHRUSHCHEV COMPLIMENTS KENNEDY AND SAYS HE WOULD HAVE AVOIDED VIETNAM

I believe that if Kennedy had lived, relations between the Soviet Union and United States would be much better than they are. Why do I say that? Because Kennedy would have never let his country get bogged down in Vietnam.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 505

KHRUSHCHEV SAYS IN CAPITALISM THE DOLLAR COUNTS NOT PEOPLE

The main thing that I noticed about the capitalist West when I was in New York, which Gorky once called the City of the Yellow Devil, is that it's not the man that counts but the dollar. Everyone thinks of how to make money, how to get more dollars. Profits, the quest for capital, and not people are the center of attention there.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 513

MOLOTOV TOLD HISTORY AS IT REALLY WAS

Molotov refused to publish an anodyne, sanitized version of his memoirs tailored to fit the current line, of the sort Gromyko & Mikoyan had published.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. xi

MOLOTOV CORRECTLY PREDICTED GORBACHEV WAS A BUKHARIN

Molotov in his last days proved to be a prophet. He predicted the triumph of the Bukharinist "right" in the USSR, which turned out to be an apt description of Gorbachev.
Only 700 of the more than 5000 typewritten pages of this diary went into this book.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993. p. xx

KHRUSHCHEV AND BERIA WERE SECRET RIGHTISTS

MOLOTOV: There was only a thin layer of party leadership in the 1920s, and there were always fissures in this thin layer–now right-wingers, then nationalists, then workers' opposition…. How Lenin managed to bear this is amazing. Lenin died, but they all lived on, and Stalin had to pass through very tough times. Khrushchev is proof of that. He turned out to be a right-winger, though he was pretending to be for Stalin, for Lenin…. Only when Stalin's power weakened did the conspirator in him surface….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 27

No, Khrushchev wasn't such a dullard. He was culturally deprived.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 187

KHRUSHCHEV reminded me of a livestock dealer. A small-time livestock dealer. A man of little culture, certainly. A regular livestock trader, a man who deals in cattle.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 347

Khrushchev? A person like him could have switched sides in a flash.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 272

CHUEV: Then Khrushchev distorted your words?
MOLOTOV: Definitely. He was never dependable. He was a man without scruples. Slapdash. Very primitive.
CHUEV: Kaganovich told me nearly the same story.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 287

…Khrushchev, Mikoyan, rightists, they sat on the Politburo where they pretended to be Stalin's greatest champions.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 317

…But as a matter of fact, Mikoyan is a Rykovist, a rightist, and a Khrushchevite. I see no great difference between Khrushchev and Rykov. And I have never supported Khrushchev.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 319

What Beria proposed would never have come up for discussion in Stalin's time. Stalin made a public statement when the GDR was created, that this was a new stage in the development of Germany, and that there could be no doubts about this. Stalin was the sort of man to sacrifice everything for the sake of socialism. He would never have abandoned the conquest of socialism.
I objected that there could not be a peaceful Germany unless it took the road to socialism. Therefore all talk about a "peaceful Germany" implied a bourgeois Germany, period.
I consider Khrushchev a rightist, and Beria was even further right. We had the evidence. Both of them were rightists. Mikoyan too.
…Being a rightist, Khrushchev was rotten through and through. Beria was even more of a rightist and even more rotten.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 336-337

He (Beria) was unprincipled. He was not even a communist. I consider him a parasite on the party.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 339

I regard Beria as an agent of imperialism. Agent does not mean spy. He had to have some support–either in the working class or in imperialism. He had no support among the people, and he enjoyed no prestige. Even had he succeeded in seizing power, he would not have lasted long.
…a big scum.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 340

He was a good organizer, a good administrator–and a born security operative, of course. But quite without principles.
I had a sharp clash with Beria the first week after Stalin's death. It is quite possible that I was not the one to meet either his or Khrushchev's requirements. Their policies would not have differed greatly.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 341

…he (Beria) was, in any event, a dangerous character.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 343

CHUEV: Beria is called a diehard enemy of Soviet power.
MOLOTOV: I don't know whether he was a diehard or some other kind of enemy, but I do know he was an enemy.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 343

CHUEV: Was Khrushchev adept in matters of theory?
MOLOTOV: No. He was extremely weak in that regard. We were all "practicals," all practitioners. Before the Revolution we read all the books and newspapers, now we read nothing.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 348

The trouble, I say, is that in the present situation it is impossible to offer a definition of socialism. There is no complete clarity on this question. One can only depict distinct stages, fundamental phases.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 349

CHUEV: Why did Khrushchev come out against Stalin so drastically?
MOLOTOV: Because he pursued a different policy. He is a rightist…. The rightist and the Trotskyist extremes come together. The main threat in the 1930s came from the rightists rather than from the Trotskyists. They had close ties with the village. Their social base was the kulak class. That's where Khrushchev had his roots….
Deep down Khrushchev was an enemy of Stalin. On the surface Stalin was the be-all and end-all, but deep down it was another matter…. His bitterness toward Stalin stemmed from the fact that Khrushchev's eldest son got himself shot. Driven by such bitterness, Khrushchev would balk at nothing to besmirch the name Stalin.
CHUEV: Nikita disowned his son, didn't he?
MOLOTOV: Yes. His son was something of a traitor, which also reflects on Khrushchev. A good political leader with a son like that?…
Stalin didn't want to pardon Khrushchev's son. And Khrushchev personally hated Stalin. Of course, that added to his animosity, but that was not the main thing about him. He was not a revolutionary. He didn't join the party until 1918–some militant! Ordinary workers had joined the party earlier. Some leader of our party he turned out to be! It was absurd, absurd.
Khrushchev opposed Stalin and Leninist policy…. The rightists wanted to block us from pressing for the liquidation of the kulaks; they were champions of a pro-kulak policy…. We saw this in Khrushchev and spoke about it,…
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 351-352

…Initially the three of us were labeled “the antiparty group”–Malenkov, Kaganovich, Molotov–then they also added Shepilov who had joined us. And after a while they included Bulganin and Voroshilov.
…The “antiparty” group had to be removed, and four of us were expelled.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 355

He [Khrushchev] had no serious interest in ideology.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 356

…Stalin’s supporters would hew to the party line, but Khrushchev was always clever enough to adapt to that line. He was quite a capable man. You can’t say he had been merely a lucky fellow. He could very well have become a Bukharinite, but he moved in the opposite direction. He sensed it would be more secure that way. Khrushchev in essence was a Bukharinite, but under Stalin he was not a Bukharinite.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 360

Khrushchev was for Soviet power but against the Revolution. This is his distinguishing feature: he was against everything revolutionary…. to him, of course, collectivization–which in our country was carried out by Stalinist methods–was impermissible. Yes, impermissible. But no alternative was proposed.
He is against collectivization. He is without a doubt a Bukharinite.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 362

…He was never seriously interested in or thought about the meaning of Leninism or of Marxism…. Khrushchev wanted to rehabilitate everyone, but everyone.
Khrushchev and Mikoyan posed as arch-Stalinists, but deep down they were not.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 363

He [Khrushchev] was a half-educated man, alien to the party. Alien, absolutely alien. He couldn’t stay at the top for long. You see, his former supporters finally got rid of him and had him quietly buried at Novodevichy cemetery. Now they all behave as if they had had nothing to do with him.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 364

You can’t say he [Khrushchev] was unintelligent; he was very shrewd…. Since Khrushchev himself was not a communist, how could he judge whether Stalin was a communist?
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 365

Khrushchev knew as much about matters of theory as a shoemaker. He was a real foe of Marxism-Leninism, a real enemy of communist revolution, a covert, cunning, skillfully camouflaged enemy…. The thing is that he reflected the spirit of the overwhelming majority.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 366

…But Khrushchevism is the bourgeois spirit.
I told Khrushchev this straight to his face,… We have very many “Khrushchevs” in our country; indeed, they are the overwhelming majority…. It would have been so easy to kick him out. But we are surrounded by little “Khrushchev’s,” and they keep mum….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 391

Molotov and Kaganovich could not prevent the reform projects of Malenkov, Beria, and Khrushchev. Malenkov wanted to increase payments to collective farms so as to boost agricultural production; he also favored giving priority to light-industrial investment. Khrushchev wished to plough up virgin lands in the USSR and end the decades-old uncertainty about supplies of bread. Malenkov and Beria were committed to making overtures to the USA for peaceful coexistence: they feared that the Cold War might turn into a disaster for humanity. Beria desired a rapprochement with Yugoslavia; he also aimed to withdraw privileges for Russians in the USSR and to widen the limits of cultural self-expression. Malenkov, Beria, and Khrushchev supported the release of political convicts from the labor camps. Quietly they restrained the official media from delivering the customary grandiose eulogies to Stalin.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 591

MOLOTOV'S VIEW OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE

With Brezhnev, in my opinion, the direction is fundamentally weak. Everything is staked on peaceful coexistence. Of course we need peaceful coexistence, but you have to remember that is not guaranteed us.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 67

PARTY WORKERS AVOID DEBATES AND FOCUS NOWADAYS ON PETTY ISSUES

CHUEV: Party workers don't have such experience nowadays.
MOLOTOV: No they don't. They would prefer to argue about how much production has increased, or the productivity of collective farmers. This too is important and interesting, but it is not polemics, not fighting with the opposition.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 76

MOLOTOV SAYS KHRUSHCHEV IS A NATIONALIST BUT SUPPORTS NATIONALISM

Nationalism is causing him to howl in pain, yet he himself is a nationalist, and that is his main defect as a communist. He is a nationalist; that is, he is infected with the bourgeois spirit. He is now cursing and criticizing his own people for nationalism. This means that the Yugoslav multinational state is breaking up along national lines. It is composed of Serbs, Croatians, Slovenes, and so forth.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 83

BERIA HELPED KILL STALIN ACCORDING TO SOME

EDITOR: Molotov wonders with good reason whether Stalin really died a natural death. Shortly before Beria was liquidated by his fearful colleagues, he took credit for Stalin's death. He confided to Molotov that he had "saved them all," implying that he had killed Stalin or at least seen to it that the stricken Stalin did not receive adequate and timely medical attention.

Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 161

…He [Beria] was a talented organizer but a cruel, merciless man.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 177

Beria strained might and main to grab leading positions. Among the reactionary elements he was the activist. That's why he strove to clear the way for a return of private property. Anything else lay outside his field of vision. He did not avow socialism. He thought he was leading us forward, but in fact he was pulling us back, back to the worst.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 232

Some people believe that Beria killed Stalin. I believe this possibility cannot be excluded…. Beria was treacherous and unreliable. He could have done the deed just to save his own skin…. I too am of the opinion that Stalin did not die a natural death. He wasn't seriously ill. He was working steadily… And he remained very spry.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 326

There is undocumented testimony that Beria intended to usurp power as Stalin grew older. Stalin may have known this, as their relations grew noticeably cooler in the last year and a half of his life. Among the many witnesses who have told me about this, most interesting was the testimony of M. S. Vlasik, wife of Lt. Gen. Vlasik, former chief of the Main Administration of the Ministry of State Security (the KGB). For more than 25 years, Vlasik had been Stalin's chief of personal security: he knew much and was trusted by the boss. Beria hated him, but Stalin would not allow him to be touched. A few months before Stalin died, however, Beria managed to compromise Vlasik, as well as Poskrebyshev, and to have them removed from Stalin's entourage. Vlasik was arrested and given 10 years' prison and exile. When he returned after Stalin's death, he said he was totally convinced that Beria had 'helped' Stalin to die after first removing his physicians.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 333

Stalin began to decline more rapidly after his 70th birthday. His blood pressure was continually high, but he did not want doctors, he did not trust them. He still listened half-heartedly to Academician Vinogradov, but gradually Beria convinced him that 'the old man [Vinogradov], was suspect' and tried to foist other doctors on to him. Stalin, however, would have no one new. When he heard that Vinogradov had been arrested, he cursed ominously but did nothing about it. He now finally stopped smoking, but continued his unhealthy life-style in all other respects, rising late and working into the night…. he would not entrust himself to doctors.
…His old belief in Georgian longevity was shaken by a series of dizzy spells which knocked him off balance.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 529

Beria would not call the doctors and instead turned on the servants: 'Why did you panic? Can't you see Comrade Stalin is sound asleep? All of you get out and leave our leader in peace, I shall deal with you in due course!'
Malenkov gave Beria some half-hearted support. According to Rybin, there seemed to be no intention at all of getting medical help for Stalin, who must have had the stroke some six to eight hours before. Everyone seemed to be following a scenario that best suited Beria.

Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 572

Beria did not hide his look of triumph. All the other members of the Politburo, including Malenkov, were afraid of this monster. The death of one tyrant promised a new orgy of bloodletting by his successor. Exhausted by all his exertions, and now sure that Stalin had crossed the dividing line between life and death, Beria dashed away to the Kremlin for some hours, leaving the other leaders at Stalin's deathbed. I have already outlined the version of Beria, as first deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, now forcing the great political game that he had long planned. His hasty departure for the Kremlin was possibly connected with his effort to remove from Stalin's safe documents which might contain instructions about how to deal with him, a last will that might not be so easy to contest, made while Stalin was in full control of his faculties.
He returned to the dacha in a mood of self-confidence and proceeded to dictate to his crestfallen colleagues that they must prepare a government statement to the effect that Stalin was ill and also publish a bulletin on the state of his health.
Meanwhile the last act of the drama was being played out. Stalin's son, Vasili, kept coming in and shouting in a drunken voice, 'They've killed my father, the bastards!'… Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Khrushchev and some others were weeping openly.
…On her knees, her head on his chest and wailing like a peasant, was Istomina, Stalin's housekeeper who for some 20 years had looked after him, accompanied him on all his trips to the south and even on two of the three international wartime conferences.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 573-574

Stalin could not be permitted to live, I believe, due to the risk that he would attempt a countercoup. The Politburo, therefore, overthrew Stalin in February 1953 to avert a purge. Stalin's timely death was the solution– Beria's, Malenkov's, and possibly others'–to the problem of disposing of the deposed Stalin. Discounting the information from official Soviet sources, I conclude that Beria was responsible for the death of Stalin, Malenkov was his accomplice, and Khrushchev & Bulganin were accessories after the fact.
Deriabin, Peter. Inside Stalin's Kremlin. Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, c1998, p. 131

Melodramatic accounts of Stalin's death, of which there is no shortage, claim that Stalin was murdered. It is most likely that the denial of medical care made not the slightest difference. But Beria clearly thought it had: " I did him in!" he later boasted to Molotov and Kaganovich. "I saved you all!"
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 641

So the staff rang through to Malenkov to alert the politburo of what had happened [to Stalin], but they could do nothing without Beria. Beria could not be found, he was out carousing with women. After finally being tracked down he marched in drunk at around 3 a.m. Looking triumphant, according to the assembled group, he glanced at the comatose Stalin and summarily dismissed their fears telling them to leave him to sleep in peace. He forbade anyone to use the telephone, ordered the politburo to reconvene in the morning, and went away. He returned at 9 a.m., again with members of the politburo, to take another look. Stalin had lain untreated for over 24 hours; it was 10 hours since he had been found. Beria now ordered doctors to be summoned from the Academy of Medical Sciences, choosing intellectuals rather than practitioners presumably since the latter were mostly behind bars,

but possibly also for his own reasons. The doctors nervously applied leeches to the back of Stalin's neck and head, took cardiograms, X-rayed his lungs and administered a series of injections. Meanwhile Beria dashed off to the Kremlin and spent some time in Stalin's study, his inner sanctuary, presumably removing from the safe documents that only she would have known about, which in his own interests should not be found. Instructions as to the political succession were never found, nor was a personal diary of Stalin's, a black exercise book in which the leader recorded his personal thoughts and plans….
Svetlana by this time had been summoned and stood immobilized amidst the frantic scene beside her father's bed. She is convinced that there was more to Stalin's stroke than met the eye.
"Beria finally plotted to murder my father. I don't know how he plotted it, and there is a lot of folklore about it. But they withdrew medical help for at least 12 hours; the whole politburo, Beria among them, arrived at the scene instead of the doctors. He was the one who had said hours earlier, "Nothing has happened. You are panicking. The man is sleeping." And then turned around and walked away.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 248

"Beria certainly was very happy when my father died; he had always worked towards that. He had removed my father's whole entourage, starting with Vlasik, who had been there 30 years. The doctor was arrested, the personal secretary was arrested, so something had been brewing there. I hate folklore and making guesses, but something was up."
"One of the guards attended the autopsy, Vlasik's successor, a man named Krustalyov. They could not permit a post-mortem to go ahead unsupervised because by this time nobody trusted anybody. He sat there, and it made such an impression on him that afterwards he collapsed completely and drank heavily, and of course he was fired. He said that what hit him was when they opened the head, and he saw the brain. One of the medics said, "This is obviously a very fine brain, quite out of the ordinary." Krustalyov never got over it."
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 252-253

The question as to whether those close to him plotted Stalin's death remains unanswered, although Svetlana is convinced of Beria's complicity, and by implication of others' too.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 255

ONLY MOLOTOV AND KAGANOVICH REMAINED LOYAL TO STALIN TO THE END

Did the Mensheviks have more theoreticians?
The Mensheviks were nothing but theoreticians….
Voroshilov was weak as a theoretician. Like Kalinin, he leaned a little to the right…. Twenty years have gone by since Stalin died. And who has remained loyal to Stalin throughout? Kaganovich and myself. I know of no one else.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 228

The Jews did not like Kaganovich. They would rather have had a more intellectual Jew in the Politburo. Even today Kaganovich is such an ardent supporter of Stalin that no one would dare to say anything derogatory about Stalin in his presence. Among all of us he was a 200 percent Stalinist.

He felt I didn't praise Stalin well enough….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 229

As we review these events, it becomes clear that Khrushchev was not, as he represented himself in his 1956 denunciation of Stalin, a moralist horrified by transgressions against a socialist ideal but the leader in a political struggle for power within the Party between the Khrushchev & Molotov groupings, and this conflict had been going at least since Stalin's death. In 1956, therefore, when Khrushchev denounced Stalin, he did so as the leader of an anti–Stalin faction in the Party. The policies of this faction soon appeared. They were those of liberal, anti-socialist "reforms." Molotov, an old Bolshevik who had worked under tsarist terror, had a long record of devotion to the working class and to socialism. He had supported Stalin's plans for socialist industrialization, and had for many years at Party Congresses, along with Kaganovich, made the main reports on this subject. The "everything new" that Molotov opposed were Khrushchev's "reforms."
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 123

"I [Kaganovich] loved Stalin, and he was something worth loving–he was a great Marxist…. We should be proud of him, every Communist should be proud of him…. We have uncrowned Stalin and without realizing it we have uncrowned 30 years of our own work."
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 317

MOLOTOV ASSESSES THE MAJOR PARTY LEADERS

Khrushchev was absolutely a reactionary sort of person. He merely hitched himself to the Communist party. He certainly didn't believe in any kind of communism.
Bulganin didn't really represent anything. He never took a firm stand either for or against anything. He drifted along with the wind, wherever it blew.
Beria, to my mind, was not one of us. He crept into the party with ulterior motives. Malenkov was a capable functionary. …I don't think Malenkov was very interested in issues of theory and problems of communism.
Khrushchev was somewhat interested in these questions, though in a retrograde sense, in order to find out when and how things could be reversed.
…Khrushchev wasn't interested in ideas. He couldn't tell one from the other.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 232-234

A man [Mikoyan] of very few principles, unrestrained and easily influenced by others…. He began to be closely associated with Khrushchev after Stalin's death. That relationship had not existed before. It only developed in Khrushchev's later years. Khrushchev's best friends had been Malenkov and Beria.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 365

CHUEV: They say that Mikoyan suggested to Khrushchev that Stalin be toppled.
MOLOTOV: I don't rule that out. KHRUSHCHEV's champions could only by proud of him. The true communists wouldn't be among that crowd…. That Mikoyan himself was rotten through and through.

Mikoyan played a vile role. He was a chameleon. He kept adapting himself to the point of embarrassment. Stalin was not overly fond of him either…. He negotiated good deals, worked perseveringly–he was a very industrious person.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 366

MOLOTOV IS THE ONE WHO REALLY SPOKE OF STALIN FROM THE HEART

CHUEV: Avtorkhanov writes that "…the only one who was candid in his relations with Stalin was Molotov."
MOLOTOV: Indeed, of the three who spoke at the funeral, I was the only one who spoke from a heart….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 235

STALIN LACKED CONFIDENCE IN THOSE AROUND HIM NEAR THE END

CHUEV: I don't believe Khrushchev grieved over Stalin's death.
MOLOTOV: No, he was extremely spiteful toward Stalin, and more so toward Beria. At times Stalin would express scorn for Beria. He wanted to have him removed. Whom did he trust? It's hard to say. No one, I would say. Khrushchev? There's no way he would have trusted that one. Bulganin was not the right sort. I don't think one can say that Malenkov was close to Stalin either.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 235

ONLY STALIN AND MOLOTOV WERE TRUE LENINISTS

CHUEV: It is also said that Stalin and Molotov considered only themselves to be true Leninists.
MOLOTOV: There was no alternative. Had we not regarded ourselves as Leninists, and had we not attacked those who wavered, we could have been weakened.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 260

MOLOTOV WAS KEPT IN THE DARK BY BERIA AND KHRUSHCHEV

…Beria stopped keeping me informed during Stalin's last years. I was on the sidelines then. Under Khrushchev I was entirely in the dark about some events.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 292

GUS HALL SUPPORTS THE CZECH INVASION

In remarks printed in Pravda, Gus Hall, chairman of the Communist Party of the USA, correctly judged the measures we initiated in Czechoslovakia during the events there. He said the Soviet Union, with other countries, acted correctly by intervening in Czechoslovak affairs, notwithstanding the fact that the Communist Party of Italy was opposed, the French party was opposed, the British party and others were opposed. Although he lived in America, he was nevertheless faithful to the truth when he said the action was absolutely necessary.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 299

BERIA DID NOT CARE WHAT KIND OF GOVERNMENT EAST GERMANY HAD

Beria… advanced the following argument: “Why should socialism be built in the GDR? Let it just be a peaceful country. That is sufficient for our purposes…. The sort of country it will become is unimportant.”
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 334

MOLOTOV: A stable Germany was good enough for him…. I was in favor of not forcing a socialist policy, while Beria favored not supporting socialism at all.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 335

MOLOTOV: It became quite clear that Beria did not hold Communist positions. In this situation we felt that in Beria we were dealing with someone who had nothing in common with our Party, a person of the bourgeois camp, the enemy of the Soviet Union.
The capitulating essence of Beria’s proposals regarding the German question is obvious. He virtually demanded capitulation before the so-called “Western” bourgeois states. He insisted that we reject the course to strengthen the people’s democratic order in the GDR, which would lead to socialism. He insisted on untying the hands of German imperialism, not only in West Germany but in East Germany….
You see how what Beria had previously concealed in his political persona was now exposed. Also, what we previously saw only vaguely in Beria, we now began to see clearly. We now clearly saw that here was someone alien to us, a man from the anti-Soviet camp.
It was not so easy to expose Beria. He artfully disguised himself, and for many years–concealing his true face–he sat in the leadership center.
Stickle, D. M., Ed. The Beria Affair. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992, p. 29

KHRUSHCHEV WAS A BUNGLER

The development of the virgin lands began prematurely. It was unquestionably an absurd undertaking….
Khrushchev was so carried away with his idea [the Virgin lands program] that he was like a runaway roan! An idea alone solves nothing conclusively; it may be helpful, but only to a limited extent. You have to make the right calculations, weigh alternatives, consult experts, sound out the people. You can’t just shout, get going! get a move on! He bit off more than he could chew–about 40 to 45 million hectares of virgin lands to be opened up. This was unmanageable, absurd, and unnecessary.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 346-347

Khrushchev, this disgusting, loud-mouthed individual, concealed his wiles and maneuvers under a torrent of empty words.
The cult of Khrushchev was being built up by the tricksters, the liberals, the careerists, the lick-spittles and the flatterers… His [Stalin’s] place and authority was usurped by that charlatan, clown, and blackmailer.
Hoxha, Enver. The Artful Albanian. London: Chatto & Windus, 1986, p. 161

Soviet help in the economic sphere was also considerable. Khrushchev's pro-active policy cost the Soviet Union many billions of dollars, but he regarded it as an investment to strengthen Soviet influence in the region at the expense of the West. His revolutionary diplomacy did not always produce the desired result, however. The report presented on Oct. 14, 1964, to the Central Committee plenum that ousted him pointed out that in the ten years he had been in power, the USSR had undertaken some 6000 projects. Beneficiaries included Egypt, Iraq, Indonesia, India, and Ethiopia, to name but a few.. Projects in Guinea alone included an airport, a cannery and sawmill, a power station, a refrigeration plant, a hospital, a hotel, a polytechnic, geological surveys and various research projects. Yet when Khrushchev's 'friend' Sekou Toure requested the withdrawal of Soviet personnel from Guinea, even the use of the airport they had built at Conakry, as a stopover en route to Cuba, was prohibited to them. In Jakarta the USSR had built a stadium for 100,000 spectators, in Rangoon a hotel, an atomic research center in Ghana, a sports complex in Mali–the list is interminable. All these costly ventures only became a bone of contention when the leadership wanted to get rid of Khrushchev.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Autopsy for an Empire. New York: Free Press, c1998, p. 228

KHRUSHCHEV ATTACKS MOLOTOV IN REGARD TO FARMING

Molotov was a schematist and a conservative; he was a total ignoramus about farming, but that didn't stop him from objecting that the Virgin Lands campaign was premature and too expensive.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 135

STALIN'S MISTAKE WAS IN NOT TRAINING A SUCCESSOR

Stalin's mistake was that he had not trained anyone to fill his position. Khrushchev took over, not by chance. Of course he was not the right man for the top office. But we had no unity in our group, and we had no program. We merely agreed to have him removed, but at the same time we were totally unprepared to assume power.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 347

Speaking of Khrushchev, Stalin is to blame, as I and all of us are to blame, for failing to see that it was not merely a matter of Khrushchev, a typical anti-Leninist, but of a trend, that of playing up to public opinion.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 364

20TH PARTY SPEECH BY KHRUSHCHEV

Everyone knew that Khrushchev was going to deliver that [anti-Stalin] report at the 20th Party Congress. The report had not been discussed in the Central Committee, but we knew the essence of it…. When Khrushchev delivered his speech at the 20th Congress I was already sidelined…. To speak out would have been unexpected at that time, and no one would have supported us. No one.
CHUEV: Was Khrushchev's report discussed in the Politburo?
MOLOTOV: It was. The majority supported it without reservation.

…Given the atmosphere in the party at the time, if we, or even I, had presented our views, we would have been easily expelled.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 349-351

TRIED TO GET RID OF KHRUSHCHEV IN 1957

Khrushchev got by because we had many Khrushchevites.
In 1957 Khrushchev was relieved of his duties for three days. This happened at one of the Politburo sessions. This, of course, had to be announced. He was chairing Politburo sessions; he was merely relieved of the chairmanship. Nothing more occurred then. He wasn't removed from his job, and he couldn't be removed. The Central Committee plenum would decide this. How else could he have been removed?
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 353

At the 20th Party Congress a Presidium [the name adopted in 1952 for the old Politburo] consisting of 11 members had been elected. Later, in 1957, we decided to remove Khrushchev. At the Politburo he chaired its sessions; we decided to replace him with Bulganin [chairman of the Council of Ministers]. The point was that starting with Lenin–and it was always so–the chairman of the Council of People's Commissars [from 1946, Council of Ministers] always chaired sessions of the Politburo. This was a Leninist tradition….
Khrushchev was the first to break with this Leninist tradition…. He was not chairman of the Council of Ministers, nevertheless he chaired Politburo sessions…. Now we had Bulganin chair.
CHUEV: Did Khrushchev remain silent?
MOLOTOV: No way! He screamed, he was furious…. But we had already reached an agreement. We were seven out of 11, and his supporters were but three, including Mikoyan. We had no program to advance. Our only goal was to remove Khrushchev and have him appointed minister of agriculture….
Zhukov is a great military man but a poor politician. He played a decisive role in elevating Khrushchev to a pedestal in 1957. But Zhukov himself cursed him soon afterward….
We failed to have him removed as first secretary; we just didn't manage it. They convened a plenary session of the Central Committee, and the plenum sided with them–the game was over!
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 354

CHUEV: As soon as you relieved Khrushchev of his chair functions, why didn't you appeal to party organizations, to the people?
MOLOTOV: The party organizations were not in our hands.
CHUEV: Anyway, you failed to take advantage of that moment.
MOLOTOV: Indeed, I wasn't able to take advantage of it. We had another disadvantage–we were not prepared to put forward a counterprogram of our own. But Khrushchev did exactly that: "Life under Stalin was hard; from now on it is going to be better." People bought it. The overwhelming majority voted against me. A good many people bore me a grudge…. The workers also bought the line: "You will have it easier now, and there will be no more rushing ahead."
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 357

MOLOTOV WAS EXPELLED FROM THE PARTY FOR SPEAKING OUT

…I was not expelled from the party because of the repressions but rather because we spoke out against Khrushchev and wanted to have him relieved of his duties. When the repressions were condemned at the 20th Congress, I was not only not expelled from the party but was even elected to its Politburo!
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 357

SOME WANTED MOLOTOV AS LEADER

IVANOVICH, SHOTA: Children were shot to death in Georgia in 1956. They removed Mikoyan's portrait and hung it in an outhouse, where his home was supposed to be. They hitched Khrushchev's portrait to a streetcar, but they carried your portrait at the head of a marching column of protesters that demanded, "We want the Central Committee headed by Molotov!" Did it really happen like this?
MOLOTOV: Children died then, and you know which children? Those whose parents were in jail in 1937. The children that were shot to death were not allowed a decent burial. People wailed, they couldn't understand. "Your parents perished at the hands of Stalin, but you are for him?"
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 358

KHRUSHCHEV HID HIS CRIMES AND PROMISED AN EASIER LIFE

Khrushchev asked former KGB chairman Semichastny to find all the documents related to his work in the Ukraine. That was done, by the way, in the heat of the anti-Stalin campaign. Surely, measures were taken to destroy all the documents on repressions in the Ukraine that he had ever signed.
How did Khrushchev happened to be moved up to the top?… Khrushchev promised a quieter, more relaxed life at the top. Many went for this instantly…. Khrushchev promised better living conditions, and a good many people took the bait, though it was a deception.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 359

Khrushchev was a capable man, too…. And backing him with his preconceived ideas were those who would also like to live easier. They hoped that the cause initiated by Lenin and Stalin could be promoted without difficulty. That was a deception. Lenin and Stalin never said that while imperialism existed we would easily advance along the path we had chosen. There are inevitable hardships along the way. If you don't agree with this, then go to hell or wherever you please,… Khrushchev was a sleight-of-hand artist, a good practical worker and energetic leader.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 361

PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE IS NOT A MARXIST-LENINIST PHRASE

CHUEV: Am I right, the slogan "peaceful coexistence" was not used under Lenin?
MOLOTOV: It was never used, and Lenin never used it. In those days it would have been naive, utterly naive, to talk about peaceful coexistence. As if we would have begged, "Please give us peace!" The imperialists would have given us no kind of peace whatever…. In my

view it is a correct slogan today [4-29-82], but we must bear in mind that some people, pacifistically minded people, incorrectly interpret this slogan. The very idea draws people toward a pacifist way of thinking. Under Lenin the old program condemned such views. Pacifist ideas are pernicious.
In 1921 we made no use of the slogan. We stood for peace,… We intended to attack no one. But we were opposed to pacifism….
We are, as it were, begging for peace. But to beg for peace means exposing one's weakness. And to show one's weakness to the strong is politically disadvantageous and inexpedient. For Bolsheviks it is unseemly….
Stalin's published works contain no slippery expressions such as peaceful coexistence. I don't recall any. Absolutely none at all in Lenin.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 388-389

There can be only one long-range goal if we are to move forward: only international revolution. There is nothing, no alternative, more reliable than this.
It is our duty to preserve peace. But if we believe that without international revolution we can fight for peace and delay war, if we still believe that it's possible to arrive at communism in this way, that is deception from a Marxist viewpoint, both self-deception and deception of the people.
We must maintain peace in every way and delay the onset of a new war, especially war against the socialist countries. But we must not get too deeply engaged in favor of the Arabs and the others when they put their national interests first.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 389-390

To wrest the working class from the clutches of capitalism is possible only with sacrifice. Anyone who wants to overthrow capitalism without sacrifice would do better to enroll in another party, the party of pacifists, idlers, babblers, and incorrigible bourgeois ideologues… In short, the working class can tear itself away from capitalism only through the greatest of sacrifices. If this is not to one's taste, then just go on living in slavery. There is no alternative.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 393

MOLOTOV COMPLIMENTS CASTRO

Jaruzelski, in my opinion, has come to our rescue…. Until Jaruzelski the only pleasant surprise of that kind I had previously was Fidel Castro.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 408

KHRUSHCHEV'S DETENTION OF KOST-LEVITSKY WAS UNNECESSARY

The remaining Ukrainian nationalist leaders had Nazi connections only at lower levels, mainly intelligence operatives of Abwehr and the Gestapo, and in this situation they had no political value to British or French authorities once the war began. So Khrushchev's claim in his message to Stalin that the detention of Kost-Levitsky was important in defeating Western plans to set up a Ukrainian provisional government-in-exile was nothing but misleading self-aggrandizement.

I sensed that, and when ordered to assess the importance of Kost-Levitsky's detention in Moscow I emphasized in my report to Beria, which was then sent to Molotov, that his detention was in no way justified.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 106

KHRUSHCHEV IS RESPONSIBLE FOR KILLINGS

On one occasion, during the summer of 1946, I was summoned to the Central Committee headquarters…together with Abakumov. There I met Khrushchev, then first secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party, in Kuznetsov's office. Kuznetsov, secretary of the Communist Party, was very formal even though he knew me socially. He informed me that the Central Committee had agreed to the suggestion of Comrade Khrushchev to secretly liquidate the leader of the Ukrainian nationalists, Shumsky, who was reported by the Ukrainian security service to have established contacts with Ukrainian emigres.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 249

Khrushchev knew that Romzha was infiltrating both government and party administrations but didn't know how. Fearing exposure of his ineptitude, Khrushchev initiated Romzha's secret assassination.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 253

I sensed that my rehabilitation case would drag on because no one in power was willing to reveal in print the truths that would compromise Khrushchev's liberalization, now being portrayed as the model for their own reforms. Decisions of the earlier leadership to eliminate political opponents like Trotsky and Shumsky, the Ukrainian nationalist, had not been brought up again for discussion in the press, nor had they been repudiated by Gorbachev and Yakovlev. They could not permit themselves to expose Khrushchev, either as an accomplice to Stalin or as an organizer of his own secret political murders. The heroic memory of the Twentieth Party Congress, in which Khrushchev exposed Stalin's crimes, would have been stained. The delegates at the Congress and the members of the Central Committee knew about his and their participation in Stalin's crimes. Thus, if my case were brought into the daylight, the entire party leadership under Khrushchev would be exposed as having used Beria and the men who worked under him as scapegoats for themselves. Gorbachev's leadership would then be held responsible for concealing the guilt of the mentors who had brought them to power.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 427

[Moscow Soviet Chairman, Vasili Pronin, who was chairman from April 1939 to 1945 says], Khrushchev sanctioned repressions against mainly good communists and Soviet workers. Under him, all the 23 Moscow party secretaries were arrested, some without Stalin even being aware. All secretaries of districts, provinces, territories, such as Katselebogen, Margolin, even his own staff were arrested. While Khrushchev was still in the Ukraine in 1938, he demanded the cleansing and arrest of all functionaries in Moscow.

QUESTION: Are you saying that the so-called repressions [in Moscow] were in most part the work and responsibility of Khrushchev?

ANSWER: I would say in the largest measure. After 1938, when Shcherbakov came to head the the Moscow party organization, none of the Moscow City comrades were repressed or let go off the job. I remember a meeting of the Politburo in July of 1940: There was a question brought up my Khrushchev and his friends about taking Shcherbakov from his position–because of some question as to his competence. Also, he was accused of not taking enough action to get rid of “enemies” in the organization. Stalin was instrumental in saving Shcherbakov. In my presence, after Shcherbakov came to head the Moscow Party organization, he was instrumental in getting rid of the commander of the NKVD from the party for fabricating accusations against party functionaries and their arrest. They were all saved by the intervention of Stalin and Shcherbakov.
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 24-25

CHAOS SURROUNDED STALIN’S FUNERAL

The arrangements for every delegation attending Stalin’s funeral were equally mismanaged. These were stupid, minor inconveniences, but tragically, hundreds of mourners were killed in the crush of unregulated crowds.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 340

The ancient custom of embalming and mummifying against which Krupskaya had so vehemently protested in her day and on which Stalin had so insisted, also seemed perfectly natural. The center of Moscow was packed with mourning crowds, in some places so dense that there were a number of fatalities.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 576

At Stalin’s funeral, the crowds were such that many were crushed to death. Sakharov describes the scene: ‘People roamed the streets, distraught and confused, with general music in the background. I too got carried away.’
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 314

Only a non-Soviet would have missed the reference: in the days after Stalin’s death, the crowd outside the Hall of Columns was so dense and emotional that hundreds of people were crushed to death–a fitting tribute.
Remnick, David. Lenin’s Tomb. New York: Random House, c1993, p. 288

But the reaction to Stalin’s death in March 1953, when popular grief took a widely hysterical form, indicates that respect and even affection for him was substantial. He incarnated pride in military victory. He stood for industrial might and cultural progress.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 545

Crowds gathered. Muscovites raced to catch a glimpse of the dictator’s remains before the funeral. Trains and buses from distant provinces were packed with passengers avid to see Stalin lying in state. By Metro and bus everyone came to the capital’s centre and then walked up on foot to the cobbled square with somber eagerness. On 8 March the human mass became too large for the police to control. Far too many people were converging from

all directions. Panic ensued as many tried to turn back. The result was disastrous. Thousands of individuals were trampled and badly injured, and the number of people who suffered fatal asphyxiation went into the hundreds.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 588

The militia were unable to control the press of people, who stampeded, and many of them including women and children were trampled to death….
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 255

Harrison Salisbury, who had been a correspondent in Russia for almost 9 years, wrote that the crush of people, young and old, men and women and some children, was something that he had never seen there before, 'a spontaneous crowd'. To attempt to curb the influx from the rest of the country, the authorities had to suspend incoming rail services, and the last trains that did arrive had people clinging in ice and snow to the roofs of the carriages. Despite the best efforts of police and troops, and the use of parked trucks to contain the crowd, the press of mourners crushed to death some of their number.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 309

STALIN'S WIFE, DAUGHTER, FAMILY AND AIDES HATED BERIA

…Everyone close to us hated him [Beria],… Everyone in the family loathed him and felt a premonition of fear, especially my mother, who, as my father himself told me, "made scenes" and insisted as early as 1929 that "that man must not be allowed to set foot in our house."
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 19

I shall come back later to Beria, who seems to have had a diabolic link with all our family and who wiped out a good half of its members….
Had it not been for the inexplicable support of my father, whom Beria had cunningly won over, Kirov and Ordzhonikidze and all the others who knew Transcaucasia and knew about the Civil War there would have blocked his advance.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 58

Redens was arrested in 1937. That was the first blow. Soon afterward both the Svanidzes were arrested.
How could such a thing happen? How could my father [Stalin] do it? The only thing I know is that it couldn't have been his idea. But if a skillful flatterer, like Beria, whispered slyly in his ear that "these people are against you," that they were "compromising material" and "dangerous connections," such as trips abroad, my father was capable of believing it.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 77

With typical cunning Beria played on my father's bitterness and sense of loss [at my mother's death]. Up to then he had simply been an occasional visitor to the house in Sochi and my father was on vacation there. Now that he had my father sympathy and support, however, he quickly wormed his way up to the job of First Secretary of the Georgian Communist Party….

Once he was First Secretary in Georgia, it didn't take Beria long to reach Moscow, where he began his long reign in 1938. From then on he saw my father every day. His influence on my father grew and grew and never ceased until the day of my father's death.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 136

I speak advisedly of his influence on my father and not the other way around. Beria was more treacherous, more practiced in perfidy and cunning, more insolent and single-minded than my father. In a word, he was a stronger character. My father had his weaker sides. He was capable of self-doubt. He was cruder and more direct than Beria, and not so suspicious. He was simpler and could be led up the garden path by someone with Beria's craftiness. Beria was aware of my father's weaknesses. He knew the hurt pride and the inner loneliness. He was aware that my father's spirit was, in a sense, broken. And so he poured oil on the flames and fanned them as only he knew how. He flattered my father with a shamelessness that was nothing if not Oriental. He praised him and made up to him in a way that caused old friends, accustomed to looking on my father as an equal, to wince with embarrassment.
Beria's role was a terrible one for all our family. How my mother feared and hated him! And it was her friends…who were the first to fall, the moment Beria was able to convince my father that they were hostile to him.
…The spell cast on my father by this terrifying evil genius was extremely powerful, and it never failed to work.
…Beria's role in the Civil War in the Caucasus was highly ambiguous. He was a borne spy and provocateur. He worked first for the Armenian nationalists and then for the Reds as power swung back and forth. Once the Reds caught him in the act of treason and had him arrested. He was imprisoned awaiting sentence when a telegram arrived from Kirov, who was chief of all operations in the Caucasus, demanding that he be shot as a traitor…. I can't imagine, moreover, that Kirov would ever have allowed Beria's election to the Central Committee.
But Kirov used to live in our house. He was one of us, an old colleague and a friend. My father liked him and was attached to him.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 137

He [Ordzhonikidze] was well acquainted with Beria from his days in the Caucasus and couldn't stand him.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 139

Beria, of course, was a bloody butcher, a rapist, and a revolting person.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin's Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 351

Vlasik went on to say that, once he had been summoned by Beria for interrogation, 'I knew I could expect nothing but death, as I was sure they had deceived the Head of government.'
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 570

And that was why he [Beria] had been unable to conceal his joy at my father's death.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 375

“During the civil war,” Svetlana reminds us, “Beria fought first with the Reds and then with the Whites–as the situation changed so did his allegiance. At one time, fighting for the Whites, he was taken prisoner by Kirov and Ordzhonikidze who were then leading the Red Army there, and they ordered his execution. But this order was overlooked: he was a little Mr. Nobody and the army had to move on and there were other matters to consider. So they forgot to shoot him.”…
“Nobody in our family liked him [Beria], though at the beginning my father regarded him as a very good worker. Yes, he committed this sin.”…
The only thing that mattered to Beria was power, even in those early days. He was both immoral and apolitical: his only creed was that the ends justify the means….
Volodya said, “Everyone in our family knew then he was a scoundrel. Nadya spoke out against him quite openly, so did my mother, Anna Sergeyevna. He was quite obviously a villain. He wanted to isolate Stalin from his relatives, to close every possible uncontrolled channel through which reality might reach Stalin.”…
“He hated all of our family,” adds Kyra [the niece of Stalin’s wife]. Svetlana said, “he is very clever, and very manipulative. He got everything he wanted. And he was a horrible man with a horrible face. According to my [Svetlana] mother too he was horrible! She wouldn’t have him around. She was outspoken enough to tell father [Stalin] that he shouldn’t invite him to the house. Every time they went on vacation to the Black Sea Beria would visit them because Georgia was where he was stationed–he was boss of the KGB at the time. She loathed him, couldn’t stand him, couldn’t sit near him. She called him a ‘dirty old man’ and without doubt he noticed her antipathy. There were quarrels over him with father; he would arrive and my mother would scream at Father, “Don’t let him come here! Don’t let him in!”
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin’s Shadow. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994, p. 102-104

Svetlana says, “Children have instincts about people like this. There was something unpleasant about him [Beria]. The others–Molotov, Voroshilov, Kaganovich–had a certain dignity, they talked to my father as equals, calling him Joseph, and ti, the familiar form of ‘you”. Beria could not handle these older statesmen who remembered and loved Nadya, and who had been close to the family for a long time. They never flattered my father. Beria was always flattering him. Father would say something, and Beria would immediately say, “Oh yes, you are so right, absolutely true, how true!” in an obsequious way. None of the others, even if they did agree with him, were flapping their wings like this and being ‘yes men’. He was a creep.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin’s Shadow. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994, p. 158

KHRUSHCHEV LIES ABOUT STALIN

…we weren’t surprised when he [Stalin] demoted Kuznetsov. I later insisted we review Stalin’s decision about Kuznetsov. We restored him to his rank as a full admiral, and returned him to active service either as commissar or as Bulganin’s deputy in charge of the navy.
[Footnote: Kuznetsov had been People’s commissar (minister) of the navy and commander-in-chief of the USSR naval forces, during World War II. After the war he was First Deputy Minister of Defense as well as commander-in-chief of the navy until Stalin demoted him to the command of the Pacific fleet in 1947. Kuznetsov was reinstated as minister of the Navy by Stalin in 1951, not by Khrushchev after Stalin’s death.]

Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 18

Khrushchev stated that about this time Stalin thought the end had come. He exclaimed: “All Lenin created, we have lost forever!” After this outburst he did nothing “for a long time”; and he returned to active leadership only after a Politburo deputation pleaded with him to resume command. But Khrushchev’s allegations are not supported by others who were at his side. In fact, Stalin had never been more in command than during these critical days when all seemed lost.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 325

Nor do I take all of Khrushchev’s ‘revelations’ at their face value: I do not accept, in particular, his assertion that Stalin’s role in the Second World War is virtually insignificant. This allegation was obviously meant to boost Khrushchev himself at Stalin’s expense; and it does not accord with the testimonies of many reliable eyewitnesses, of Western statesmen, and generals who had no reason to exaggerate Stalin’s role, and of Soviet generals who have recently written on this subject in a sober and critical vein.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. viii

There is a legend that Stalin suffered a nervous collapse on hearing of the German invasion and hid himself away to wring his hands in a drunken stupor, wailing “All that Lenin created we have lost forever!” This story was fostered by Khrushchev in 1956, as part of his campaign to shatter the icon of Stalin, which was still casting its huge shadow across party and people. But Khrushchev was far from Moscow at the time of “Barbarossa,” in Kiev. Those who were in the Kremlin, such as Colonel-General (later Marshal) Voronov, commander of Soviet anti-aircraft defenses, tell a different story, recalling that Stalin was working furiously in his office during the days following the invasion, though he seemed nervy and low-spirited and attended command meetings only erratically.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 643

The statement that Stalin let himself collapse in confusion during the first days of the war is rubbish. Both my mother and the head of the Party in Moscow, Shcherbakov, told me what happened in those crucial days. Once the German attack had been confirmed, Stalin, far from collapsing, set himself to receive the military and other leaders. My father spent three-quarters of his time with Stalin, when not busy performing tasks entrusted to him by Stalin.
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin’s Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 69

Khrushchev, who was not in the room, claimed that Nikolaev had said he had done it on assignment from the Party….
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 149

BERIA RELEASED DANGEROUS CRIMINALS AFTER STALIN DIED

After Stalin’s death, Beria demonstrated his “generosity” by letting out a lot of criminals. He wanted to show off his “liberalism.” However, in actual fact, this action of his was directed against the people because these criminals who got out of jail went right back to their old trades– thieving and murdering.

Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 118

KHRUSHCHEV INSTITUTED CAPITALIST PROGRAMS

I realize that by publicly advocating material incentives I'm opening myself up to those know-it-alls who will say our people should be motivated not by money but by ideological considerations. That's nonsense. I'm old enough to know from experience that the majority of collective-farm administrators who are paid a flat salary won't take any chances for the sake of improving production. Stalin refused to knowledge that fact, and so did some of the people who were in the leadership at the same time I was. The main thing in the struggle for socialism is the productivity of labor. For socialism to be victorious, a country must get the most out of every worker. And when I say "get the most," I don't mean by force.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 127

KHRUSHCHEV ATTACKS CENTRALIZATION

Some people might say that the division of regional administrations into industrial and agricultural boards is crude and inefficient. I say it's better than the petty tyranny which comes from [centralized] administration.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 152

KHRUSHCHEV CRITICIZES MAO

They'd fill our ears with a lot of Mao Tse-tung's gibberish.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 165

KHRUSHCHEV ACCUSES STALIN OF GIVING PART OF THE UKRAINE TO POLAND AFTER WWII

However, Stalin's decision to set Poland's eastern frontier along the Curzon Line created a problem because he failed to take into account the national interests of both the Ukrainians and the Byelorussians. The Ukrainians were particularly unhappy. Only a few years before, in 1939, the eastern and western territories of the Ukraine had been united by the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact. For the first time in their history the Ukrainian people had found themselves joined in one state, a Soviet state. Triumphant celebrations had taken place in Kiev and Moscow. Our country had attained its maximum territorial gains and simultaneously satisfied the aspirations of the Ukrainian people. Now, after the war, Stalin decided to concede some of the Western Ukraine back to Poland.
Take the town of Kholm for example. Under the terms of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact it had become part of the Ukraine. Now, along with other regions, Kholm was to be part of Poland again. The population of these areas was overwhelmingly Ukrainian, and suddenly hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians were to be placed under Polish jurisdiction.
Stalin made major concessions to the Poles, creating great difficulties for our State and for me personally. I'm thinking particularly of the way he played favorites with the new Polish leadership and helped Poland at the expense of the Soviet Union….
So there we were, aiding the Poles economically at great cost to ourselves and restoring to them territories in the Ukraine. Yet, believe it or not, I later met some Polish comrades who

were still dissatisfied with the borders Stalin had given them in the wake of Hitler's retreat. They thought their border with the Soviet Union should be even farther to the east.
Once Stalin made up his mind to adjust Poland's eastern border back to the Curzon Line, he decided to let any Ukrainians who wished to do so move from the new frontier regions of Poland across the border into the Soviet Ukraine. Likewise, the Polish population of the Soviet Ukraine was given the option of moving to Poland. The same measures were taken with respect to the Poles and Byelorussians living on either side of the frontier around Brest. Stalin ordered me, as the representative of the Ukraine, and Ponomarenko, who was Secretary of the Central Committee of the Byelorussian Communist Party, to contact the Polish provisional government and work out a scheme for an exchange of populations.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 178-180

KHRUSHCHEV ADMITS STALIN SHOWED MORE TOLERANCE THAN HE DID

In fact, it was more complicated than that. After the liberation of Lvov people had brought the exhibit out of storage and put it on display. It was a panorama of paintings showing scenes from the 19th-century Polish revolt against Russian rule. One scene was the aftermath of a battle in which a force of Polish insurgents had defeated some Russian troops, taken the Russian general prisoner, and were leading him off into captivity. There were also other episodes from the history of the Poles' struggle against tsarist Russia. In no time at all the exhibit was literally the object of a pilgrimage by Poles living around Lvov. The exhibit obviously struck a sensitive chord in their hearts. We didn't like the implications of such a pilgrimage, so we took the exhibit down and put it back in storage.
Of course, you could look at the exhibit historically and say the scenes it recreated all belong to the past. But the past is always relevant to the present, and the content of the exhibit could be construed as anti-Russian. Pictures depicting battles between Poles and Russians didn't serve our goal of establishing closer ties among our three fraternal nations: Poland, Russia, and the Ukraine. On the contrary, such an exhibit might serve to induce Poles to repeat that whole episode from their history.
With this in mind, I felt I had to warn Beirut and Osobka-Morawski about the possible consequences of moving the exhibit from Lvov to Warsaw: "Go ahead and take it if you insist, but I'm telling you if you put it on display, it will stir up the opposite of fraternal feelings between our people. It will be like a call to battle, urging your people, 'Fight Russia! Defeat the Russians!'"
Stalin didn't agree. He supported the Polish comrades, saying, "But this is all history, it's over and done with. Look at us: we staged a production of the opera Ivan Susanin, which is an anti-Polish work, and it didn't do any harm to our present-day goals."
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 185-186

KHRUSHCHEV REFUTES HIS OWN CRITICISM OF STALIN REGARDING GOMULKA

Then one day, when I was at Stalin's he received a phone call. He listened impassively, hung up, and came back to the table where I was sitting. As was his habit, he didn't sit down but paced around a room.
"That was Beirut calling," he said. "They have arrested Gomulka. I'm not sure it was the right thing to do. I wonder whether they have sufficient grounds to arrest him."
That's exactly what began to happen in Poland, and Stalin was largely to blame. Of course Stalin had his aides, but they were just sycophants. Just as Lenin warned us in his Testament, Stalin mistrusted everyone; and he acted cold-bloodedly on his mistrust.
[Yet Khrushchev just said Stalin doubted the wisdom of arresting Gomulka]
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 207

GOMULKA FAVORS A FORM OF SIMPLE CAPITALIST PRIVATE FARMS OVER COLLECTIVES

Gomulka, of course, had never favored collective farms in the first place. As I've already recounted, his opposition to collectivization provided the basis for one of the charges brought against him after the war by Beirut and his colleagues. Gomulka preferred "circles," or farmers' co-operatives, which allowed several peasants to pool their resources to buy seed, fertilizers, and machinery; they would till their land collectively, but the land itself would remain divided into patches, each of which was the private property of an individual peasant. The surplus of what was collectively produced could then be sold through the circle. Strictly speaking, this was not a socialist form of production. Nor was it a system of cooperatives in our socialist understanding of the term. The Polish "circles" were closer to what we would call workers' cooperatives or partnerships. They were like small companies in that the land continued to belong to the peasants. Thus the system was a throwback to the old days. However, the organization of farmlands was an internal matter for Poland, and we never took Comrade Gomulka to task for it.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 240

KHRUSHCHEV SAYS HE WAS FORCED TO RETIRE

I say "continue" because a number of years have passed since I retired–that is, since I was forced to retire.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 266

KHRUSHCHEV EXPOSES HIS IGNORANT FOREIGN POLICY OF AIDING GOVTS INSTEAD OF MASSES

Later there were other upsetting incidents. The Guineans asked us to build them an airfield capable of handling the heaviest planes. We willingly obliged and sent our specialists down there to build the airfield. Then along came the so-called Caribbean crisis, when military conflict threatened any moment to flare up between the USSR and the United States. Our communications with Cuba took on vital importance. Our planes needed at least one stopover on their way to Havana, but the countries where our planes usually stopped suddenly refused us landing rights.
The airfield we'd built in Guinea would have been a perfect refueling point, but the Guinean government wouldn't let us use it. They tried to justify their refusal on the grounds that

“technical conditions” weren’t right. We might well have asked, who knew more about the technical conditions–the government of Guinea or the Soviet engineers who built the airfield? The Guinea’s action seemed clearly in favor of the United States and contrary to the interests not only of the Soviet Union, but of all peoples struggling for independence. After that incident we no longer trusted Guinea’s motives.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 382-383

I’d like to say a few words about Yemen. Even before our visit to England in 1955, Crown Prince al-Badr asked us to give his country military aid and we agreed. As I’ve already mentioned the British Minister of War told me in London that a little birdie had whispered in his ear that we were selling arms to Yemen. The little birdie was right. As a result, al-Badr became confident in us, and we continued to help him over the years….
He asked us to give him economic assistance so that Yemen could build a port. The British wouldn’t let them use the harbor in Aden any more. Al-Badr said, “Can you imagine that since ships have to anchor a great distance offshore, all the cargo and passengers have to be carried ashore on the dockers’ backs?” We agreed to build a seaport for them….
After his father died, al-Badr ascended the throne. As often happens, a liberal prince became a reactionary king. He turned out to be an extremely cruel leader, a literal slave driver. After a while, the chief of the royal security guard led a palace revolt and over-threw him.
For a long time there were rumors that al-Badr had been killed and buried under the rubble of the palace, but it turned out that by some miracle he had survived. He’d put on woman’s clothing and snuck away.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 385-386

KHRUSHCHEV THINKS TRUMAN IS A FOOL

By then Roosevelt–who had always treated us with such understanding–was dead, and the United States was headed by Truman, an aggressive man and a fool. His policies reflected his stupidity and his class hatred. He was vicious and spiteful toward the Soviet Union. He had neither an ounce of statesmanship nor an iota of common sense. I can’t imagine how anyone ever considered him worthy of the Vice-Presidency, much less the Presidency. The whole world knows from the newspapers how he once slapped a journalist for criticizing his daughter’s singing. That incident alone told us something about Truman’s statesmanship, to say nothing of his suitability for so important a post as the Presidency of United States.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 402

KHRUSHCHEV DENOUNCES REUTHER’S PEACEFUL-COEXISTENCE BETWEEN CLASSES

I have always favored peaceful coexistence among countries, but Reuther favored peaceful coexistence among classes, which is a fundamental contradiction to our Marxist-Leninist teaching. Worse, it is treason to the cause of his fellow workers. I’m afraid such treason is all too common among American trade-union leaders.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 447

KHRUSHCHEVISM IS TROTSKYISM IN ESSENCE

The events of the last few years, which have overwhelmed Eastern Europe and the USSR, have not only proved the utter bankruptcy of Khrushchevite revisionism but also exposed, if such exposure was ever required, the thoroughly counter-revolutionary nature of Trotskyism. These events have proved beyond doubt the inner affinity, notwithstanding the differences in form, of revisionism and Trotskyism. Khrushchevite revisionism, right in form and in essence, was aiming, through the Communist Party, for the same aim of restoring capitalism in the USSR and other East European countries that Trotskyism, 'left' in form and right in essence, had been attempting ever since the twenties through the so-called "anti-bureaucratic revolution."
Brar, Harpal. Trotskyism or Leninism. 1993, p. 68

MILLIONS MOURNED AT HIS FUNERAL AFTER STALIN'S DEATH

Early in the morning of March 6, Moscow radio announced the death of Stalin. A vast crowd began filling Red Square… and by late afternoon the line of mourners was reported to stretch for 10 miles. In their thousands Russians from Moscow and distant regions filed past the bier in a slow, unending procession, taking leave of their father.

In every part of the country from Vladivostock in the east to Leningrad in the west, from Archangel in the north to Astrakhan in the south, houses and windows were draped in red flags, hung with black crepe. Even in the numerous labor camps… there were displays of grief. A nation of over 200 million people was united in the solemn quiet of morning for their leader who had guided and driven them through harsh trials and a savage war and who, they knew instinctively, had sought to serve them and Russia.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 464

When he [Stalin] died in March 1953 the grief of hundreds of millions, both in the Soviet Union and around the world, was quite sincere.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 617

I wanted to do my job so that he [Stalin] would be pleased. His smile of approval was a priceless gift. I didn't identify the things that happened to my father with Stalin but rather with the bad people who had penetrated his inner circle. Was it not Stalin who with his article "Dizzy with Success" had tried to put the brakes on the runaway forced collectivization? He didn't hesitate to remove or execute the people who violated "socialist law." Yagoda, Yezhov, and other butchers paid for their lives for their hideous crimes. He was also ruthless to those who departed from or perverted Lenin's teaching.

Millions and millions of Soviet people shared that thinking then. I was one of them who just happened to have the good and rare fortune to be near the Great Leader.

Stalin's death hit me hard. For me he was not just the leader of our country, a faithful follower of Lenin and the alpha and omega of all we lived by before, during, and after the war. For me he was someone I had known personally, someone I had sat next to, hanging on his every

word in an effort to get across to his interlocutors the tone and tenor of his every thought. When he died, I no longer felt heartbroken over the fact that he had spurned me. What was my puny pain compared to the irreparable loss for our people and for humanity as a whole!
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin's Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 348

For three days the body lay in state at the Hall of Columns in the House of Trade Unions, three blocks from the Kremlin. On the first day hundreds died in the crush of thousands pushing forward, not knowing that admission to the hall was by ticket.
Deriabin, Peter. Inside Stalin's Kremlin. Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, c1998, p. 137

Anatoly remembered the day Stalin died, and how everyone around, even those with parents and friends in the camps, wept as if the world were lost. "It was March 1953," he said. "I was a Young Pioneer, and we always wore those orange scars. They gave us black ones to wear, and when the teacher started crying, we cried, too.
Remnick, David. Lenin's Tomb. New York: Random House, c1993, p. 230

The first blow fell powerfully, on March 5, 1953, with Stalin's death. For the overwhelming majority of Russians, that was a day of emotional trauma. It is hard for Americans, who see Stalin as an evil tyrant, to understand how differently Stalin was seen at that time by his own people.

Stalin's death was personally even more devastating for Russians than the assassination of John F. Kennedy was for many Americans a decade later. To this day, Russians can remember what they were doing when they heard Stalin had died, where they were standing, how they were feeling–as if it were yesterday. For most of them, Stalin was not the paranoid dictator of the purges, but their infallible leader, the father of their country. Stalin had industrialized country, had led them to victory in war. Millions had gone into battle shouting, "For the Motherland, for Stalin!" He was the linchpin of their universe, their compass, their czar, the ruler who held life together and gave it meaning. His death shattered their national self-confidence, leaving them feeling bereaved and abandoned, vulnerable to external enemies, uncertain of a future without him. On the day of his funeral, millions stampeded in the center of Moscow in a frenzy of anxiety and grief.
Smith, Hedrick. The New Russians (Pt. 1). New York: Random House, 1990. p. 51

"When my father died there was a tremendous outpouring of feeling from the people as he lay in state. It was all filmed by Gerasimov who had by then made a lot of documentaries and feature films. I knew him very well, and he told me, "I filmed mostly the ordinary people, not the official personnel. I am not making the official version!" That was in 1953. When I asked him, years later, what had happened to the film of the funeral, he said, "I showed it and it was banned. It was banned because it showed the truth of what happened. The later official story was that nobody cried."

"All his marshals stood near my father's open coffin, and Marshal Rokossovsky was weeping. He was Polish, and had been saved from prison by my father and had risen to high rank under him." Rokossovsky had joined the Red Army in 1919 and had a brilliant career, being one of the most outstanding generals of the Second World War. He was twice awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union for his part in the defense of Moscow and

Stalingrad. In 1949 he was officially transferred to the Polish army. “I have never seen a man cry like this. Tears were rolling down his uniform, over his tunic and decorations. The others were weeping too, especially those who had been through the war with him. They knew that the war would probably not have been won without Stalin. When there was a need to hold everything in one pair of hands and pull everybody together to make the effort, he was there. They depended on him for that, and they had been through it all together. It was a powerful experience.”

“General Vishnevsky told me, “When I was fighting in the war, I was not afraid of anything. I was under shellfire, I was wounded, and I didn’t care. But when I saw your father in his coffin, when we all came to say goodbye in the civil farewell, and when I saw all those marshals sobbing, my knees gave out. I had to go looking for a chair and I sat down like a sack! I couldn’t stand up. It was a very strong emotion.”
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin’s Shadow. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994, p. 253

“When the funeral was over,” continues Svetlana, “there were so many wreaths in Red Square that they could not all be put on the mausoleum, but on the stone ramparts where the people came to watch.”

…On New Year’s Eve 1991 there were more flowers on Stalin’s grave than on any other in sight.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin’s Shadow. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994, p. 255

When the news of his death reached Siberia the scenes of grief in the village on my kolkhoz surpassed anything I have ever witnessed, and I understand that this small hamlet faithfully reflected the mood that swept through the country. The people’s sorrow was sincere and crushing; they behaved as though their own beloved Father had died, the protector behind whose backs they had sheltered. I saw old peasant men and women who could not have put on an act, and had no reason to do so, looking distraught. They lamented, ‘Who will defend Russia now? The Germans will fall on us. The foreigners will attack us. Russia is lost.’ These simple people spoke of civil war, famine and chaos; they were in despair. The behavior of the children was particularly extraordinary. All the schools were closed, indeed all life had come to a halt, and out into the village street poured children from the age of six to sixteen, their eyes red from crying as though they had indeed been orphaned. Around them was a crowd of men and women, sobbing hysterically; even Party members, even the members of the local Party Committee, were weeping. At one moment the District Secretary of the Party called out, ‘Enough tears’, and for a short time the weeping stopped, but then it started up again.
Berger, Joseph. Nothing but the Truth. New York, John Day Co. 1971, p. 236

The funeral took place on the ninth. Not only the whole of Moscow came to have a last look at Stalin but people walked tens of kilometers from outlying villages into the capital. The result was a stampede; generals and other high-ranking officers linked arms, spoke to the people and ordered them to move back. In spite of this hundreds were crushed to death. Of course, we did not hear of this till long afterwards.
Berger, Joseph. Nothing but the Truth. New York, John Day Co. 1971, p. 238

BERIA WAS A TRAITOR, CAPITALIST AGENT, CAREERIST, AND LIAR TO STALIN

MOLOTOV: It is totally obvious that he kept his plan secret, a plan aimed against building Communism in our country. He had another course–a course for Capitalism. This faint-hearted traitor, like other faint-hearted traitors whom the Party has dealt with satisfactorily, was planning nothing less than a return to Capitalism.

I must again draw your attention to Beria's attempts to establish ties with Rankovich and with Tito, which Comrade Malenkov has already mentioned.
Stickle, D. M., Ed. The Beria Affair. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992, p. 30

MOLOTOV: Hence it follows that we must seriously dig into his biography, into his past, in order to fully understand his rotten, treacherous role in our country, in our Party. We have studied his biography very little. Let as now take this up more seriously.

How did it happen, that such an inveterate enemy like Beria, could get into our Party and into its leadership organs?

Without going into the deeper reasons for this type of fact, one can give a simple answer to this question: This is the result of insufficient vigilance on the part of our Central Committee, including Comrade Stalin. Beria found certain human weaknesses in Comrade Stalin, and who doesn't have them? He skillfully exploited them, and was able to do so for many, many years.
Stickle, D. M., Ed. The Beria Affair. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992, p. 32

MOLOTOV: Although it was written by certain of Beria's self-serving cronies, he didn't hesitate to put his name on the brochure, which was destined to play its role in his progress toward a central job. Beria also used other methods for his careerist goals. The methods of a smooth operator and unforgivable careerist, when activity in work is hardly explained by ideological ideas or true faithfulness to the Party. We can't deny his organizational abilities, which showed in organizing and implementing a number of economic measures. The Party had to use these abilities when they were used to execute necessary tasks. The Party does not refuse to use even the abilities of exposed wreckers, when it has the opportunity to do so.
Stickle, D. M., Ed. The Beria Affair. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992, p. 34

BULGANIN: All these facts tell us that Beria was acting on the principle of: the worst things are, the better things are for him.
Stickle, D. M., Ed. The Beria Affair. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992, p. 46

BAGIROV (Candidate Member of the Presidium of the Central Committee): Beria–this chameleon, this most evil enemy of our Party, our people–was so cunning and adept that I personally, having known him for some 30-plus years before his exposure by the Presidium of the Central Committee, could not see through him, could not draw out his true enemy nature. I can only explain this as my excessive gullibility, and the dullness of my Party and

Communist vigilance toward this double-dealer and scoundrel. This will be a serious lesson for me, too.
Stickle, D. M., Ed. The Beria Affair. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992, p. 78

MALYSHEV (Member of the Central Committee): For example, I, as a minister, have worked under the leadership of several comrades–Comrade Molotov, Comrade Kaganovich, and Beria. I must say, that each time you go to report on some matter to the comrades, you go with different feelings. You go to comrade Molotov with one feeling–we know that he is a strict leader, demanding, but whenever you go to him you know that there will be no hasty decisions, adventurist decisions, if you made a big and serious mistake you will never be struck at because of his mood. Then there's comrade Kaganovich–a sometimes hot tempered fellow, but we know that he does not bear grudges. He'll erupt, but it quickly passes and he makes the right decision. Beria is another thing. We minister's knew that you would enter his office a minister, but who you would be on return–you didn't know. Perhaps a minister, or perhaps you'd land in prison. This was his method: "A knock on the head"–and you'd come out staggering. In one word, Beria's leadership style was the crude style of a dictator, no Party spirit. And speaking of Party spirit, I worked under Beria during the war, in charge of tanks,… and I was convinced that he never had any Party spirit.
Stickle, D. M., Ed. The Beria Affair. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992, p. 83

MIKOYAN: From the date when Comrade Stalin fell ill, and the doctors told us he would not recover, the chief concern of each of us was to preserve the iron unity of the Party leadership collective, since Party unity had been secured during Stalin's lifetime.

Many comrades may ask how is it that members of the Central Committee who knew Beria for many years weren't able to recognize in their midst this foreign and dangerous person for such a long time. By the way this wasn't such a simple matter, it wasn't so easy to achieve. In the first place, we didn't know all the facts. In the second place, the facts occurred at various times and, taking each one separately, they didn't have the same significance which they take on when you see them all together. We mustn't forget that there was a good deal of skillful work in masking these facts, in muddying up their significance and interpreting them in a totally different meaning. There were many instances of Beria's positive work, and in the shadow of these successes the negative facts were hidden.
Stickle, D. M., Ed. The Beria Affair. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992, p. 107

MIKOYAN: Even before Beria's coming to Moscow, and especially when he was in Moscow, he was able to skillfully, with every truth and every untruth, worm his way into Comrade Stalin's trust. Even during Comrade Stalin's life, especially in recent years when Comrade Stalin couldn't work as he used to, when he had begun to meet with people less often, read information less often, at that time Beria skillfully got himself made Chief Information Officer to Comrade Stalin.

I must say that lately Comrade Stalin didn't trust Beria. Beria was forced to recognize, at his last session of the Presidium of the Central Committee, that Comrade Stalin didn't trust him,…

During the war Comrade Stalin divided the MVD and State Security. It seems to me that this, too, was done from a certain lack of trust in him, otherwise there was no point in dividing the

ministry. This had to be done in order to take away his rights as a Minister. At that time they appointed him to the Council of Ministers and to the GOKO. This, too, was one of the first signs of a lack of trust. But in spite of all this, Comrade Stalin showed him a great deal of trust.

… He feigned being a buddy–first of one-person, then another–saying one thing to your face and another behind your back, he alienated the comrades — first some, then others–and stacked the deck for his purposes. We all saw this, but didn't give it the significance which it all took on after Comrade Stalin was gone.
Stickle, D. M., Ed. The Beria Affair. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992, p. 109

MIKOYAN: A few days before his death the late Ordzhonikidze, in a private conversation with me said "I don't understand why Stalin doesn't trust me. I am completely loyal to him, I don't want to fight with him, I want to support him, but he doesn't trust me. Beria's schemes play a large part in this–he gives Stalin wrong information, but Stalin trusts him."
Stickle, D. M., Ed. The Beria Affair. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992, p. 110

SHATALIN (Secretary of the Central Committee): In the light of materials we now have on Beria, it is absolutely clear that presenting the Doctor's Affair was useful only to him and his protectors. He wanted to use this incident to make points as a humanitarian and brave initiator. What does this rogue care for the interests of the State.
Stickle, D. M., Ed. The Beria Affair. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992, p. 119

SARKISOV (For 18 years he worked in Beria's security force): I also know that Beria cohabited with a certain Sophia. At Beria's suggestion, through the Chief of the Health Department of the USSR MVD, she had an abortion. I repeat, Beria had many, many such relationships.

On Beria's instructions, I kept a special list of women with whom he cohabited. Later, at his suggestion, I destroyed this list. However, I kept one list. In this list are the surnames and names and addresses of telephone numbers of more than 25 such women. This list is in my apartment in my jacket pocket. (The list to which Sarkisov was referring was found, it contained 39 names of women.).

One or 1 1/2 years ago, I learned for a fact that, as a result of his relationships with prostitutes, Beria contracted syphilis. He was treated by a doctor in the MVD clinic, initials U.B. I don't remember his name.
Stickle, D. M., Ed. The Beria Affair. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992, p. 121

VOROSHILOV: However, the question reasonably arises, why was this subject able to freely work in Party leadership and government for so long, without being exposed sooner, why did he have such a great authority, and hold such high Party and State positions? The question is entirely legitimate.

First and foremost,… Beria is an insidious and cunning enemy, a consummate adventurist, schemer, who knows how to skillfully worm his way into the trust of a leader, who can hide his base plans for a long time and wait for the proper moment. He witnessed the daily life of the great Stalin. Together with all of us he knew that Stalin, as the result of intense work,

often fell sick in recent years, obviously this circumstance to a certain extent was the basis for Beria's vile tactics. He waited in the hope that sooner or later Stalin would be no more. As the facts have now shown, after the death of Stalin this adventurist was counting on the speedy realization of his criminal plans against the Party and the State. That's why he was in such a hurry after the death of Stalin, or perhaps he was being hurried….

In all these characteristics of his, Beria feared Stalin, he ingratiated himself with Stalin, but skillfully, in his own way; he would whisper all manner of disgusting things, would completely confuse him. And we could tell just by Comrade Stalin's mood, when we met either for business or other reasons, we could all feel whom Beria had been "whispering" against that day.
Stickle, D. M., Ed. The Beria Affair. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992, p. 143

VOROSHILOV: We were by our Stalin's side until his last breath, and Beria immediately demonstrated his "activity"–as if to say don't forget, I'm here.
Stickle, D. M., Ed. The Beria Affair. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992, p. 145

ANDREYEV (Member of the Central Committee and the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet): In this sense, Beria's plan differed from the plan of other traitors of the Soviet people, former enemies. As we now know, this plan was about:

Firstly, worming his way into the trust of Comrade Stalin, whatever the cost. This he considered a fundamental condition for his enemy activity. And so in any way he tried to worm his way into Stalin's trust. Did he achieve this? Undoubtedly he did. Comrades here have already mentioned that Comrade Stalin had a weakness of being too trusting. This is the truth.

The second, and obviously the central, task in his plan, was to destroy the Bolshevik nucleus of our leadership…. to undermine the trust Comrade Stalin had in various leaders, to sow strife among the Party leaders and the leaders of the government.

Was he able to achieve any of this? Certainly, he was successful for a time.

Now Comrade Voroshilov spoke about Comrade Ordjonikidze. Ordjonikidze was the most honest, most noble Bolshevik, and you may be sure that he was a victim of Beria's intrigues….

Beria divided Comrade Stalin and Ordjonikidze and Comrade Ordjonikidze's noble heart couldn't take it; thus Beria took out of commission one of the best leaders of the Party and friends of Comrade Stalin.

Going on. All of us Chekists and the new ones too, know what a warm key friendship there was between Comrade Stalin and Molotov. We all considered this a natural friendship, and were happy for it. But then Beria appeared in Moscow, and fundamentally changed everything, Comrade Stalin's relationship with Comrade Molotov was ruined. Comrade Molotov began to be subjected to undeserved attacks from Comrade Stalin. This was Beria, successfully undermining the close friendship of Comrade Stalin and Comrade Molotov with his intrigues.

Stickle, D. M., Ed. The Beria Affair. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992, p. 154

ANDREYEV: It was only lately, in the German question, and in other questions, that we saw his bourgeois degeneracy.
Stickle, D. M., Ed. The Beria Affair. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992, p. 155

ANDREYEV: And Beria, of course, at times did great work, but this was work done for a disguise, and in this was the difficulty of exposing him. He created himself a halo, that, for example, during the war he was during enormous work, etc., he was blackmailing in the name of Comrade Stalin. He was difficult to expose.
Stickle, D. M., Ed. The Beria Affair. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992, p. 157

TEVOSYAN (Member of the Central Committee): Yesterday, we learned from the speech of Comrade Kaganovich that this scoundrel Beria protested against referring to Comrade Stalin–along with the names of Marx, Engels, Lenin–when speaking about the teachings which guide our Party. That's how far this scoundrel went.
Stickle, D. M., Ed. The Beria Affair. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992, p. 159

MALENKOV: As you see, comrades, great people, too, can have weaknesses. Comrade Stalin had these weaknesses. We must say this, in order to bring up the need for collective party leadership properly, like Marxists, the need for criticism and self-criticism in all branches of the party, including, before all else, the Central Committee in the Presidium of the Central Committee.
Stickle, D. M., Ed. The Beria Affair. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992, p. 176

Special Judicial Session of the Supreme Court: All the accused were indisputably proven guilty of the accusations against them, through original documents, exhibits, handwritten letters of the accused, and the testimony of numerous witnesses.
Stickle, D. M., Ed. The Beria Affair. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992, p. 196

Another provocation… an anonymous letter from Italy stated: "Comrade Stalin, in your car there is an explosive device underneath the hood." We looked… of course, there was no explosive. Then another letter from Italy came: "Comrade Stalin, it seems that your living expenses are extremely high… costing the Government money!"

Stalin decided after this to set up a commission, under Malenkov, to look into the finances. The commission detailed all of the expenses of running the government Dacha. Malenkov brought this to Orlov in order for him to sign. Orlov refused, because Stalin was a light eater, hardly drank, and took no liquors. A bottle of "Tsinandali" was enough to last him for two weeks. It was proven that it was Stalin's "friends," under the aegis of Beria, who really lived it up, charging the cost to Stalin's budget. Vodka was the main culprit in the inflated costs charged to Stalin's name.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 66

Grandma Olga and Anna used to say–which always sounded strange to me but now I don't think it's so strange–"Your father could be influenced very easily. He could be influenced by good people: Kirov had a wonderful influence on him. Beria had a terrible influence."

Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 209

MOLOTOV SAYS THERE ARE ANTI-SOVIET TRAITORS IN THE POST-STALIN GOVT

MOLOTOV: We can be certain that foreign capital would throw any millions and billions of rubles–merely for the chance to back any political organization opposing the Communist Party in power in the USSR. This particular political organization could have the most leftist platform and bear any sign, but in one way or another it would immediately be used by foreign capital and imperialist espionage, to crack and split the workers of the USSR, which is the dream of the imperialists. They would use this type of special organization to break up the union of workers and peasants, to undermine socialist construction in all possible ways, to create intrigues and break down the Soviet state. Why, Tito's anti-Communist clique seized power in Yugoslavia under the guise of Communism. Why, this clique even now calls itself "Communist," although it is already openly a lackey of the North Atlantic bloc of imperialists.
Stickle, D. M., Ed. The Beria Affair. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992, p. 33

BERIA HAD A POOR KNOWLEDGE OF MARXIST IDEOLOGY

… he [Beria] himself not only underestimated this theory, but simply didn't understand it–in his speeches, both published and unpublished, you'll find very little Marxism-Leninism. He did not know Marxism-Leninism. He had a poor theoretical foundation; the book mentioned by Comrade Molotov was written not by him, he was using it to earn points for himself.

Beria had a hostile response to statements that Stalin was a great continuer of the work of Lenin, Marx, and Engels.
Stickle, D. M., Ed. The Beria Affair. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992, p. 74

BREZHNEV SOUGHT TO REHABILITATE STALIN RATHER THAN FORGET OR IGNORE HIM

Not everyone believed these confessions, either in the Soviet Union or in the West. But the majority believed them.

… As for Brezhnev, during his time in power he was more concerned with trying to rehabilitate–Stalin. He wished to reverse the decisions of the 20th and 22nd congresses rather than carry them through consistently.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 15

MOLOTOV WAS A MUCH BETTER & MORE RESPONSIBLE LEADER THAN HE IS GIVEN CREDIT FOR

The widespread opinion in the West that Molotov didn't take any initiative and acted strictly on Stalin's instructions appears unfounded, just as the view that Litvinov pursued an "independent" policy that was discontinued when he was removed from office.

Normally, important proposals were drafted by the staff of the People's Commissariat. A draft report would be initialed by a deputy people's commissar who was in charge of that problem or that country, and after that it was submitted to the people's commissar. In most cases, Molotov took the final decision. It was, of course, possible that he would secure his boss's prior agreement either over the phone or at his dacha on the preceding day. Be that as it may, according to my observations, in many cases Molotov took full responsibility for the decisions.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin's Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 209

STALIN KEPT BERIA AROUND BECAUSE HE NEEDED HIS SKILLS BUT DID NOT TRUST HIM

Deep down, Stalin no doubt despised Beria, but he could not manage without him. Beria was his inquisitor, his right-hand man and his spy. Beria, for instance, informed him that Berlin had for a long time been planning to carry out a terrorist act against the Soviet leader. According to some information received, he said, a special Messerschmitt Arado-332 was to drop a trained group of terrorists from Vlasov's Russian Army of Liberation, while other reports suggested that the Germans were going to leave a commando group behind as they retreated. Almost every month Beria told Stalin of new measures he had taken to increase his master's security. But Stalin needed Beria for a range of other duties. For instance, he needed to know why 140 out of 400 fighter planes, allocated for use on the Kalinin and Western fronts, had to be withdrawn from service after three or four days of action. On the other hand, he did not like it when Beria poked his nose into the affairs of Staff Headquarters and the General Staff.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 480

Behind these words ['You're indulging an old man; it won't do anything for my health.'] lay yet a new fear that assailed him [Stalin] on the eve of his birthday. He had been getting up to leave for the dacha one evening, and as he rose from his desk to put on his coat, he had a dizzy spell. Orange circles swam before his eyes, but he recovered quickly. Poskrebyshev gripped him firmly by the arm with both hands and asked in some alarm, 'Let me call the doctors, Comrade Stalin. You shouldn't go out right away. You need a doctor.' Stalin told him not to fuss.
The dizziness soon passed. Stalin waited a little while and drank some tea. He felt pressure at the back of his neck but would not have the doctors called in. True, he did not trust them, but he trusted Beria, who was in charge of the 4th Main Administration of the Ministry of Health, even less. He did not want it to get around that he had been unwell.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 526

Everything had tended to indicate my father's complete trust in Beria and his dependence on him, but of this one could never be quite sure. I shall never forget how startled I had been by something my father said in 1941 during the first days of the war. I was visiting Beria's wife at their dacha. My father had always encouraged my friendship with her. I was talked into staying the night. Next morning my father suddenly called up in a fury. Using unprintable words, he shouted, "Come back at once! I don't trust Beria!"
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 376

In 1948 Stalin began to bring pressure to bear on Rapava, Georgia's Minister of Internal Affairs, to provide him with a compromising dossier on my father [Beria].
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 217

When he [my father, Beria] gradually began to open my eyes to certain facts and to get me ready to understand that there was a conflict between Stalin and him, he always took care to emphasize that there was no one equal to Stalin when it came to perseverance and capacity to achieve his aims.
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 290

BERIA NOT LIKED BY STALIN IN THE LAST MONTHS

Yepishev, who was at one time deputy Minister of State Security, told me that Stalin kept a black oilskin exercise book in which he would make occasional notes,…. All efforts to discover either the notebook or these letters have failed, and Yepishev did not reveal his source. Only Beria, Poskrebyshev and Vlasik had direct access to Stalin, and only they can have known of these notes, but Poskrebyshev and Vlasik were compromised by Beria shortly before Stalin's death and were therefore distanced from him.
Beria must have been aware that Stalin's attitude towards him had cooled markedly over the last year or 18 months. For his part, Stalin must also have been aware of Beria'a intentions…. Perhaps the truth will never be known, but Yepishev was convinced that Beria cleaned out the safe before the others could get to it.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 513

BERIA FELL OUT OF FAVOR WITH STALIN

From Krasnoyarsk, where he [Vlasik] was in exile, he wrote in May 1955 to Voroshilov, as chairman of the Supreme Soviet. Quaintly referring to Stalin throughout as 'the Head of government', Vlasik described a conversation that had taken place between him and Stalin, when they were on a holiday in the south after the war:
"The Head of government expressed his dissatisfaction with Beria, saying that the work of the state security organs did not justify the protection they got. He said he had given orders to remove Beria from the job of running the MGB. He asked me what I thought of Merkulov and Kobulov, and later of Goglidze and Tsanave. I told him what I knew. When I later found out that my conversation with the Head of government had definitely become known to them, I was staggered."
Beria had obviously been alarmed by Stalin's attitude to him, but how did he know what his boss and Vlasik had said about him when they were alone? Had Stalin relayed their conversation, or did Beria have some means of bugging the leader himself?
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 569

Relations between Stalin and Beria deteriorated during the years 1946 through 1948. The earliest sign of Stalin's distrust was his dismissal of Beriaites from the MGB and, on suspicion of misplaced loyalty, Georgians from the Guards Directorate. Stalin then went out of his way to slight Beria. He promoted the chiefs of bodyguard details for all Politburo members except Beria's chief, who remained a colonel as the rest moved up in rank to

general. Stalin would agree to meeting Malenkov but then cancel the appointment if Malenkov said that Beria planned to join them.
Deriabin, Peter. Inside Stalin's Kremlin. Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, c1998, p. 62

In 1948, 1949, and 1950 Stalin had gone on vacation to Sochi in southern RSFSR, some 50 miles from the border with the Georgian Republic. In 1951 he went to another resort on the Black Sea, this in Georgia. The purpose of his choosing to go to that republic at that time was to commence undermining Beria's power with an attack on Beriaites in their stronghold. The first report to reach Moscow that the Stalin-Beria relationship again had soured was an announcement by the Georgian Party's Central Committee in November 1951. Muscovites read that the Party accused three senior officials of protecting unnamed criminals. At MGB headquarters we recognized all three as Beriaites, which meant to us that Beria had lost his grip on affairs in his native Georgia. The big chief [Stalin] was back in the drivers seek there and back on the warpath.
The purge of Beriaites lasted into the winter of 1952, long after Stalin had left the Georgian resort for Moscow. According to the Georgian press, it resulted in hundreds–thousands, according to MGB officers–of dismissals from jobs in the Georgian Party and government. Some of the most senior Beriaites were arrested.
When the Guards Directorate personnel accompanying Stalin once more returned to the Center from Georgia, they told me that Beria had not visited Stalin during his vacation of 1951. The nights of the two Georgians engaging in Georgian revelries had ended.
Deriabin, Peter. Inside Stalin's Kremlin. Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, c1998, p. 68-69

Is it correct to say that Comrade Stalin has turned against Beria?
My boss nodded [yes].
And is it correct to say that Comrade Stalin's reason was the information about Beria having syphilis?
Absolutely, said [my boss] Goryshev.
Less than a year after this conversation Stalin's hostility toward Beria was indicated on the pages of Pravda.
Deriabin, Peter. Inside Stalin's Kremlin. Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, c1998, p. 71

STALIN LOOKED IN GOOD HEALTH SHORTLY BEFORE HIS DEATH

And whatever his basic physical and mental condition, foreigners he received only a few weeks before his death saw him as reasonably sharp and fit,…
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 301

…Stalin was thus now deprived of his long-term personal doctor (Vinogradov), his personal secretary, and his personal guard commander.
That Stalin was still capable of any sort of merriment as late as February 28 is remarkable, even though exceptional. Yet it is at any rate clear that he was in reasonably full position of his faculties almost to the last,…
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 311

My father's health, on the whole, was strong. At 73 acute sclerosis and high blood pressure brought on a stroke, but his heart, lungs, liver were in excellent condition. He used to say

that in his youth he had had tuberculosis, a poor digestion, that he had lost his teeth at an early age, that his arm, injured in his childhood, often hurt him. But in general he was in good health…. Under no circumstances could one call him a neurotic; rather, powerful self-control was part of his nature.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 359

At last came a glimmer of reason. At a meeting of the Presidium on March 1, 1953, in Stalin's office, Kaganovich proposed that a committee be appointed to study the case of the doctors who had been arrested….
Stalin reached for the bell-button to call his guards,… but nevertheless Stalin over-balanced and fell, hitting his head on the table.
Stalin had not in fact suffered serious injury; although over 73 years of age he was in superb physical condition, a fact confirmed by the Argentine Ambassador Senor Bravo, by the Indian Ambassador Mr. Menon, and by Dr. Kichlum an Indian activist of the Peace Movement. All three, who had been with Stalin only a short time previously, had been impressed by his vigorous health.
Fishman and Hutton. The Private Life of Josif Stalin. London: W. H. Allen, 1962, p. 183

When I saw Stalin in December 1952 he looked well and had a perky air.
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 247

Until the last months of his life Stalin was in good physical condition and his mind and will were intact.
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 242

KOSYGIN SAYS KHRUSHCHEV HAS A ROTTEN LINE

[Kosygin said to me] "I understand…you found the conditions difficult in the collective at the time. But we don't intend following Khrushchev's rotten line!"
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 36

POLINA MOLOTOV DENOUNCES BERIA AND KHRUSHCHEV WHILE PRAISING STALIN

When she [Paulina Molotov] was arrested in 1949, everybody thought that physically she would be unable to bear it. For four years even her daughter did not know where she was, and everyone considered Paulina Molotov dead. When, immediately after my father's death, she was brought back from her exile in Kazakhstan, it was almost impossible to believe that she was still alive. But she, laughing, said that "severe conditions had improved her health." And indeed, she looked better than before, and all her "mysterious ailments" had vanished. There is no doubt that Paulina Molotov had been arrested with the consent–and perhaps on the explicit order–of my father, who considered that, being Jewish, she was "mixed up with Zionists and was spying on Molotov." She knew this perfectly well but insisted on blaming her misfortunes on Beria. She told me that she had "danced with joy like a mad woman" when she heard of his arrest. No one had resisted the 20th Congress and Khrushchev's new direction more than Kaganovich and Molotov. As for Molotov's wife, she was even more vehement about it. Kaganovich and Molotov considered Khrushchev their personal enemy,

because he had ousted them from the government and had recommended their expulsion from the Party. When Kosygin came to power, they instantly sent in a demand for reinstatement in the Party, which was refused. After that they grew incensed at the whole world and began singing praises to the “memory of the great Stalin.”
I saw Molotov after Khrushchev had been replaced by Kosygin. He looked old and wizened, living as a pensioner in a small apartment. As usual, he spoke little, only backing with yeses what others said…. Now he was yessing his wife. She, on the other hand, was full of energy and battle cries.
She had not been excluded from the Party and now attended Party meetings in a candy factory, as she had done in her youth. When I arrived, the family was gathered round the dinner table. Paulina said to me, “Your father was a genius. He destroyed the Fifth Column in our country, and when war broke out, the Party and the people were as one. Now there’s no revolutionary spirit left, only opportunism. See what the Italian Communists are doing! It’s a disgrace! They have all been scared out of their wits by this fear of war. There’s only one hope left– China. There alone the spirit of revolution still survives!”
Molotov kept nodding his head and yessing…. Paulina Molotov crumbled diced garlic into the borsch, assuring us that “Stalin always ate it this way.” Later she reviled the laundry service, complaining of having to do the wash all over again; then she inveighed against Khrushchev: she could never forgive him for expelling her husband from the Party.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 407-408

Almost every account quotes cases of people who remained devoted to “the Party and the Government” and attributed their arrest to error.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 318

CONSUMER PRICES ROSE AFTER STALIN’S DEMISE

Soviet citizens, especially of the older generation, are generally convinced that under Stalin prices decreased every year, whereas under Khrushchev and his later successors they have constantly risen. This explains the existence of a certain nostalgia for the Stalin era.
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 476

STALIN’S CORRECT POLICY PREVENTED THE REVOLTS IN POLAND THAT LATER OCCURRED

The disturbances [of 1956] in Poland did not develop into a general uprising for many reasons. One of the most significant was that in Stalin’s time the repression of the moderate elements in Poland had not taken the form of executions and massive bloody purges of the party and state apparatus.
Nekrich and Heller. Utopia in Power. New York: Summit Books, c1986, p. 538

KHRUSHCHEV WAS A TROTSKYIST

Even two decades after 1937 and a third of a century since his “mistake,” Khrushchev himself invested this charge with such significance that he devoted a major portion of his speech to it at the June plenum of 1957…. After describing how, at the time of “the discussion, foisted [on the Party] by the Trotskyists,” he [Khrushchev] had spoken out

against the violations of inner-party democracy which had been allowed in his party organization, Khrushchev added: “And so it turned out that my comments at that time, that is, during the first days of the discussion, were objectively in support of the Trotskyists, although in essence I never had acted together with the Trotskyists. I quickly understood that I had made a mistake, that my remarks might be interpreted as contributions from incorrect positions.”
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 303

QUESTION: What about Khrushchev? What are your [Moscow Soviet Chairman, Vasili Pronin, who was chairman from April 1939 to 1945] thoughts about him?
ANSWER: From 1920 onwards, Khrushchev always voted for and supported Trotsky and his platform… even voting against Lenin in his last days….
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 23-25

But for supporting Khrushchev you [Kaganovich] will be blamed.
Yes, you are right. I was the one who pushed him up as I thought him to be a capable person. But he had been a Trotskyist. I informed Stalin that he had been a Trotskyist. I told this to Stalin when Khrushchev was elected a member of the Moscow Committee. Stalin asked: ‘How is he now?’ I replied: ‘He is fighting against the Trotskyists, genuinely, actively’. Stalin then asked me to support him on behalf of the CC at the conference.
We heard of this episode differently. It seems Khrushchev had said that Kaganovich wanted to destroy his career when he was pushed for the Moscow Committee. You at the last moment reportedly pointed out to Stalin that Khrushchev had been a Trotskyist, to which Stalin replied that he already knew about it.
Really, is that so?
Yes, that is how the story is told.
I told you how it exactly happened. Khrushchev came to me during the conference in tears and asked me whether he should speak or not. I told him that I would consult Stalin. Stalin suggested that he should speak, narrate, everything, and later on I was supposed to speak and express trust in him on behalf of the CC.
THUS SPAKE KAGANOVICH by Feliks Chuyev, 1992

KHRUSHCHEV THREW AWAY THE LARGE GOLD RESERVES STALIN HAD BUILT UP

Every year Stalin carefully studied the report on the country’s gold reserves submitted by the Ministry of Finance, and he became convinced that the ministry was not doing its job at all well. In November 1946 he transferred responsibility for the gold and platinum industry to the MGB, or Ministry for State Security (as the NKVD became that year, when ministries replaced People’s Commissariats)…. In the year of his [Stalin] death, the state repository was holding more precious metal than at any other time in Soviet history, including 2049 tons of gold and 3261 tons of silver. Within a year of his death the reserves began inexorably to fall, and when in the early 1960s gold started to be traded for grain, they evaporated at catastrophic speed.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Autopsy for an Empire. New York: Free Press, c1998, p. 145

The measures applied by Khrushchev in agriculture led to the growth of grain output, without doubt, but also to a sharp rise in consumption. The shortage became chronic, and the consequent drop in reserves was so drastic that he was finally compelled to purchase large supplies abroad. This desperate step was proof, it proof were needed, that the Soviet system of agriculture was bankrupt. The purchase of grain from abroad continued for more than 30 years, as the country literally ate up its gold reserves, which declined from 13.1 million tons in 1954 to 6.3 million in 1963.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Autopsy for an Empire. New York: Free Press, c1998, p. 211

According to memoranda approved by the Politburo, in the Five-Year Plan prior to 1977, 1214 tons of gold were sold for grain. This had evidently been insufficient, for it had been supplemented by the sale of fuels, copper, zinc, magnesium, chromium ore, aluminum, cellulose, coal, industrial diamonds, cotton, cars, tractors, machinery and much, much more. It is obvious enough from all this that the Bolshevik's plans for agriculture had failed. Russia had been turned from a large-scale exporter of grain into a regular importer. The last 25 years during which the USSR bought grain abroad, Moscow was in effect financing the development of agriculture in other countries, instead of its own. In that time, the USSR transferred about 9000 tons of gold to Western banks. Only part of this was for grain–it was also buying meat, butter and other agricultural products. In 1977 alone, for instance, and only for "supplementary" deliveries of meat, the Politburo had to sell an additional 42 tons of gold abroad. Virtually all the gold the country produced, plus its hidden reserves, was being sold abroad to buy food….
If, as has been seen, the highest volume of pure gold reserves was reached in 1953 at 2049.8 tons, then all the gold mined after that date, between 250-300 tons annually, was sold for grain.
… the highest output of grain achieved during Stalin's role had been 34.7 million tons, in 1952….
After 1953, less grain was produced than was consumed in 18 of the 24 years to 1977, the shortfall being covered by huge foreign purchases, at the cost of the national reserves. In 1975, for instance, 50.2 million tons were produced, while consumption amounted to 89.4 million tons.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Lenin: A New Biography. New York: Free Press, 1994, p. 339-340

TOLERATION OF TROUBLE MAKERS CAUSED THE HUNGARIAN REVOLT

He [Andropov] had learnt his 'Hungarian lesson', and knew that those events had begun with 'the toleration of trouble-makers'.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Autopsy for an Empire. New York: Free Press, c1998, p. 342

GORBACHEV CRITICIZES REAGAN

For instance, in 1986 he [Gorbachev] told the Politburo: 'In Reagan at Reykjavik we were fighting not only with the class enemy, but with one who is extremely primitive, has the looks of a troglodyte and displays mental incapacity.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Autopsy for an Empire. New York: Free Press, c1998, p. 449

GORBACHEV STABS NAJIBULLAH IN THE BACK

There were times when Gorbachev had the ability to issue a firm yes or no. In March 1989, when Soviet troops had been withdrawn from Afghanistan, Shevardnadze, yielding to Najibullah's persuasion, suddenly raised the defense of the tottering regime in Kabul as an issue. The question was whether to carry out bombing missions from Soviet territory against mujahedin in the vicinity of Jellalabad. The Defense Ministry, in the person of Marshall Yazov, gave its support to the Foreign Ministry only reluctantly. At this point Gorbachev exploded: 'No other reply to Najibullah, except an absolute refusal to do these bombing raids!' He ordered the appropriate telegram to be sent to Kabul at once.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Autopsy for an Empire. New York: Free Press, c1998, p. 464

GORBACHEV WAS DETESTED AT HOME BY MANY

Gorbachev approached the end of his rule sadly and, typically, surrounded by paradox: however ecstatic the West was about him, at home he was reviled in equal measure.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Autopsy for an Empire. New York: Free Press, c1998, p. 489

In his memoirs, Lukyanov, who as Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet in 1991 had been one of the initiators of the coup, and who had known Gorbachev since their student days together in Moscow, writes that he found 'the phenomenon of Gorbachev's authority' understandable: the policy of concession and compromise, which led to the 'destruction of the Warsaw Pact', suited the West very well. As for Gorbachev's personal characteristics: "His pernicious tendency to resolve everything, even matters of principal, by compromise, improvisation and vacillation, under the influence of circumstances and his personal adviser, became a sort of curse hanging over him…. He had a blithe belief that everything would somehow be all right and was permanently lagging behind events. He was certain that every presidential word would be effective of itself and he lacked the ability to listen to the opinion of others…. He was astonishingly unwilling to defend people from his own team and had a tendency to quickly get rid of anyone who had fulfilled his task and ceased to be useful to him."
When Lukyanov was asked to define the part Gorbachev had played in the history of Russia, he was unequivocal: 'It was the role of Herostratus… Gorbachev betrayed his Party.'
Alexander Alexander-Agentov, who had been an assistant of Gorbachev's and was replaced by Chernyayev, echoed some of Lukyanov's thoughts: 'Unfortunately, Gorbachev suffers from a very serious shortcoming in a leader: he is totally unable to listen, or rather unable to listen to his interlocutor, but is wholly absorbed by what he says himself. I left Gorbachev and took my pension because he had no need of advice.'
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Autopsy for an Empire. New York: Free Press, c1998, p. 525

STALIN WAS BEING UNDERMINED SHORTLY BEFORE HE DIED

… in order to make it much harder to get into the Politburo by opportunists, just looking to their personal pocketbooks, he proposed a cut in pay for all members of the Government. The members of the Politburo were dismayed, but what could they do? They started to make plans against Stalin more and more by taking into their own hands practically all of the functions of the government apparatus. Who were these people in actual fact? Beria,

Malenkov, Khrushchev, Kaganovich, Bulganin. When they managed to put aside Stalin and his role in government in actual practice, they started their plan in earnest. His personal bodyguards and trusted friends that were with Stalin for scores of years like Poskrebyshev and Vlasik were forced out of the Kremlin shortly after [Stalin's death].
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 57

STALIN'S BODYGUARDS HATED BERIA

No one wanted to telephone Beria, since most of the personal bodyguards hated Beria.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 61

If before, Menzhinsky, Yagoda, or Yezhov did not meddle in the affairs of Stalin's bodyguards, Beria tried through all means to compromise the loyal guards of Stalin such as Vlasik and Rumyantsev. But we stood our ground and managed not to have Beria replace us with his Georgian henchmen. This is due to Stalin's suspicions of Beria, and I remember once the following outburst by Stalin against Beria:
I myself will take care of things, I do not need your help!
Beria always worked under cover and tried to dislodge workers loyal to Stalin. All of us knew what Beria was up to and hated him for it. He was a double-dealing conniver.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 65-66

MALENKOV, NOT STALIN, WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR BERIA'S RISE IN POWER

I met Beria in September of 1937, when I was in Yerevan with Mikoyan…. Beria replaced Yezhov. It is necessary to ask how Beria arrived in Moscow. There are rumors that Stalin helped Beria to come to Moscow. Definitely not! Stalin was not that warm towards Georgians, although he himself was Georgian by nationality. Malenkov was the hidden culprit, who already wormed his way into the Central Committee CPSU.
Beria immediately replaced all the other members of his Ministry, employing only his henchmen. He trumped up charges on previous Bolsheviks like Pauker, Volovich, Dagena, Kursk, Gintsel….
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 65

MOLOTOV SAYS SOME POLITBURO MEMBERS ARE CONTROLLED BY BERIA

That is why Molotov was clever and saw through this when he told Malenkov and Khrushchev:
You are profane and fools, you are sitting in the pocket of Beria so deep, that only your ears are wriggling above the coat pocket.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 70

STALIN WAS STRIPPED OF HIS PROTECTION IN THE LAST MONTHS

It is often written that nature struck down Stalin in the fullness of his power. That is not true. I witnessed Stalin being systematically stripped of his defenses during the last months of his life: his fantastic guard force cut back; his most faithful protectors sent away, or imprisoned, or killed; his hands removed from the levers of control…and was exposing himself to murder. … Yet the final plot against him did succeed–and it did so by dismantling, before his very eyes, that inner circle of protection.
Deriabin, Peter. Inside Stalin's Kremlin. Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, c1998, p. 115

The new winds blew stronger in February 1953, and they affected Stalin's inner circle, his son Vasily, and others close to him.
…He was dismissed as the air commander of the Moscow District and dishonorably discharged.
Five more links in the chain of loyalists around Stalin broke during February 1953. On the 13th the Jew Mekhlis, one of the last of Stalin's old comrades from the Revolution, died at age 64 and was buried in the Kremlin wall an honor normally reserved for higher-ranking leaders. Mekhlis had been hospitalized during his retirement for reasons of health in 1950.
Deriabin, Peter. Inside Stalin's Kremlin. Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, c1998, p. 117

Beria's foe and Stalin's favorite general, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Colonel General Shtemenko, also lost his job in February. The Politburo took this action at the insistence of Beria, after consultation with former Defense Minister Bulganin. Only later did Stalin learn of it. In addition, the Politburo fired Minister of Public Health Dr. Smirnov who had been serving simultaneously as Stalin's personal physician.
Lt. Gen. Spiridonov and Major General Kosynkin had been commandant and deputy commandant, respectively, of the Kremlin Kommandatura since 1939. Of the two, General Kosynkin was on more intimate terms with Stalin. He spent less time supervising Kommandatura subordinates than standing at Stalin's elbow and fulfilling his requests for personal services.
The obituary for Kosynkin said that he died "unexpectedly" of a heart attack, in the line of duty, on Feb. 17.
[Footnote]: On the day of Kosynkin's death the ambassador of India met with Stalin in the Kremlin, according to accounts that later appeared in the West. Stalin is reported to have doodled pictures of wolves during the interview. Seemingly apropos of nothing, he volunteered that Russian peasants learned how to fight wolves–they killed them.
On the next Saturday I happened to see Col. Nosarev's deputy for Kommandatura Personnel-Security as we left the main MGB headquarters building. Hailing this lieutenant colonel, I caught up with him, and we walked together for a block or two.
"Too bad about Comrade Kosynkin," I said.
[He said] "I'm skating on thin ice when I tell you this. The only heart condition he had was that it stopped beating. Comrade Kosynkin died from being shot in the head."… It's making a difference in Comrade Spiridonov…. [He] says that hereafter he'll only answer to the Politburo as a group. He won't answer to a single individual anymore."
[Footnote]: Beria put Spiridonov under house arrest in March 1953. Although Spiridonov was permitted to retire from the MGB that summer for reasons of health, he lived into the 1970s.

Deriabin, Peter. Inside Stalin's Kremlin. Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, c1998, p. 118

Kommandatura Kosynkin, who died in mid-February, had been a Stalin loyalist in the mold of Kremlin chief of staff Poskrebyshev. Minister Abakumov, Guards Directorate Chief Vlasik, Vlasik's deputies, and the chief of bodyguards for Stalin–all dismissed in 1951-52. Stalin's personal physician and the chief of the Armed Forces General Staff were both dismissed in February 1953. Also, during that 21-month period the number of Stalin's bodyguards was cut in half, many of his personal staffers were reassigned, and the inexperienced Ignatiev took charge of the Guards Directorate. Gradually the means for protecting Stalin's life had withered.
In the 30 years since Stalin had been named CPSU general secretary, the quality of MGB protection for his life was never worse than toward the end of February 1953. The stripping of Stalin's personal security and his increased vulnerability were apparent.
[A summary of what was done is as follows]:
Personal chief of staff and aide in directing MGB activities: position vacant since Poskrebyshev's removal in April 1952.
Minister of State Security: the inexperienced Ignatiev since April 1952.
Chief of the Guards Directorate: none since April 1952.
Personal bodyguards: reduced by half in mid-1952.
Chief of personal bodyguards: replaced in mid-1952 by a colonel lacking command experience in this specialty.
Personal chauffeurs and bodyguards: also replaced in mid-1952.
Personal servants at the dacha in Kuntsevo: cut back in mid-1952.
Chief of physical security at the Kremlin office and unofficial doorman: none since February 1953.
Minister of Public Health and Stalin's personal physician: dismissed in February 1953.
Miscellaneous physical security units around Moscow: reduced in size and dispersed to other organizations in mid-1952.
Deriabin, Peter. Inside Stalin's Kremlin. Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, c1998, p. 120

BERIA UNDERMINED STALIN IN THE LAST MONTHS

"Whereas till now he [Lieutenant General Nikolay Spiridonov] answered strictly to the Big Chief [Stalin]."
"Yes, that's right. Strictly to the Big Chief till now."
From late January through February 1953 the indications of a drastic shift in power accumulated. They led us in the MGB to believe that in the Politburo as well as in State Security Stalin had lost the struggle with Beria….
I imagine Beria putting forward two arguments to persuade a majority of Politburo members to join him in a rebellion against Stalin. The first argument would have been this: Stalin intended the [a] purge to envelop the entire Politburo old guard–Malenkov, Khrushchev, Bulganin, Voroshilov, Mikoyan, Kaganovich, and Molotov besides Beria. After that, and following his pattern of the past, it was only a matter of time before Stalin purged some or all of the 16 new members whom he appointed in October 1952. To cancel the purge, the eight old guard members (including Beria) needed five new members for a majority of 13 votes to 12 (including Stalin's). Assuming a democratic process at work in the Politburo, Beria won a majority over to his side, against Stalin.

Second, Politburo members needed no persuasion that Stalin should not repeat the pattern of past purges…. Beria may have argued that Stalin had lost the capability to conduct a purge because he no longer controlled the MGB–Beria did. Beria had been building influence in the MGB since the last months of 1951, and Stalin and Minister Ignatiev had not succeeded in stopping him. With nothing to fear from an MGB no longer answering to Stalin, the Politburo majority joined with Beria to terminate the purge.
Whether or not the Politburo was actually polled, it did rebel against Stalin and then faced the problem of how to dispose of him.
Deriabin, Peter. Inside Stalin's Kremlin. Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, c1998, p. 118-119

There are new declassified documents that show that it was actually Beria who was the first to speak out against the Stalin cult more forcefully and consistently than either Malenkov or Khrushchev.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 107

They [Stalin's closest aides, Vlasik and Poskrebyshev] had been removed from the entourage at Beria's instigation a few months before, arrested and sentenced to 10 years imprisonment. In his memoirs Vlasik says he is convinced that Beria "helped" Stalin to die after first removing his physicians and the two men closer to Stalin than he was himself. He believed that Beria was plotting to usurp power.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 247

Of the Alliluyev family, Volodya [Stalin's nephew] remains the most explicitly Stalinist. Icons of his uncle's era manifest his dogmatic adherence to the creeds and actions of the society in which he was nurtured. He eloquently defends his family's position, apportioning blame in no small measure to Beria, whose wish to control every channel of information "was the reason for all the misfortunes of our family. At all times, even after the arrest of members of it, the family trusted Stalin completely, they continued to have a positive attitude to him. They knew Stalin and his character very well. I have come to the conclusion that it was Stalin's entourage who needed all the arrests."
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 273

NEARLY ALL STALIN'S 1952 POLITBURO APPOINTEES ARE REMOVED

In the revised Party lineup, 14 of Stalin's 16 recent appointees to the Politburo were left out. The eight old guard members who stayed on–Beria, Malenkov, Khrushchev, Bulganin, Voroshilov, Molotov, Mikoyan, and Kaganovich–made a solid majority.
Deriabin, Peter. Inside Stalin's Kremlin. Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, c1998, p. 139

BERIA OPPOSED STALIN'S POLICY OF HAVING DIFFERENT NATIONALITIES AS HEADS OF REGIONS

Beria honored the desire of other nationality groups to have persons of their own blood heading the Party in the republics. Stalin's practice of appointing Party secretaries of the republics and oblasts regardless of their nationality groups had aroused much resentment.

Ukrainians wanted a Ukrainian at the head of the Party organization in their republic, Tadzhiks a Tadzhik in their republic, and so on.
Deriabin, Peter. Inside Stalin's Kremlin. Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, c1998, p. 147

AFTER STALIN'S DEATH BERIA STARTS REMOVING STALIN'S ALLIES FROM POSITIONS

At the same time a purge was underway in Georgia. Eight of the 11 Members of the Georgian Politburo were arrested, as were others whom Stalin had appointed to replace Beriaites during the Mingrelian Affair of 1951-52. It was yet another swing of the pendulum between the two natives of the republic [Stalin and Beria] who had risen to power in Moscow. In April the Georgian Party newspaper reported a speech calling Beria " Georgia's best son, the outstanding leader of the great Soviet state."
Deriabin, Peter. Inside Stalin's Kremlin. Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, c1998, p. 148

AFTER STALIN'S DEATH BERIA STARTS ACTING LIKE HE IS IN CHARGE OF EVERYTHING

Workers in Communist East Berlin staged demonstrations, riots, and a general strike on June 17-19, 1953, against the work quotas and compensation scheme of the East German government. Soviet tanks and troops halted the disturbance, killing 16 rioters. On the first day of the disturbances, Beria dispatched Deputy Minister Kobulov with a group of 10 MGB officers to conduct on-the-scene investigations. Only after their departure (but before Soviet tanks and troops put down the uprising) was the Politburo told of Kobulov's mission.
With the MGB and MVD under his command, Beria came within a hair's breath of seizing control of the country. He planned to become the new Stalin, to achieve absolute power over the Party apparatus from the Politburo down.
Deriabin, Peter. Inside Stalin's Kremlin. Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, c1998, p. 148-149

BERIA IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE POST-WAR CRIMES OF THE SECRET POLICE IN THE SU

After all this time it still seems important to the Kremlin that it prove and prove again Beria's guilt. But the case against Beria is carried one step further. Whether they are open critics or open defenders of Stalin, whether they speak as officials or as private citizens, everyone quoted in Soviet media shifts from Stalin to Beria the blame for many crimes by State Security in the postwar years.
Deriabin, Peter. Inside Stalin's Kremlin. Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, c1998, p. 172

KHRUSHCHEV SAYS ABAKUMOV WAS BERIA'S MAN

[According to Khrushchev] Abakumov, who actually supervised the prosecution [in the Leningrad Affair] was Beria's man; he never reported to anyone, not even to Stalin, without checking first with Beria."
Deriabin, Peter. Inside Stalin's Kremlin. Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, c1998, p. 181

KHRUSHCHEV HATED STALIN BECAUSE STALIN WOULD NOT INTERVENE TO SAVE HIS SON

[From the Military Archives of the NKVD-KGB and the Military-Historical Journal, 1989, by the editor]

Much has been written about Leonid Khrushchev, son of Nikita Khrushchev and how he met his death; or was he captured by the German Army? Was he shot down, since he was an officer in the Soviet Air Force, a fighter pilot?

There is a persistent theme by historians that point to Khrushchev's attack on Stalin in his infamous "cult of the individual" speech at the 20th Congress of the CPSU, only because he could not forgive Stalin for not saving his son's life when he was sentenced by a Soviet Military Tribunal.

I talked to Ivan Kuzovkov, Commander of the Unit of fighters where Leonid Khrushchev was a fighter pilot. Kuzovkov was a Major General of the Soviet Air Force and here is what he stated:

General Kuzovkov said that the son of Nikita Khrushchev, Leonid, was shot down by German artillery and became a prisoner of war. Having found this out, Nikita Khrushchev immediately asked Stalin to rescue his son from the POW camp. Stalin agreed to the exchange of prisoners, thus Leonid Khrushchev was part of this exchange.

But the KGB knew facts that were very critical of Leonid Khrushchev, because reliable information was that when Leonid Khrushchev was in the POW camp, he behaved extremely badly and was fulfilling practically the role of a "Quisling" in order to get Soviet POW's to desert from the Red Army. He propagandized on behalf of Nazi Germany.

According to the Military Tribunal and in accordance with military laws, Leonid was tried and was sentenced to death.

Having found out about the military sentence against his son, Khrushchev pleaded with Stalin. According to the stenographic record in the files of the KGB, Stalin replied:

"The guilt of your son is indisputable and I have no jurisdiction or right to overrule the sentence as prescribed by the Military Tribunal according to laws during wartime and hostilities!"

General Kuzovkov stated that because Stalin did not intervene–or could not–this is why Khrushchev, besides other activities of his in the party, started this campaign against Stalin.

General Kuzovkov showed me his personal records of the trial–all of this pointed to the guilt of Khrushchev's son.

Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 185-186

LAWSUITS FILED AGAINST ANTI-STALINISTS FOR LYING ABOUT STALIN

It was the trial of the season. Since the rise of Gorbachev, a retired lawyer from Kharkov named Ivan Shekhovtsov had filed repeated lawsuits against various intellectuals and newspapers for "slandering Stalin." He made a career of these suits. Sixteen so far.

I asked Shekhovtsov why he bothered. Why was he spending all his money and energy filing suits and always losing? He looked at me, not angrily, but with a sort of kindly eye. I was a foreigner and didn't know any better.

“It is I who am restoring the historical truths,” he said. “I didn’t know anyone who was repressed. In the press now they are saying that in every house everyone at least knew someone who was repressed. In Kharkov, I investigated 150 households and not one said it was waiting for a knock on the door. These numbers you are hearing are all sensations, pure libel. During collectivization in 1929, my grandfather was kicked off his land and exiled. But people gave us clothing and food, and after six months we returned to the land. During the exile, my brother died of an inflammation of the lung, but my mother never blamed Stalin. It was the local officials! My mother is 86 and she understands this with her woman’s mind!
“From the point of practical deeds, Stalin did more than even Lenin. But that, of course, is probably a matter of longevity. I get letters all the time from people nostalgic for the life under Stalin–their joy in labor and love of the Motherland, how they lived with heads raised high and sang patriotic songs. Right now we don’t hear anyone singing. And it’s not that there is an absence of songs to sing. There is an absence of fate. You see, people forget. They need to be reminded. In the ’30s, when I was in the Young Pioneers and in Komsomol, there was unprecedented patriotism in this country. There was a willingness to sacrifice personal needs for the good of the nation. People had in mind great aims and a wonderful future, and so they endured. Stalin is with us and Stalin will come. That is the mine-set of a generation. We went into battle with his name on our lips. He took Russia, which had a wooden plough in its hands, and he left it with an atomic bomb. Such a man cannot be slandered. The young should learn their history.”
…In the courtroom, I’d gotten a dinner invitation from a woman who described herself as a “great lover of Stalin,” Kira Korniyenkova [Alekseyevna]….
But hadn’t there been mistakes? I asked Kira Alekseyevna. Did Stalin ever commit a mistake?
“Mistakes?” She said. “Yes, he made one, he died too soon.”
Remnick, David. Lenin’s Tomb. New York: Random House, c1993, p. 129-131, 133

GORBACHEV SHOWS HIS HATRED OF STALIN AND SOCIALISM

“I’ve [Shekhovtsov] been told more than once that it is time to stop swearing allegiance to socialism,” he [Gorbachev was saying it now [1990]. “Why should I? Socialism is my deep conviction, and I will promote it as long as I can talk and work.”
Remnick, David. Lenin’s Tomb. New York: Random House, c1993, p. 149

Am I [Gorbachev] supposed to turn my back on my grandfather, who was committed to the socialist idea?…. And I cannot go against my father, who defended Kursk, forded the Dnieper River knee deep in blood, and was wounded in Czechoslovakia. When cleansing myself of Stalinism and all other filth, should I renounce my grandfather and my father in all they did?”
Remnick, David. Lenin’s Tomb. New York: Random House, c1993, p. 150

[Yuliya who played the Snowgirl in a play with Gorbachev said], “The truth is, he was a very good actor. There was a time when he even talked with me, and his friends…about trying for a theatrical Institute.
Remnick, David. Lenin’s Tomb. New York: Random House, c1993, p. 156

Gorbachev's first meaningful "rhetoric of change" in the thrust of Soviet foreign policy occurred during the 27th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, which took place Feb. 25-March 6, 1986…. March 6, 1986, then, should be marked as the beginning of the end of the Cold War.
Gates, Robert. From the Shadows. New York , New York : Simon & Schuster, c1996, p. 380

Gorbachev resumed the campaign against Stalin and all his works and a flood of documentary data was released.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge , Mass. : Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 6

Gorbachev encouraged the intelligentsia to convince society that total repudiation of the Stalinist legacy was vital for the regeneration of Soviet society.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge , Mass. : Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 596

Gorbachev went on to castigate Stalin as one of history's greatest criminals.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge , Mass. : Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 596

CORRUPTION TOOK OVER THE PARTY ONLY AFTER THE DEMISE OF STALIN

It was only in the post-Stalin era, after the violent period of collectivization and industrialization was over, that the Party-mafia structures took shape. Vladimir 0leinik, a famously honest investigator in the Russian prosecutor's office, published excerpts from his diary in Literaturnaya Gazeta described the rapid growth in the 1960s of the trade mafia, a pyramid of corruption that began in the Communist Party Central Committee and the top ministers and went all the way down to butchers, bakers, and gravediggers, with everyone getting a piece. 0leinik wrote of how one Central Committee member filled his bank account by selling midlevel positions in the ministries for 50,000 rubles a spot.
Remnick, David. Lenin's Tomb. New York : Random House, c1993, p. 184

YELTSIN WAS AS ROTTEN AS GORBACHEV

Later, when he returned to power, however, Yeltsin lived no worse than Gorbachev did. He commandeered a splendid dacha, organized a regal caravan of limousines, and made a public show of his love for that proletarian game–tennis. Yeltsin's new double-breasted suits and silk ties were also, one supposed, not available for rubles.
Remnick, David. Lenin's Tomb. New York : Random House, c1993, p. 195

And as for Sobchak [Yeltsin's mayor of Leningrad], Nevzorov [Host of 600 Seconds an immensely popular program on Leningrad television much like 60 Minutes] said, "His sole policy is survival at any cost. If the Germans attacked Leningrad again, he'd start learning German just to stay in power."
Remnick, David. Lenin's Tomb. New York : Random House, c1993, p. 394

Sokolov [One of Yeltsin's aides] told Michael Dobbs of the Washington Post, "When we were forming the new structures, we had to hire people from the old structures. Our supporters–the people who came to rallies and street demonstrations– didn't know anything about how to run a country."
Remnick, David. Lenin's Tomb. New York : Random House, c1993, p. 505

WHEN GORBACHEV & YELTSIN TOOK OVER THE SOVIET PEOPLE FELT TRAPPED & OPPRESSED

The trap seemed inescapable, as inescapable as the system itself. For all the excitement in the big cities over glasnost and the new parliament, the great majority of the people in the Soviet Union felt trapped, cogs in a system that not only oppressed them, but also failed to provide a decent, minimal standard of living.
Remnick, David. Lenin's Tomb. New York : Random House, c1993, p. 215

GORBACHEV WAS A ROTTEN BOURGEOIS AGENT

Yeltsin's memoir, Against the Grain, became an underground best-seller precisely because it hacked away at the Mystery. He revealed what the mighty talked about in private, their petty greed, their weakness. He described for all Gorbachev's taste for luxury, his marble bathrooms and swimming pools.
Remnick, David. Lenin's Tomb. New York : Random House, c1993, p. 443

Gorbachev was resting in splendor. When he came to power in 1985, he built himself a magnificent place to rest, a compound in the Crimean town of Foros that cost the Soviet government and estimated $20,000,000. He and his family lived in the main house, a three-story structure with a central hall done up in marble and gilt. It was the sort of opulence you see sometimes when a sheik moves into Beverly Hills . There was a hotel for the staff and security guards, a guest house for 30 people, fruit trees, an olive grove, an indoor swimming pool, a movie theater, an elaborate security system, and an escalator to the Black Sea .
Remnick, David. Lenin's Tomb. New York : Random House, c1993, p. 453

In the spring of 1992, Gorbachev toured the United States in the Forbes corporate jet, The Capitalist Tool. He saw nothing odd or ironic in this.
Remnick, David. Lenin's Tomb. New York : Random House, c1993, p. 501

The CIA had been enthusiastic about Gorbachev since he emerged as Andropov's protege early in 1983. We knew a lot about him…. Years later, some of his rightist [read: Marxist] opponents would allege that he and his buddy Yakovlev had been CIA agents. They weren't, and it's a good thing. We could not possibly have guided him to engineer so successfully the destruction of the Soviet empire.
Gates, Robert. From the Shadows. New York , New York : Simon & Schuster, c1996, p. 327

GORBACHEV WAS ALLIED WITH TRAITORS EARLY ON

Mlynar, a gray-haired intellectual living in Vienna when I saw him in March 1989, was a particularly thoughtful observer of Gorbachev during their university years. Mlynar, who was Czech, had made it to Moscow as one of a small group of promising young East European Communists. He lived across the hall from Gorbachev. Taking a considerable risk at a time of Stalinist Cold War paranoia about spies and outside influences of any kind, Gorbachev formed a close friendship with Mlynar. They were often in the same classes and small study groups, and they spent hours talking together, comparing experiences. Mlynar, who would eventually become one of the leaders of the Prague spring of 1968, was struck by Gorbachev's intellectual curiosity and openness.
Smith, Hedrick. The New Russians (Pt. 1). New York: Random House, 1990. p. 46

KHRUSHCHEV AND GORBACHEV JOIN HANDS TO STAB STALIN BY REMOVING HIS BODY

Khrushchev, still feeling threatened by the Stalinist wing of the Party, played to Gorbachev and his generation as the hope of the future. In a highly symbolic gesture, the delegates–Gorbachev included–joined Khrushchev in a new act of de-Stalinization. They voted to remove Stalin's body from its honored place beside Lenin's in the mausoleum on Red Square.
Smith, Hedrick. The New Russians (Pt. 1). New York: Random House, 1990. p. 59

GRISHIN ALMOST CHOSEN OVER GORBACHEV

But as the Politburo met through the night of March 10, 1985, Gorbachev's prospects were touch and go. He had exposed his own beliefs more and more, dropping the double life he had carried on within the Party for so many years. Now, on the threshold of power, he faced the final obstacle. He was almost blocked by the aging, conservative Moscow Party leader Victor Grishin, whom Chernenko had tried to anoint before his death.
Smith, Hedrick. The New Russians (Pt. 1). New York: Random House, 1990. p. 76

GORBACHEV GOT ELECTED BY DEVIOUS MEANS

Ligachev, then a strong supporter of Gorbachev, has reported that the Politburo was closely divided on the critical choice, and passed "very anxious hours" that could have come out with very different people on top. I have been told by well-connected Party officials that Gorbachev's circle anticipated the close division as they watched Chernenko sink into a coma in the final days of his life and that Chernenko's vital life-support systems were pulled at a time when three Politburo conservatives were far from Moscow and unable to vote on the new leader. Shcherbitsky, the Ukrainian Party leader, was in San Francisco; Vorotnikov, future head of the Russian republic, was in Yugoslavia; and Kunyayev, the Kazakh Party leader, was in his capital of Alma-Ata, several hours away from Moscow by plane. Whether or not it is true that Chernenko's life support was removed at a politically propitious time, the fact that Shcherbitsky, Kunyayev, and Vorotnikov did not reach Moscow until March 11–after the Politburo had made its selection–unquestionably helped Gorbachev. By virtually all reckonings, at least two of them, if not all three, would have voted against him. Shatrov, the playwright, has reported that the eight Politburo members voting that fateful night were evenly split until the deadlock was broken by threats from KGB chief Victor Chebrikov to

expose corruption in Grishin's family. At the Central Committee meeting held to confirm the Politburo vote, the scales were tipped by former Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko's stunning endorsement of Gorbachev as a skilled leader of the Politburo, nearly brilliant in foreign policy. Significantly, Gromyko did not review Gorbachev's record in agriculture, which was far from brilliant; in fact, Gorbachev had not been a good economic manager. But Gromyko praised his political finesse and hailed Gorbachev as a tough partisan, despite his nice smile–" a man with iron teeth."
Smith, Hedrick. The New Russians (Pt. 1). New York: Random House, 1990. p. 77

GORBACHEV DID NOT KNOW HOW TO RUN THE SU

But it was apparent from the beginning that Gorbachev didn't know what he was doing in economic matters or in dealing with the nationalities, and he never would. In addressing these realities, the CIA accurately described current developments and correctly forecast his failures.
Gates, Robert. From the Shadows. New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, c1996, p. 345

On July 13, 1990, I sent President Bush a memorandum urging a change in the U.S. approach. I said that, at home, Gorbachev "is increasingly viewed unfavorably by the public at large–as indecisive, a "chatterbox," a leader who offers no way out of the present sorry state to which he has brought the USSR…. His effort to meld state socialism and "regulated" markets—and the incoherent mishmash of reform measures all have produced economic catastrophe. And, there is no indication that, in fact, he has the faintest idea of a way out."
Gates, Robert. From the Shadows. New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, c1996, p. 495

GORBACHEV BEGINS THE UNDERMINING OF THE SU AND SOCIALISM

At home, Gorbachev would begin seriously in 1986 and 1987 to confront the three challenges–economic, political, and ethnic, that he would face throughout his time in power. In all three, unknowingly and inadvertently, he would take actions that hastened the destruction of the Soviet Union.
Gates, Robert. From the Shadows. New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, c1996, p. 382

But what even the optimists in the West did not fully grasp at the end of 1987 was that, unintentionally and inadvertently, Gorbachev's "reforms" were sowing the seeds of destruction of the Soviet Union.
Gates, Robert. From the Shadows. New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, c1996, p. 388

And so, as Gorbachev in 1986 and 1887 began to dismantle the house that Stalin built, he unconsciously accelerated the demise of the entire system.
Gates, Robert. From the Shadows. New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, c1996, p. 389

Gorbachev would now use his authority as General Secretary of the Communist Party to dramatically weaken its role and power in governing the Soviet Union–to take it out of day-to-day management of the country altogether. If he could not change the party, he would hobble it and then leave it behind.
Gates, Robert. From the Shadows. New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, c1996, p. 438

As Henry Kissinger would observe about Gorbachev's course during an Agency briefing in the fall of 1989, "If you were setting out to destroy the Soviet Union, would you do it any differently?"
Gates, Robert. From the Shadows. New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, c1996, p. 448

However severe the hardship of the peoples of the former Soviet Union today, they owe Gorbachev a great debt, for he destroyed the Soviet state….
Gates, Robert. From the Shadows. New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, c1996, p. 555

KRHUSHCHEV HATED STALIN AND LIED ABOUT HIM

It is apparent from the speech at the Twentieth Congress as well as from later speeches that the young Khrushchev's passionate devotion to Stalin had long since given way to carefully concealed emotions of hostility and fear. Stalin repeatedly mocked the simple-minded "Nikita," frequently in a humiliating and insulting manner. "Nikita, dance for us!" demanded Stalin during one of his usual soirees when the news came that Kiev had been taken. Khrushchev described how Stalin would sometimes summon him to the southern dacha near Sukhumi, or to some other place, make him wait in the reception room for several hours, and then, casually walking past him, would ask in a surly tone: "What are you doing here? Go back." Evidently this long-suppressed hatred of Stalin erupted at the first opportunity, when Khrushchev found himself at the summit of power.
Medvedev, Roy. On Stalin and Stalinism. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 166

… for Khrushchev–personal bitterness and indignation were certainly a part of the motivation for his speech at the 20th Congress.
Medvedev, Roy. On Stalin and Stalinism. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 168

NO RECORDS KEPT OF PRESIDIUM MEETINGS IN 1953

But I saw no way whatsoever of checking the stories against actual events. No record of proceedings at meetings of the Bureau of the Presidium were kept at that time [in 1953].
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 563

THE FINAL SELLOUT OCCURRED IN 1986 WHEN GORBACHEV INVITED SAKHAROV

By the end of 1986, the General Secretary telephoned the exiled academician Sakharov, offering him full freedom. In the context of Soviet reality, this was a clarion call for an end to the repression of dissidents and a harbinger of the coming campaign for democratization (not democracy) in the Soviet Union. And the main victim of his campaign was to be Stalin.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. xii

KHRUSHCHEV AND BREZHNEV DID NOT KNOW MARXIST IDEOLOGY

Let us be fair: neither Khrushchev nor Brezhnev ever learned enough Marxism to be able to write it.

Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 463

KHRUSHCHEV WAS A LIAR

[Footnote]:… Mandelstam, who had it [Stalin's alleged belief that an actor was a disguised traitor] from Ehrenburg, who in turn claims to have gotten it from Khrushchev. The last two, it is fair to add, were not above telling fibs.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 673

ONLY INCOMPETENT FIGURES CAME TO POWER IN THE SU AFTER STALIN

After Stalin, increasingly incompetent figures came to power in the Soviet Union, sometimes entirely by chance. Although the economic and military strength of the USSR continued to grow, it was largely inertia that preserved political unity, based on the strength of the early foundations. Not a single ruler of the USSR after Stalin's death contributed anything of substance to these foundations. [RIGHT ON]
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 8

Without Stalin and his rule, the USSR would have remained a brittle state with a fading grip on its society.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 601

"All that we see today, all of this mess, has nothing to do with the revolution," declared Volodya. "The crux of the matter is that we have abandoned those initial principles on which the revolution was based. And it was Khrushchev who started this abandonment. Brezhnev continued the process, and it was put to an end by Gorbachev. Now we are reaping the mess of it."
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 287

NO ONE WAS QUALIFIED TO TAKE OVER FROM STALIN

No Party congresses were held in the immediate post-war years, and plenums of the Central Committee took place only rarely. All routine business was mainly dealt with by the government. Therefore it was the prospective head of government rather than Party leader who was regarded to be the potential successor. There were virtually no appropriate candidates for the Party leadership. The position demanded a person who was educated, well-versed in Marxism and ideologically adept–it could not be someone who was merely an experienced apparatchik, and there was no such person to be found among Stalin's Politburo colleagues.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 58

KHRUSHCHEV WAS AN IGNORANT COUNTRY HICK

Khrushchev himself hardly ever wrote letters, articles, or reports. After he dictated a draft to a stenographer, numerous aides would then edit the text. Khrushchev's Russian was that of an uneducated man. He came from a poor peasant family and only went to a village school for about two years. Although he could read, he was unable to write grammatically, which explains why no handwritten documents were found after his death in 1971.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 94

Stalin regarded this dynamic cannonball of a man as a semi-literate peasant. "Khrushchev's as ignorant as the Negus of Ethiopia," he told Malenkov.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 600

MOLOTOV WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO SINCERELY WEPT AT STALIN'S FUNERAL

Molotov, with his Jewish wife, was no longer regarded as a danger by the pretenders. In any case, he was not possessed by the same thirst for power as the others. He was the only one of them who sincerely wept for Stalin when he died. He took his setbacks calmly and always had the air of not worrying about them.
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 188

Malenkov, my father, and Molotov delivered their funeral orations standing on the mausoleum. I listened attentively. I detected no emotion in my father's address. Molotov alone visibly felt sincere sorrow.
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 249

STALIN MIGHT HAVE BEEN POISONED BECAUSE HIS STOMACH WAS BLEEDING

On the 5th of March, Stalin suddenly paled and his breathing became shallower with longer intervals. The pulse was fast and faint. He started to wiggle his head. There were spasms in his left arm and leg. At midday, Stalin vomited blood. The latest research has uncovered a first draft of the doctors' medical notes, which reveal that his stomach was hemorrhaging, a detail deleted from the final report. Perhaps it was cut because it might suggest poisoning.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 646

December 21 was the 126th birthday of Soviet leader Joseph Stalin. Historian and publicist Nikolay Dobryukha says the Kremlin archives contain documented evidence proving that Stalin was poisoned.

The discovered documents absolutely disprove all affirmations saying that Stalin died of cerebral hemorrhage caused by his poor health. These documents are the records of Stalin's medical examination within the period of over 30 years. These documents also demonstrate that Stalin was not at all apprehensive of medical examinations and was not afraid of receiving treatment of doctors as it was rumored. It was also said that for fear to visit doctors Stalin often resorted to self-medication. In fact, highly-qualified doctors were

called for in case of Stalin's slightest indisposition and had close medical examination of the high-ranking client all day round.

Records made in September 1947 state that Joseph Stalin had initial stage hypertension, also chronic articular rheumatism and overfatigue. Doctor Kirillov made a record of Stalin's blood pressure 145 per 85 which was excellent for his age of 67 at that time.

At the age of 70, Stalin's blood pressure made up 140 per 80 and the pulse made up 74 beats per minute before taking bath. After the bath, blood pressure dropped to 138 per 75 and the pulse made up 68 per minute. The Soviet leader did not complain of bad sleep, had regular bowel movements and was fine in general. The medical records show Stalin had the blood pressure of 140 per 80 and the pulse 70 beats per minute at the age of 72. At that, the latter measuring was made when Stalin had flu and fever. It is unlikely that younger and healthier people can register similar showing. And this is astonishing that no other medical record mentions of the initial stage hypertension of Stalin.

It was not true when some people stated that "Stalin was seriously ill, especially after the dramatic stress he endured during WWII". These talks appeared as soon as bulletins about Stalin's health were published for the first time on March 4, 1953. These official bulletins stated that on the night of March 2 Joseph Stalin had cerebral hemorrhage caused by his hypertension and atherosclerosis.

The false statements were encouraged by Lavrentiy Beria and his protege's Malenkov and Khrushchev as soon as they became leaders of the country.

The discovered documents reveal that the Soviet leader got poisoned within February 28 March 1, 1953, between the Saturday night and Monday, the period when majority of doctors cannot be reached for because of their day off. That was done on purpose to give the poison enough time to take effect.

But it is not also ruled out that conspirators first immediately poisoned Stalin and only after that his double fell victim of the poison as well. In fact, Beria did not expect the poisoning would be so protracted and that is why he felt incredibly nervous. On March 4, newspapers controlled by Beria reported that "Stalin had cerebral hemorrhage staying in his Moscow apartment on the night of March 2" which was not true because Stalin died at the out-of-town residence. Why did Beria need to report the leader died in his Moscow apartment? Probably he spread misinformation to use Stalin's look-alike: maybe Stalin died immediately after poisoning staying in the out-of-town residence and his double "fell ill" in an instant in the Kremlin and then on the night of March 2 was moved to the out-of-town residence to substitute the already dead Lord. In a word, Beria's plan turned out to be not quite smooth. To be on the safe side, when it was publicly announced Stalin was dead Beria still arrested the head of a laboratory making poisons for secret killings.

Many people knew that Beria was going to wage war against Stalin. His son Sergo said that father highly likely schemed something against Stalin with the help of his supporters in law enforcement structures and with his own intelligence structure that was not controlled by any of the governmental structures.

Stalin's bodyguards say that the leader got poisoned immediately after he drank mineral water. Indeed, Stalin was found dead lying near a table on which a bottle with mineral water and a glass stood. The poison took effect instantaneously. Some sources state that Stalin fell down dead and others insist he fell down unconscious.

Study of the archives revealed that on November 8, 1953 the Kremlin sanitary department wanted to hand "medicaments and three empty mineral water battles" over to the Stalin Museum. But for some reason, the department handed just two empty bottles to the Museum on November 9. What is the secret of the third lost bottle?

The journal kept by doctors treating Stalin brings to nothing the memoirs and researches of Stalin's last illness and death. As seen from the records in the journal the doctors obviously understood that Stalin was poisoned. This is proved by prescriptions they made: ice application to the head; sweet tea with lemon; catharsis with sulfur-acid magnesia and so on.

When doctors examined Stalin at 7 a.m. March 2 they found the patient lying on his back on a sofa with the head turned to the left and the eyes closed. The hyperemia of face was moderate; the breathing was not upset. The pulse made up 78 beats per minute, the heart sounds were rather muffled. The blood pressure made up 190 per 110. The stomach was soft and the liver protruded 3-4 cm from under the rib edge. Stalin was unconscious; his condition was grave.

Doctor Lukomsky discovered that Stalin's right arm and leg were paralyzed. From time to time his left leg and arm moved a little. The medical records suggest that doctors did their best to treat the leader for poisoning and for its consequences, blood supply disturbance and insult, at the same time. But none of them pronounced that was poisoning.

It was on March 3 when Stalin's doctors registered that condition of the patient grew even worse and heart activity got weaker. Next day, March 4, the condition of the patient grew extremely grave because of frequent respiratory standstills. Suddenly, the skin on the face, legs and arms became blue which is quite typical of poisoning with some poisons. When a human organism is poisoned with aniline, nitrobenzene and others hemoglobin turns into methemoglobin having dark color. It is not ruled out that Stalin was poisoned with a mixture of different poisons.

On the night of March 5, doctors got results of Stalin's blood and urine tests which indicated the patient suffered from poisoning. But the doctors were afraid to tell Beria about poisoning as they feared he would blame any of them for the poisoning. Stalin's liver was still enlarged, another factor typical of poisoning.

Early in the morning March 5, Stalin had bloody vomit as a result of which the pulse declined and the blood pressure dropped. The doctors were at a loss how to explain what was happening to the patient. All day long Stalin had bloody vomit and was in collapse several times.

In the evening on March 5, Stalin was wet through with perspiration, the pulse was thready and cyanosis intensified. The doctors gave the patient carbogene several times but the

condition did not improve. At 9:40 p.m. Stalin had artificial ventilation but in vain. His death was registered at 9:50 p.m.

Many of documented evidence left by doctors, including premortal examination of Stalin, disagree with recollections of other eyewitnesses. For instance, Stalin's daughter Svetlana said she could not recognize the father as his illness changed him beyond recognition. Was it possible that Beria's people substituted Stalin with his double and even his relatives could not recognize him?

One of the documents pertaining to Stalin's death discovered in the Kremlin archives seems to be particularly mysterious. The document says that nurse Moiseyeva gave Stalin an injection of calcium gluconate at 8:45 p.m. Never before that over the whole period of illness was Stalin given such an injection. At 9:48 p.m., the nurse affixed her signature to a document revealing she gave Stalin an injection of 20-percent camphor oil. Finally, the woman made an injection of adrenalin to Stalin for the first time over the whole course of treatment and made an official record of the fact. Soon after that the Soviet leader died. This coincidence probable gave rise to rumors that a Jewish woman trained by Beria dispatched Stalin to the next world by giving him a special injection.

When contemporary doctors studied medical records of Stalin's illness and last hours of life they stated adrenaline injections were forbidden for patients registering the same symptoms that Stalin had.

But it is a fact that soon after Stalin's brothers-in-arms distributed authority at a special plenary session in the Kremlin, they came to the out-of-town residence where Stalin was still staying alive and gave him the fatal injection.
Dobryukha, Nikolay [Historian and publicist]. "Secret Documents Reveal Stalin Was Poisoned," Pravda, December 29, 2005.

Neither [Khrushchev and Svetlana] wishes to argue that Stalin was murdered, yet the impact of their memoirs, along with the falsity of the official bulletin, suggests that the suspicion is reasonable.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 304

Such speculation cannot settle the matter, which probably never can be settled. If murder it was, the prime suspect as master plotter is Beria, who had good motive not to reveal his secret to anyone but a few executioners, who probably became 'suicides' soon after the event.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 307

EVIDENCE AS TO HOW STALIN DIED

The veracity of Khrushchev's account is further undermined by the fact that a standing order existed in the Kremlin Guard that if any Kremlin official showed signs of illness, doctors were to be called immediately by the guards themselves. There was no need to go through Malenkov, Beria, or Khrushchev to obtain medical assistance for Stalin. Either the guards had been instructed to deviate from the standing order by members of the Politburo, or their

call for help was countermanded. In either case, complicity at the highest level of Soviet government appears to have ensured that Stalin would die.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 317

The stated time of the doctors' arrival at Stalin's bedside, in "The History of the Illness of Stalin," provides the first documentary confirmation that while Rybin's account may be inaccurate, Khrushchev's account is false.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 319

Khrushchev's account is made more questionable by the fact that the doctors did not find a high alcohol level in any of their numerous analyses made of Stalin's urine or blood. Nothing supports Khrushchev's statement that Stalin was "pretty drunk" by the time their dinner broke up. Nothing confirms Khrushchev's story that before he died, Stalin pointed to a picture of a "little girl" feeding a lamb from a horn in order to show appreciation to his colleagues who were caring for him. "Then he began to shake hands with us one by one. I gave him my hand, and he shook it with his left hand because his right wouldn't move. By these handshakes he conveyed his feelings." Touching but not true.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 320

The fact that no two accounts of his [Stalin] death correspond and that much of the final medical report was never disclosed may be the result of faulty memories and the inveterate conspiratorial nature of the Soviet government.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 322

FAILURE OF POLITBURO TO ACT IMPLIES THEY MIGHT HAVE LET STALIN DIE

For whatever reason, it was hours before doctors were summoned to care for Stalin. The precise time of their advance is in dispute. In any case it is clear that presidium members were not quick to arrange for such assistance. This gave rise to the suspicion that they deliberately let Stalin's condition deteriorate.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 584

Although an autopsy was carried out, the report has never been found. This would be more than enough to induce suspicions. Furthermore, the 10 doctors to cared for him at the end composed a history of his illness. Yet it was not completed until July (and has only recently become available). Its plausible conclusion was that Stalin died of natural causes. But the delay in composition was odd, as was the loss of the autopsy document: perhaps something important was being covered up.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 587

AFTER STALIN DIED HIS WRITINGS WERE EITHER DESTROYED OR GIVEN TO LIBRARIES

Sanctioned by the Party Central Committee on 5 Mar 1953, they [his successors] commandeered his book collection and distributed most of it anonymously to various public libraries. Only a few hundred books were left with the Institute of Marxism-Leninism. Many of his letters and telegrams were incinerated and most drafts of his articles and books disappeared. The last edition of his collected works was suspended incomplete.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 592

KHRUSHCHEV UNDERMINED THE POLITBURO AND USURPED POWER

It is ironical in view of the presentation of Khrushchev internationally as a votary of 'democracy' and 'collective leadership' that on issue after issue he flouted the norms of democratic party functioning. It was this which persuaded the majority of the party Presidium to seek the removal of Khrushchev from the party leadership in June 1957. This elucidates the hitherto puzzling fact that Khrushchev incurred the ire of both the left-wing of the leadership of the party Presidium, Molotov and Kaganovich, who were holding back the process of liberalization, as well as the prominent rightists such as Malenkov who, in the company of Beria and Khrushchev, had embarked on 'the thaw' immediately after the death of Stalin….
The Presidium meeting discussed the question of Khrushchev under the chairmanship of Bulganin for four days. Unbeknown to the Presidium, the highest organ of the CPSU, Khrushchev surreptitiously called members of the party Central Committee to Moscow…. It is apparent that a virtual coup d'Etat involving the military and state security organs had taken place against the Presidium of the CPSU.

Comrade Mao publicly praised and supported Khrushchev; in fact, he approved the condemnation of the "anti-party group of Molotov", etc., and advocated complete unity with the Khrushchev group.

The communiquE issued after the Plenum of the Central committee of the PLA of Fourth of July, 1957, stated that, after hearing the report of Hoxha on the resolution of the Central Committee CPSU of June 29, 1957 on the anti-party group, the plenum "unanimously denounced the anti-party and factional activity of this group."

It was the speech of Hoxha at the 1960 meeting of the Communist parties in Moscow, which confronted Soviet revisionism directly for the first time.

Kaganovich says:

The functioning of the party should have improved after the 20th Congress, but unfortunately this did not happen….
For some time now Khrushchev had become quite active on the issues of foreign policy. This was very good. I had myself advised him–since Lenin's time not even a single question on foreign policy was decided without the Politburo, and Stalin would always submit all the issues regarding foreign policy to the Politburo, and would deal with them himself. Therefore he [Khrushchev], as the First Secretary of the Central Committee had to follow the rule. In the beginning Khrushchev also adhered to this arrangement, but later started to act willfully.

Demonstrating that he had ‘mastered the techniques,’ as an unsurpassed ‘expert’ of diplomacy, Khrushchev began to insert his modifications in almost all the work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or simply reject it, especially after Molotov was removed from the post of the Minister for Foreign Affairs.
There was one question on which the Presidium did not support Molotov. It was the question regarding Yugoslavia. Molotov was holding back reestablishment of relations with Yugoslavia, including along government lines. The Presidium of the CC took the decision to reestablish state relations with existing differences on Party and ideological lines. Khrushchev, violating the directives of the CC, actually went much further than the Party line. In general Khrushchev went ‘berserk’ and started to give interviews to foreigners without any preliminary understanding with the Presidium, i.e., in violation of the established arrangement. Suddenly, the Presidium comes to know that Khrushchev has spoken on television on foreign affairs without having mentioned anything to anyone prior to it.. This was a serious violation of all fundamental norms of supervision of foreign affairs by the Party. The Politburo had never given such a privilege to speak in public without its prior scrutiny even to highly erudite diplomats, and here we knew the incompetence, the ‘elegance’ of his art of oratory, and we were concerned that he may swerve astray.

The majority of the members of the Presidium of the CC, who for some time showed tolerance in the name of the unity of the Party and the CC, in the end understood, that it is impossible to further tolerate such political mistakes in this kind of functioning of their leadership, that Khrushchev is incompetent and is hardly suitable for the role of the First Secretary of the CC, that sooner or later the party and the CC would be forced to dismiss him. Therefore, the sooner, the better.

And then in one of the meetings of the Presidium in the second half of June 1957 the dissatisfaction of the members of the Presidium of the CC exploded into the open.

And then Khrushchev stood up and started chastising one member of the Presidium after another. He got so carried away that even Mikoyan, who was adept at ‘fast manoeuvring’, had to pacify Khrushchev. At this point of time the members of the Presidium stood up and declared that it is impossible to work in this way – and let us first discuss Khrushchev’s behaviour.
A proposal was made that the chairmanship of this meeting be given to Bulganin. It was accepted by the majority in the Presidium, and certainly, without any prior conspiracy.
After Bulganin took up the place of the chairman, Malenkov was the first to address the house. ‘You know comrades’, Malenkov said, ‘that we supported Khrushchev. I and comrade Bulganin proposed to elect Khrushchev as the First Secretary of the CC. But now I can see that I made a mistake. He has shown his inability to head the CC. He is committing mistake after mistake in his work, he has become arrogant, his attitude towards the members of the CC has become intolerable, especially after the XX Congress. He is displacing the state apparatus and directly issues orders superseding the Council of Ministers. This is not Party supervision over the Soviet organs. We should take a decision to relieve Khrushchev from his responsibility as the First Secretary of the CC’.
This is a very short description of the speech by Malenkov as of other comrades too.
It was Comrade Voroshilov who spoke after Malenkov. He said that he willingly voted for electing Khrushchev as the First Secretary of the CC and also extended his full support in the course of daily work, but he started to make mistakes. ‘I have come to the conclusion

that it is necessary to relieve Khrushchev of the responsibilities of the First Secretary of the CC. Comrades, it has become impossible to work with him'. He described how and when Khrushchev had shouted at him, acted brashly and even rudely. 'We cannot anymore tolerate all this. Let us decide' – he concluded.

Kaganovich spoke after Voroshilov. 'The issue under consideration is difficult and painful. I wasn't among those who proposed the name of Khrushchev for the First Secretary of the CC, because I know him for a long time with all his positive and negative characteristics. But I voted for the proposal, as I considered that responsibility obliges the leader to grow in the process of work. I knew Khrushchev as a modest person and a tenacious learner, who grew and came to be an able leader at the Republican, provincial and the Union level as a secretary of the CC in the collective Secretariat of the CC.

'After his election as the First Secretary he demonstrated for some time his positive characteristics, and then his negative characteristics began to surface more and more – both in the resolution of party tasks and in relation to people. I, as the other comrades too, spoke about his good work and pointed out his mistakes on the issues of planning of the national economy where Khrushchev's subjective and voluntarist approach was most prominent, as well as on issues of party and state leadership and supervision. Therefore, I support the proposal to relieve comrade Khrushchev of the responsibilities of the First Secretary of the CC. This, certainly, does not mean that he would not be a part of the leadership of the party. I think that Khrushchev would take his lesson and raise the level of his activities to a new height.'

But there is another side to the behaviour of Khrushchev which must be criticised. Khrushchev, as it is now established was forging a fraction of his own in the Secretariat of the CC. He was systematically discrediting the Presidium and its members, criticised them not only in the Presidium itself which is absolutely unacceptable and unnecessary but also in the Secretariat of the CC, directing his attacks against the Presidium which was the highest organ of the Party between the Plenums of the CC. These activities of Khrushchev actually harm the unity, for the sake of which the Presidium had until now tolerated the antics of Khrushchev. This needs to be reported at the Plenum of the CC which needs to be convened. I would add one mere important, according to me, fact. At one of the meetings of the Presidium Khrushchev said 'The case of Zinoviev, Kamenev and other Trotskyites needs to be dealt with'. At which I remarked 'let anyone else's cow moo, but yours must be silent.' Khrushchev exploded and began to shout 'What are you hinting at. I am fed up of all this. At that time in the Presidium I did not clarify what I was hinting at, but I would explain now. Khrushchev was a Trotskyite during 1923-1924. In 1925 he reviewed his views and confessed his sins. In the year 1925 itself I got acquainted with him in Donbass and I saw in him a genuine Leninist – a follower of the line of the CC of the CPSU(b). His role first as the secretary of the CC of the Ukraine and then as the secretary of the CC of the CPSU in charge of the cadres played a prominent role in furthering his political career. I valued him as a capable worker of the party who had come out of the ranks of the workers. I did so because I thought that the party and the CC does not prevent people, who have made mistakes in the past but have overcome them, to grow.

I informed Stalin about this, when at the Moscow conference Khrushchev was elected to the post of the secretary. Along with Khrushchev I met Stalin, and he (Stalin – ed.) suggested that Khrushchev speak about himself at the conference, and Kaganovich would confirm that the CC knows about it and trusts Khrushchev. This is how it happened. Certainly, the mistakes of the past are forgiven and not cited incessantly.

The remarks made to Khrushchev at that time implied that he was a recidivist, and we were reminding him of old sins so that such relapses were not repeated.
Molotov spoke after Kaganovich. ‘However hard Khrushchev tried to provoke me’, Molotov said, ‘I did not give in to any aggravation of our relationship. But it appears that it is not possible to tolerate it any more. Khrushchev has not only aggravated personal relations but also the relations within the Presidium as a whole in decision-making on crucial state and party matters.’ Comrade Molotov talked in detail on the issue of reorganisation of management, considering it to be incorrect, and also talked about the erroneous view that he was against the (development of – ed.) the virgin lands. It was incorrect. What is true is that he objected to an unrestrained increase immediately to 20-30 million hectares, that it was better to concentrate in the beginning on 10-20 million, make appropriate arrangements in order to develop properly and obtain high returns. Comrade Molotov also refuted the allegations that he was putting obstacles in the policy of peace, and that, evidently, this fallacy was needed for justifying the necessary steps in the sphere of foreign policy. His stand on Yugoslavia was related not to issues of foreign policy, but to the anti- party and anti-Soviet actions of the Yugoslavs, for which we criticised and continue to criticise them. ‘It is impossible to work with Khrushchev as the First Secretary,’ said Molotov, ‘I am for relieving Khrushchev of the responsibilities of the First Secretary of the CC.’
Bulganin spoke after Molotov. He began speaking by giving an account of the improper methods of supervision of the functioning of the state organs, including the Council of Ministers and about the unfriendly attitude towards him personally. He spoke about the mistakes in a number decisions. ‘I,’ concluded Bulganin, ‘fully agree with the proposal to relieve Khrushchev.’
Comrades Pervukhin and Saburov also spoke. Both of them declared that earlier they had good relations with Khrushchev, as Khrushchev with them. ‘But now we see that Khrushchev has become arrogant and makes it difficult for us to work. Khrushchev should be removed.’
Comrade Mikoyan, true to his tactics of manoeuvering, said that it is a fact that there are shortcomings in the way Khrushchev works, but they can be rectified, and therefore, he considers that it is not necessary to remove Khrushchev. Khrushchev spoke after us. He refuted some of the accusations, but without being arrogant, almost, so to say, in embarrassment. Some of the complaints he accepted to be true and, indeed, that there was improper behaviour towards the colleagues on his part, there were incorrect decisions made, but I promise the Presidium that I will rectify these mistakes.
The secretaries of the CC – Brezhnev, Suslov, Furtseva and Pospelov – spoke in favour of Khrushchev. While admitting that there are shortcomings, they said that they would rectify these.
Shepilov was the only one amongst all the secretaries of the CC who spoke differently. He honestly, truthfully and convincingly described the unacceptable atmosphere of fault-finding with and discrediting the Presidium that has been generated by Khrushchev in the Secretariat of the CC. Khrushchev would especially denigrate Voroshilov ‘as a weary and conservatively outdated’ leader. (At the same time Khrushchev hypocritically showed superficial respect and devotion for Voroshilov.) Shepilov spoke about a range of wrong decisions of the Secretariat that were taken without the knowledge of the Presidium of the CC. Practically Khrushchev had converted the Secretariat of the CC into an organ functioning independently of the Presidium of the CC.
The Presidium met for four days. Bulganin conducted the meetings in the most democratic way, he did not put any limits on the time required by the speakers allowing even the secretaries of the CC to speak a second time.

In the meanwhile the Khrushchevite Secretariat, secretly without the knowledge of the presidium summoned the members of the CC to Moscow, having sent dozens of airplanes through the GPU and the Ministry of Defence which fetched the members to Moscow. And this was done without any decision of the Presidium and even without waiting for the Presidium to come to any decision on the issue under discussion. This was an unquestionable act of factionalism, clever and in the Trotskyite traditions.

The majority of the Presidium did not consist of simpletons or bad organisers. If they had taken to the path of factional struggle, something which they were accused of later, they could have got organized or to put it simply, removed Khrushchev. But we were criticising Khrushchev as a party member, and strictly observed all the party norms with the aims of maintaining party unity.

But Khrushchev acted as a factionalist. Towards the end of the meeting of the Presidium of the CC a delegation with Konev at its head, on behalf of those assembled in the Sverdlov Hall, came and announced that the members of the Plenum of the CC are asking the Presidium to report to the Plenum about the issue being discussed in the Presidium. Some of the members of the Presidium reacted angrily to this act of calling the members of the CC to Moscow without the permission of the Presidium of the CC, an act of usurpation on the part of the Secretariat of the CC and, obviously, Khrushchev himself.

Comrade Saburov who had earlier worshipped Khrushchev remarked angrily: ‘I considered you Comrade Khrushchev, to be an honest person. Now I see that I was mistaken. You are a very dishonest person, who, using factionalist means, behind the back of the Presidium, has organised this assembly in the Sverdlov Hall’.

After a short break the Presidium of the CC decided to discontinue the meeting of the Presidium and to go and meet the members of the CC in the hall, despite the fact that they had blatantly violated the party norms, as a demonstration of their (Presidium’s – ed.) respect for the members of the CC who are waiting for them in the Sverdlov Hall.

Throwing away the mask of embarrassment, an emboldened Khrushchev accompanied by Zhukov and Serov marched into the Hall.

One may well imagine the internal psychological condition of the members of the Plenum of the CC who were brought to Moscow in such an extraordinary way. Even before the Plenum proceedings had started the members of the CC were obviously informed about the meeting of the Plenum started, instead of the report on the meeting of the Presidium of the CC, which the members of the CC were expecting, they were treated to the ‘dish’ of ‘On the anti-Party group of Malenkov, Kaganovich and Molotov’.

Instead of the issue ‘the unsatisfactory leadership of the First Secretary of the CC, Khrushchev’, one completely opposite to this and a totally imaginary one ‘On the anti-Party group of Malenkov, Kaganovich and Molotov’ was put on the agenda.

The report on the Presidium of the CC and the issue under discussion in this meeting of the Presidium was for all practical purposes not made but a great many political accusations were made against an imaginary anti-Party group of Malenkov, Kaganovich and Molotov and their accomplice Shepilov, Candidate to the Presidium of the CC.

Feeling the absurdity of the situation – declaring the entire Presidium guilty of factionalism, the Khrushchevite accusers took to the cunning falsehood of ‘the group of three’ Malenkov, Kaganovich and Molotov, naming them from amongst the seven members of the Presidium who spoke against Khrushchev, denounced him and demanded his removal (from amongst the rest of the four – Voroshilov, Bulganin, Pervukhin and Saburov – the first three were reelected to the Presidium of the CC).

In this manner, having pointed out three persons – Malenkov, Kaganovich and Molotov, an attempt was made to conceal that OUT OF NINE MEMBERS OF THE PRESIDIUM ONLY TWO; MIKOYAN AND KHRUSHCHEV HIMSELF WERE IN FAVOUR OF KEEPING KHRUSHCHEV AS THE FIRST SECRETARY and the majority comprising seven members favoured removing Khrushchev for poor implementation of the political line of the CC of the Party in practice.
Later the 'victors' invented a new argument that, in view of the arithmetical majority, this group wanted to change the composition of the leading organs of the Party and alter the policies of the Party. But, firstly, it is absurd to talk about an arithmetical majority – what other majority can there possibly be while deciding one or the other issue? It is true that the majority in the Presidium of the CC favoured removal of Khrushchev, but is it that the composition of the leading organs of the Party consists only of Khrushchev alone? Is it not true that the entire Presidium is also a leading organ of the party between successive Plenums of the CC? Therefore it is ridiculous to talk and write that the Presidium wanted to replace the leading organs of the party, that is to replace its own self.
The result is known: the proposed draft of the resolution was accepted, that was published in Pravda. 'On the anti-Party group of Malenkov G.M. Kaganovich L.M. and Molotov V.M.'
In the resolution adopted it said that 'this group by anti-party and factionalist methods wanted to achieve replacement…' Is it possible to call the majority of the Presidium a faction? There are no facts given about factionalist methods, there were none; there were no groups, no special meetings of any groups neither before nor after the official meeting of the Presidium and there was no conspiracy. Had there been any faction, we are not all that bad organisers to have landed in such a situation, so that Khrushchev and his faction could have thus fooled us – the majority of the Presidium. It was actually Khrushchev and his accomplices who in an organised manner acted as a faction, having called secretly the members of the CC, without the knowledge of the Presidium of the CC. And we were not a faction but the majority, that defended the unity of the CC. We met and discussed and proved our points and strove to come to a decision without the factional cunningness used by Khrushchev and his sly advisors.
One can say that after all Khrushchev is a shrewd person. Yes, but this is Trotskyite and anti-party shrewdness. However, realising that by identifying only three members of the Presidium and then expelling them from the CC and its Presidium and sticking on them the factionalist and anti-party label is not convincing for the Party. The new Khrushchevite leadership, even before it was elected, composed the draft of the resolution of the Plenum of the CC full of falsehoods and political allegations against the so-called anti-Party group of Malenkov, Kaganovich and Molotov.
The draft was full of accusations which are not even worth being refuted, because they are all imaginary…
Kaganovich, Lazar. Intro. By Vijay Singh. "Recollective Notes of Kaganovich," 1996.

HOXHA ATTACKS KHRUSHCHEV FOR WANTING TO COPY HITLER

"In regard to a number of special products of industry," Khrushchev said, "among other things, we must do as Hitler did. At that time Germany was alone and he produced all those things. We must study this experience and we, too, must set up joint enterprises for special products, for example, weapons."

We could not believe our ears! Could it be true that the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union wanted to learn from the experience of Hitler and even recommended it to others?! But this is what things were coming to.
Hoxha, Enver. The Artful Albanian. London: Chatto & Windus, 1986, p. 165

Private Life of Stalin

STALIN IS GOOD LEADER

When I'm met Stalin, I did not find him enigmatic. I found him the easiest person to talk to I ever met. He is far and away the best Committee Chairman of my experience. He can bring everybody's views out and combine them in the minimum of time.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 47

If I should explain Stalin to politicians, I should call him a superlatively good committee man. Is this too prosaic a term for the leader of 200 million people? I might call him instead a farseeing statesman; this also is true….
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 52

Stalin brings certain important qualities to these joint decisions. People who meet him are first of impressed by his directness and simplicity, his swift approach. Next they noticed his clearness and objectivity in handling questions. He completely lacks Hitler's emotional hysteria and Mussolini cocky self-assertion; he does not thrust himself into the picture. Gradually one becomes aware of his keen analysis, his colossal knowledge, his grip of world politics, his willingness to face facts, an especially his long view, which fits the problem in the history, judging not only its immediate factors, but its past and future too.
Strong, Anna L. The Soviets Expected It. New York, New York: The Dial press, 1941, p. 54

"I [A.L. Strong] was hardly conscious of the part played by Stalin in helping us to reach a decision. I thought of him rather as someone superlatively easy to explain things to, who got one's meaning half through a sentence, and brought it all out very quickly. When everything became clear, and not a moment sooner or later, Stalin turned to the others: 'Well?' A word from one, a phrase from another, together accomplished a sentence. Nods–it was unanimous. It seemed we had all decided, simultaneously, unanimously. That is Stalin's method and greatness. He is supreme analyst of situations, personalities, tendencies. Through his analysis he is supreme combiner of many wills. A creator of collective will–such is supposed to be every Communist, though by no means all of them measure up to this high calling. The greatness of the man is known by the range over which he can do this. "I can analyze and plan with the workers of one plant for a period of several months," said a responsible Communist to me. "Others, much wiser than I, like men on our Central Committee, can plan with wider masses for years. Stalin is in this our ablest. He sees the interrelations of our path with world events, and the order of each step, as a man sees the earth from the stratosphere. But the men of our Central Committee take his analysis not because it is Stalin's but because it is clear and convincing and documented with facts." When Stalin reports to a congress of the party, or of the farm champions, or the heads of industry, none of his statements can be ranked as new. They are statements heard already

on the lips of millions throughout the land. But he puts them together more completely than anyone else. He analyzes them, shows the beginning, the end and all the stages to that end. He shows the farm champions the long, hard path to collective farming and just where they are on that path today. He shows the heads of industry what and why are the fundamental tasks in industry at the moment. He shows the party congress the chief tasks for the Soviet Union in the next few years. All of this he shows out of their own reports and knowledge, combining and relating these to the situation in the country and the world. It is not the statements or the policies that are new but the combining of them, so that they become a collective program, unanimously and understandingly adopted. It is for this capacity that men cheer Stalin….
Men never speak in the Soviet Union of “Stalin’s policy” but always of the “party line,” which Stalin “reports” in its present aspects, but does not “make.”
Strong, Anna Louise. Dictatorship and Democracy in the Soviet Union. New York: International Pamphlets, 1934, p. 17-18

What Lenin valued in Stalin was his knowledge of details and of persons, his working power and the swiftness of his decisions, qualities which only a supreme character would appreciate in a subordinate.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam’s sons, 1942, p. 71

Everyone knows about Stalin’s own revolutionary spirit and about his other virtues which have been cited by the party over and over again. His pretensions to a very special role in our history were well founded, for he really was a man of outstanding skill and intelligence. He truly did tower over everyone around him, and despite my implacable condemnation of his methods and his abuses of power, I have always recognized and acknowledged his strengths.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970. p. 4

[HOXHA STATED On the occasion of the centenary of the birth of great Marxist-Leninist Joseph Stalin]
All this villainy emerged soon after the death, or to be more precise, after the murder of Stalin. I say after the murder of Stalin, because Mikoyan himself told me and Mehmet Shehu that they, together with Khrushchev and their associates, had decided to carry out a “pokushenie”, i.e., to make an attempt on Stalin’s life, but later, as Mikoyan told us, they gave up this plan. It is a known fact that the Khrushchevites could hardly wait for Stalin to die. The circumstances of his death are not clear.
An unsolved enigma in this direction is the question of the “white smocks”, the trial conducted against the Kremlin doctors, who, as long as Stalin was alive were accused of having attempted to kill many leaders of the Soviet Union. After Stalin’s death these doctors were rehabilitated and no more was said about this question! But why was this question hushed up?! Was the criminal activity of these doctors proved at the time of the trial, or not? The question of the doctors was hushed up, because had it been investigated later, had it been gone into thoroughly, it would have brought to light a great deal of dirty linen, many crimes and plots that the concealed revisionists, with Khrushchev and Mikoyan at the head, had been perpetrating. This could be the explanation also for the sudden deaths within a very short time, of Gottwald, Bierut, Foster, Dimitrov and some others, all from curable illnesses, about which I have written in my unpublished memoirs, “The Khrushchevites and Us”. This could prove to be the true reason for the sudden death of Stalin, too. In order to

attain their vile aims and to carry out their plans for the struggle against Marxism-Leninism and socialism, Khrushchev and his group liquidated many of the main leaders of the Comintern, one after the other, by silent and mysterious methods. Apart from others, they also attacked and discredited Rakosi, dismissed him from his post and interned him deep in the interior of the steppes of Russia, in this way. In the “secret” report delivered at their 20th Congress, Nikita Khrushchev and his associates threw mud at Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin and tried to defile him in the filthiest manner, resorting to the most cynical Trotskyite methods. After compromising some of the cadres of the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Khrushchevites exploited them thoroughly and then kicked them out and liquidated them as anti-party elements. The Khrushchevites headed by Khrushchev, who condemned the cult of Stalin in order to cover up their subsequent crimes against the Soviet Union and socialism raised the cult of Khrushchev sky-high. Those top functionaries of the party and Soviet state attributed to Stalin the brutality, cunning perfidy and baseness of character, the imprisonments and murders which they themselves practised and which were second nature to them. As long as Stalin was alive it was precisely they who sang hymns of praise to him in order to cover up their careerism, and their underhand aims and actions. In 1949 Krushchev described Stalin as the “leader and teacher of genius”, and said that “the name of Comrade Stalin is the banner of all the victories of the Soviet people, the banner of the struggle of the working people the world over”. Mikoyan described the Works of Stalin as a “new, higher historical stage of Leninism”. Kosygin said, “We owe all our victories and successes, to the great Stalin”, etc., etc. While after his death they behaved quite differently. It was the Khrushchevites who strangled the voice of the party, strangled the voice of the working class and filled the concentration camps with patriots; it was they who released the dregs of treachery from prison, the Trotskyites and all the enemies, whom time and the facts had proved and have proved again now with their struggle as dissidents to be opponents of socialism and agents in the service of foreign capitalist enemies. It is the KHRUSHCHEVites who, in conspiratorial and mysterious ways, tried and condemned not only the Soviet revolutionaries but also many persons from other countries.

Khrushchev, Mikoyan and Suslov first defended the conspirator Imre Nagy, and then condemned and executed him secretly somewhere in Rumania! Who gave them the right to act in that way with a foreign citizen? Although he was a conspirator, he should have been subject only to trial in his own country and not to any foreign law, court or punishment. Stalin never did such things.

No, Stalin never acted in that way. He conducted public trials against the traitors to the party and Soviet state. The party and the Soviet peoples were told openly of the crimes they had committed. You never find in Stalin’s actions such Mafia-like methods as you find in the actions of the Soviet revisionist chiefs. The Soviet revisionists have used and are still using such methods against one another in their struggle for power, just as in every capitalist country. Khrushchev seized power through a putsch, and Brezhnev toppled him from the throne with a putsch.

Brezhnev and company got rid of Khrushchev to protect the revisionist policy and ideology from the discredit and exposure resulting from his crazy behaviour and actions and embarrassing buffoonery. He did not in any way reject Khrushchevism, the reports and decisions of the 20th and 22nd Congresses in which Khrushchevisrn is embodied. Brezhnev showed himself to be so ungrateful to Khrushchev, whom he had previously lauded so high, that he could not even find a hole in the wall of the Kremlin to put his ashes when he died!

Stalin was not at all what the enemies of communism accused and accuse him of being. On the contrary, he was just and a man of principle. He knew how to help and combat those

who made mistakes, knew now to support, encourage and point out the special merits of those who served Marxism-Leninism loyally, as the occasion required. The question of Rokossovsky and that of Zhukov are now well known. When Rokossovsky and Zhukov made mistakes they were criticized and discharged from their posts. But they were not cast off as incorrigible. On the contrary, they were, warmly assisted and the moment it was considered that these cadres had corrected themselves, Stalin elevated them to responsible positions promoted them to marshals and at the time of the Great Patriotic War charged them with extremely important duties on the main fronts of the war against the Hitlerite invaders. Only a leader who had a clear concept of and applied Marxist-Leninist justice in evaluating the work of people, with their good points and errors, could have acted as Stalin did.
Following Stalin's death, Marshal Zhukov became a tool of Nikita Khrushchev and his group; he supported the treacherous activity of Khrushchev against the Soviet Union, the Bolshevik Party and Stalin. Eventually, Nikita Khrushchev tossed Zhukov away like a squeezed lemon. He did the same with Rokossovsky and many other main cadres. Many Soviet communists were deceived by the demagogy of the Khrushchevite revisionist group and thought that after Stalin's death the Soviet Union would become a real paradise, as the revisionist traitors started to trumpet. They declared with great pomp that in 1980 communism would be established in the Soviet Union!! But what happened? The opposite, and it could not be otherwise.
Khrushchev himself admitted to us that Stalin had said to them that they would sell out the Soviet Union to imperialism. And this is what happened in fact. What he said has proved true.
Any person who assesses Stalin's work as a whole can understand that the genius and communist spirit of this outstanding personality are rare in the modern world.
Hoxha, Enver. With Stalin: Memoirs. Tirana: 8 Nentori Pub. House, 1979.

GOLOVANOV: I heard from Stalin many times and I say categorically that the way people live is the basis of everything….
Unless we have another Stalinist hand firmly on the helm, we won't build communism. I hold that Stalin took the correct road and that we must continue this line.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 303

Stalin and Khrushchev. As for Khrushchev, he is not worth one of Stalin's fingernails. Stalin's achievements, despite everything, are enormous. He was the great transformer…. While they strive to efface his colossal achievements.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 364

The end of the war is still vivid in my memory as a glorious event that washed away all my doubts about the wisdom of Stalin's leadership. All heroic and tragic events, losses and even purges, seemed to be justified by the triumph over Hitler. I remember the grand reception in the Kremlin where I had the privilege of being seated in the Georgian Hall at table No. 9 together with Admiral Isakov, deputy commander of the Navy…. I remember when Stalin came to our table to greet Isakov, who had lost a leg in a German air raid in the Caucasus in 1942, and pronounced a toast in his honor. Isakov could not appear before an audience on crutches, and we were all moved by Stalin's gesture.
You must realize the emotion of every officer in the high command when Stalin admitted in his speech to us that mistakes were made and that we had been helpless in dreadful

situations in the war. He said that another people and another nation would have asked the government to conclude a peace treaty with the Germans, but the Russian people had displayed confidence and patience in their government, and he thanked the Russian nation for that confidence.
Stalin was quite a different man that night from the one I had met in his Kremlin office. This time he displayed deep emotion, and it seemed to me that he looked at us young generals and admirals as the generation he had raised, his children and his heirs.
In retrospect, what is remarkable is that Stalin displayed such emotion and devoted such special attention to the mid-level military leaders who were much younger than Zhukov, Voroshilov, and others of the old guard. He was definitely addressing himself to my generation, which had come of age in the war, and we were thrilled to bask in his proud and approving glances in our direction.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 170

If Stalin had accomplished for the world bourgeoisie what he did for the world proletariat, he would have long been hailed in bourgeois circles as one of the “greats” of all time, not only of the present century. The same general criteria should apply to Stalin’s reputation from the Marxist point of view. Stalin advanced the position of the world proletariat further than any person in history with the exception of Lenin. True, without the base Lenin laid, Stalin could not have built, but using this base he moved about as far as was possible in the existing situation.
In short a new class of world leader has emerged, and Stalin is in its highest rank.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 120

His [Stalin] history is a series of victories over a series of tremendous difficulties. Since 1917, not a single year of his career has passed without his having done something which would have made any other man famous. He is a man of iron…. He is as strong and yet as flexible as steel. His power lies in his formidable intelligence, the breadth of his knowledge, the amazing orderliness of his mind, his passion for precision, his inexorable spirit of progress, the rapidity, sureness, and intensity of his decisions, and his constant care to choose the right men.
In many ways, as we have seen, he [Stalin] is extraordinarily like Lenin: he has the same knowledge of theory, the same practical common sense, the same firmness.
Among all the sources of his genius, which is the principal one? Bela Kun said, in a fine phrase: “He knows how not to go too quickly. He knows how to weigh the moment.” And Bela Kun considers that to be the chief characteristic of Stalin, the one which belongs to him in particular, much more than any other; to wait, to temporize, to resist alluring temptations and to be possessed of terrible patience. Is it not this power that has made Stalin, of all the Revolutionaries of history, the man who has most practically enriched the spirit of Revolution, and who has committed the fewest faults? He weighs the pros and cons and reflects a great deal before proposing anything (a great deal does not mean a long time). He is extremely circumspect and does not easily give his confidence. He said to one of his close associates, who distrusted a third party: “A reasonable amount of distrust is a good basis for collective work.” He is as prudent as a lion.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 275-276

Whoever you may be, the finest part of your destiny is in the hands of that other man [Stalin], who also watches over you, and who works for you–the man with a scholar's mind, a workman's face, and the dress of a private soldier.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 283

By the mid 1920s, Stalin's main opponents would come to realize that this 'outstanding mediocrity' [to quote Trotsky] was an exceptional politician,…
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 108

Sklyansky knew Stalin well enough himself. He wanted my definition of Stalin and my explanation of his success. I thought for a minute.
"Stalin," I said, "is the outstanding mediocrity in the party."
Trotsky, Leon. My Life. Gloucester, Massachusetts: P. Smith, 1970, p. 512

Koba is cautious, but his is the caution of a statesman. He does not want to begin anything without being 100 percent certain of success. That is characteristic of him.
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 127

But there was much more to him [Stalin]. He had the potential of a true leader. He was decisive, competent, confident, and ambitious. The choice of him rather than Zinoviev or Kamenev to head the charge against Trotsky at the 13th Party Conference showed that this was beginning to be understood by other Central Committee members.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 228

First Meeting of Hoxha with Stalin
July 1947
The attention with which he followed my explanations about our new economy and its course of development made a very deep impression on us. Both during the talk about these problems, and in all the other talks with him, one wonderful feature of his, among others, made an indelible impression on my mind: he never gave orders or sought to impose his opinion. He spoke, gave advice, made various proposals, but always added: This is my opinion, this is what we think. You, comrades, must judge and decide for yourselves, according to the concrete situation on the basis of your conditions.. His interest extended to every problem.
Hoxha, Enver. With Stalin: Memoirs. Tirana: 8 N'ntori Pub. House, 1979.

Premier Stalin left upon me an impression of deep, cool wisdom and a complete absence of illusions of any time. Said by Sir Stafford Cripps
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 12

…He [Stalin] was mainly a politician. He played a great historic role in the affairs of the nation. It's being hushed up now. The riffraff do their job, that's for sure.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 176

How did he exercise his power while presiding over the commissariat for nationality affairs? In his own department, Stalin was neither imperious nor hard. He was not a thunderer. His

close collaborator in this work, Pestkovsky, described Stalin's relations with the collegium or council governing his commissariat
"… Stalin faced the difficult task of fighting within his own organization. I am almost certain that Trotsky, who accuses Stalin of 'dictating,' would in three days have dispersed the oppositional council and surrounded himself with his own followers. But Stalin acted differently. He decided to educate us by slow and persistent efforts, and displayed much discipline and self-control. He had his conflicts with individual members of the council, but was loyal to the body as a whole, submitted to its decisions even when he disagreed, with the exception of such cases where there was a violation of party discipline."…
"Sometimes Stalin would grow weary at the conferences with his department chiefs, but he would never lose his temper."
Pestkovsky continues, "Lenin could not get along without Stalin for a single day. It was probably because of that that our office in the Smolny was next to that of Lenin. In the course of the day, Lenin would telephone Stalin innumerable times, or he would drop in and take Stalin with him. Stalin spent most of his time with Lenin."
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 160-161

Conventionally it has been supposed that Stalin was put in office because he was an experienced bureaucrat with an unusual capacity for not being bored by administrative work. The facts do not bear this out.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 190

All of this meant that Stalin was well adapted to survival in the environment of bureaucracy that inevitably grew up as the Soviet-Bolshevik regime adapted to the task of ruling a large country.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 49

But a capacity for antagonistic working relations was not the only aspect of Stalin's personality as a boss. Those who were loyal and hard-working in Stalin's interest, received his protection. Testimony that Stalin displayed this valuable and by no means contemptible characteristic comes from a witness who was not partial to Stalin, Trotsky.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 49

STALIN WAS GOOD DEBATER

He was a fearless debater, and preferred organized debates to any other form of public speaking.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 46

The debates with the Mensheviks were to him as much a part of the war against Czardom as a conflict with the police, and far more important.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 61

Stalin was a genius, but Dimitrov was hardly a nobody.
Djilas, Milovan. Conversations with Stalin. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962, p. 117

His ability as an organizer was not in question; he was a man who could get things done, and while Stalin as a Marxist never showed anything like Lenin's originality, he was an effective debater who knew his Marxist texts well enough to be able to support his arguments with quotations from Marx and Engels as well as Plekhanov and Lenin. But even in controversies that were conducted with no regard for civility on either side, he gave offense by his rudeness and sarcasm.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 33

STALIN READ CENSORED BOOKS

This was the 13th time books deemed subversive had got him into trouble.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 18

There are some very interesting entries in the conduct book of the theological seminary:
"It appears that Djugashvili has a ticket to the Cheap Library, from which he borrows books. Today I confiscated Victor Hugo's Toilers of the Sea, in which I found the said library ticket—Father Germogen, Supervisor."
The report bears the notation:
"Confine him to the punishment cell for a prolonged period. I have already warned him once about an unsanctioned book, Ninety-Three by Victor Hugo." (Entry made in November 1896.)
"At 11 p.m. I took away from Djugashvili Letourneau's Literary Evolution of the Nation's, which he had borrowed from the Cheap Library…. This is the 13th time this student has been discovered reading books borrowed from the Cheap Library.
Yaroslavsky, Emelian. Landmarks in the Life of Stalin. Moscow: FLPH, 1940, p. 16

Djugashvili was discovered reading the same book on the chapel stairs. This is the 13th time the student has been discovered reading books borrowed from the Cheap Library. I handed over the book to the Father Supervisor.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 18

Stalin's biographers, official or hostile, dispute whether Stalin first became a Marxist in those years [his adolescent years in seminary] (which is probable), whether he first became a Leninist in any sense (highly improbable)…. They agree in portraying his life as a round of reading forbidden books, discussing forbidden ideas, and attending forbidden meetings, along with consequent clashes with the monks. No doubt such activities were the best and most intense parts of Stalin's adolescent life.
Randall, Francis. Stalin's Russia. New York: Free Press, 1965, p. 25

STALIN READ A LOT AND WROTE WHEN HE COULD

Some people have asked, "Where are the theoretical works of Stalin in this period?" as if he had been deported to the Reading Rooms of the British Museum instead of a peasant's hut in the Arctic.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 78

Accordingly, Joseph Stalin read a great deal. He read so much that he aroused suspicion in ”the minds of the authorities of the seminary,”… and he was expelled from the seminary.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 22

Trotsky made much of the fact that during those years of continuous exile Stalin did not write a line or attempt any literary work, but for this, too, no blame attaches to Stalin. Not every political captive, even though an intellectual, wrote anything in such exile. Some did, but when a man is living in a small village in a wilderness of snow, the conditions are naturally not encouraging. Even the newspapers took weeks or months to arrive. The exiled intellectuals asked their friends and relations to send them books. Stalin, the shoemaker’s son, had no relations who could do him that service. And his few friends were naturally without the means to send him parcels of books; moreover, the books that interested him would not have reached him, for there was a very severe censorship of the material sent by post to the exiles.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 43

Stalin likes both hunting and fishing, and occasionally will play chess. His favorite relaxation, however, is reading, of which he does as much as demands upon his time permit. Starting from a good foundation in such literary classics as Shakespeare, Schiller, and Tolstoy, his favorite authors are Saltykov-Shchedrin, Gogol, and Chekov. He has read the works of many American and English authors in translation, including James Fennimore Cooper, Upton Sinclair, Mark Twain, and Sinclair Lewis, and, on one occasion, used the term “Babbitt” in a speech. He has read widely in the history of civilization and Marxian literature, but his first love in reading was and is poetry. When he was young he wrote poetry, and at the age of 16 a few of his poems were published in the newspaper Iberia….
Stalin reads all the best works of the contemporary Soviet writers and takes real personal interest in them, frequently receiving authors for personal chats. It is not infrequent that, enthusiastic about a new work, he telephones the author in the middle of the night to congratulate him on the achievement. His interest in culture is well reflected by the fact that the government awards for outstanding work in the fields of literature, art, music, and science have been titled the Stalin prizes, and Stalin, as head of the government, takes an active part in choosing the award winners….
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 10

Books were Joseph’s inseparable friends; he would not part with them even at meal times….
Yaroslavsky, Emelian. Landmarks in the Life of Stalin. Moscow: FLPH, 1940, p. 14

It is widely supposed abroad that Stalin is a poorly educated and uncultured man, a notion fostered especially by Trotsky in his followers.
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 155

I read a great deal, for my father had a vast library of books….
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 142

He was neither unintelligent nor devoid of common sense.
… Stalin hardly ever signed a document without reading it over very carefully. He read a great deal; he read the party press, the most significant literary works, material from the

Western press translated especially for him, and even emigre literature, not to mention various diplomatic documents, materials relating to the internal party disputes, etc.. In addition, he often attended performances at the Moscow Art Theatre and the Bolshoi Theatre.
…he was by no means an entirely unskilled polemicist. Igor Sats, a veteran party member, writes in his memoirs:
“I must add a few words to try to explain in part Stalin’s effectiveness as a writer and orator, what gave him an edge over other orators and writers who were far more skilled. Kamenev, Zinoviev, Bukharin, even Trotsky were much less familiar with the text of Lenin’s writings than Stalin. These men had interacted with the living Lenin much more closely and more often than Stalin. They had listened to him, argued with him, and read what he had just published, but they hardly ever reread his writings…. Unlike them, Stalin studied Lenin’s texts and knew the printed Lenin intimately. He had no trouble selecting a quotation from Lenin if he needed it….”
It should be added that 1924 was the year of Stalin’s most creative activity. His writings of that year occupy an entire volume of his works (Volume 6). In 1924 Stalin published his two most important theoretical pamphlets, Foundations of Leninism and The October Revolution and The Tactics of the Russian Communists. In these writings Stalin showed himself to be, if not a continuator, at least a rather skillful systematizer of Lenin’s views.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 90

It is worth noting in this connection that Stalin’s regular reading included extracts from all the nine main emigre journals, and that his library had copies of many of the emigre books, including Trotsky’s.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 210

Nearly all the memoirists, whether friendly or hostile to Stalin, agree with the impression of him given by Glurdjidze, one of the school-fellows who said, “…Books were Joseph’s inseparable friends; he would not part with them even at meal times….
Another writer, Iremashvili…describes Djugashvili as one of the chief debaters among the seminarists, more knowledgeable than most of his comrades, and able to advance his argument with much stubbornness and political skill.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 17

As his daughter remarks, in spirit Stalin was completely Russianized. He had not learned Russian until he was eight or nine, and always spoke it with an accent. But he spoke it well and his conversation was often rich and vivid in a course way. Although not well-educated, he was widely read in the Russian classics–in particular, the satirists Shchedrin and Gogol. He had also read when young a number of foreign authors in Russian translation–in particular, Victor Hugo–and popular works on Darwinism and social and economic matters. Gendarmerie reports on the Tiflis Theological Seminary in the last part of the 19th-century mention the reading by students of “seditious” literature of this sort, and Stalin’s name appears in the seminary bad-conduct book a number of times for the discovery of such works from the local “Cheap Library,” showing that he was engaged in absorbing this sort of self-education.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 62

A discussion followed. Koba surprised me by his thorough knowledge of the subject. He had obviously done some researching. He asked Yagoda, a little slyly, about masonic degrees. Yagoda got muddled and spoke of the degrees of the Scottish Ritual. Koba said, “You are obviously not familiar with the subject. The degree of the Scottish Ritual, which at one time numbered 25, became 33 degrees in the Grand Orient on September 22, 1804. The Grand Orient took eight additional degrees from the Lodge at Charleston, U.S.A.. An example, of course, of American exports to Europe”….
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 86

From other sources, information became available about Stalin’s intellectual interests. In the year 1926, he composed a list for Tovstukha, his then Secretary, to buy a personal library covering all major fields of human knowledge. He was particularly interested in historical literature…. But he also read historical textbooks and from time to time he would send a short note to one of his favorite writers…. Stalin devoured newspapers. In 1936, he subscribed to no fewer than nine emigre Russian newspapers and periodicals from Paris, Prague, and New York–including Vremya, published in Harbin.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 150

His formal education was admittedly defective; he criticized it himself with customary savagery. But at some point in his adolescence Stalin acquired a taste for reading–whether Karl Marx or Victor Hugo–and for the wider world that books uncover. Stalin seems to have read all the literature, all the science, social science, and philosophy that he could get hold of in Tbilisi. He thereby became a kind of European intellectual. He became, more specifically, one of the intelligentsia of the Russian Empire–one of that extraordinary body of men and women who, regardless of national or class origin, read and treasured a large body of Russian and European writings and felt that the injustices of the Tsarist regime could not be allowed to continue.
Randall, Francis. Stalin’s Russia. New York: Free Press,1965, p. 23

As Stalin earned his status as an intelligent he grew in the eyes of workers and peasants, in the eyes of his fellow students, and eventually in the eyes of the regime.
Randall, Francis. Stalin’s Russia. New York: Free Press, 1965, p. 24

A voracious reader, Stalin once told a visitor who noted a pile of books on his office table that his “daily norm” was 500 pages.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 51

He became pensive, seemed gloomy and introspective, was never without a book,” wrote one of his contemporaries later. He was never without a new book, to be precise.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 36

He [Stalin] was, as we have already seen, a voracious reader, with a considerable stock of historical and philosophical knowledge.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 119

Stalin was a well-read man;….
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 704

The private library of a person in power serves as an additional special source of authority and information. Stalin was always a great reader, particularly during his exile….
Visitors to Stalin's apartment in the Kremlin were always struck by the extensive range of his library.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 95

Zolotukhina describes the Kremlin apartment [of Stalin]: Clearly Stalin was an educated person. He got extremely irritated whenever he came across grammar or spelling mistakes, which he would carefully correct with a red pencil.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 97

In view of the fact that Stalin always read with a pencil in his hand, never simply for pleasure or relaxation, there should be thousands of books containing his notes and comments, but, unfortunately for historians, it seems that most of his private library has simply vanished forever.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 99

If Stalin's personal archive had not been destroyed, selected items certainly would have surfaced and been used to support the moves to rehabilitate Stalin in 1965.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores,. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 101

Surreptitiously and voraciously he read books on sociology, natural sciences, and the labor movement.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 10

Verestchak continues, He always carried a book. Of more than medium- height, he walked with a slow catlike tread.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 79

He read voraciously and actively.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 9

Determination stimulated both aptitude and memory. Another school comrade, Kapanadze, testifies that throughout the 13 years of tutelage and throughout the later 35 years of activity as a teacher he never had occasion once "to meet such a gifted and able pupil" as Joseph Djugashvili. Yet even Iremashvili, who wrote his book not in Tiflis but in Berlin, maintains that Soso was the best pupil in the theological school. In other testimonies there are, however, substantial shadings. "During the first years, in the preparatory grades," relates Glurdzhidze, "Joseph studied superbly, and with time, as he disclosed increasingly brilliant abilities, he became one of the best pupils."
…Identical in nature are the recollections of another schoolmate, Elisabedashvili. Joseph, says he, "was one of the most indigent and one of the most gifted…."
Without being definite as to Joseph's exact rating in his class, Gogokhiya states that in development and knowledge he ranked "much higher than his schoolmates." Soso read everything available in the school library, including Georgian and Russian classics, which were, of course, carefully sifted by the authorities. After his graduation examinations Joseph was rewarded with a certificate of merit, "which in those days was an extraordinary

achievement, because his father was not a clergyman and plied the shoemaking trade." Truly a remarkable touch!
"Usually he was serious, persistent," writes Gogokhiya, "did not like pranks and mischief. After his schoolwork he hurried home, and he was always seen poring over a book."
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 10-11

"The book was Joseph's inseparable friend, and he did not part with it even while eating," testifies Glurdzhidze.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 16

STALIN REJECTS FILTH, IMMORALITY, AND SEXUAL CORRUPTION

Those who search for sexual scandal in Stalin's life will search in vain. I recall Radek speaking to me of Stalin's reaction to the vagaries and often abominable aberration's in the sexual life of modern civilization. Several illustrated German books dealing with the subject lay on Radek's table, which was as usual piled with volumes newly arrived from Europe and America. Stalin was just about to leave Radek's room when he noticed these books and began thumbing over their pages. Turning to Radek he asked: "are there really people in Europe who do these kinds of things?" "Yes, of course," answered Radek. "Stalin," Radek said to me, "looked utterly disgusted, shrugged his shoulders, and walked away without saying another word." To Stalin they reflected a diseased way of life, and he was a normal healthy man in his reactions to disease whether of the mind or of the body.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 137

The Soviet leader's recreational likes and dislikes are quite in keeping with his character. All Stalin's associates say that he is quite puritanical in his personal habits. He never permits smutty stories to be told in his presence. He rarely drinks vodka, preferring the mild Caucasian red wine. He smokes a pipe, never gambles and never drinks to excess.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 10

Stalin has no vices. He smokes a pipe. Like all Georgians, he drinks wine with his dinner. But he is not addicted to alcohol. Women, gambling, and similar pleasures do not exist for him.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 323

Despite such occurrences, one must not think that Stalin staged drinking orgies in the manner of Peter the Great. Actually, parties were held rather infrequently, inasmuch as the major Soviet leaders were beavers for work, with Stalin a good example.
Tuominen, Arvo, The Bells of the Kremlin: Hanover: University Press of New England, 1983, p. 163

But my father took a puritanical view of what he called "foreign luxury" and refused to tolerate even the scent of perfume. In his opinion the only fragrance that was becoming to a woman was her own freshness and cleanliness. And so my mother had to enjoy these presents surreptitiously, although she did wear the perfume.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 53

So it was that Lesakov [the escort of Djilas through Leningrad] told me “in confidence” that Marshall Zhukov had been ousted for looting jewelry in Berlin–“You know, Comrade Stalin cannot endure immorality!”
Djilas, Milovan. Conversations with Stalin. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962, p. 170

Unbridled sexual appetites also caused Dekanozov’s first fall from grace. After the war, he seduced a girl who turned out to be the daughter of a ranking government official close to Molotov. When that happened, Stalin didn’t step in to cover his protege. Dekanozov was reprimanded by his Party cell and was fired from the Peoples Commissariat for Foreign Affairs.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin’s Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 349

My uncle [Stalin] and aunt bowed to the custom, but after their embrace was over, Nadejda [Stalin’s wife] told her guests, “You know, you really shouldn’t treat us as newlyweds. It’s true we only registered our marriage today, but we’re going to have a child shortly.”
“Why did you bother to register it, Koba?” Mdivani asked. “Why didn’t you and Nadia go on living in free union like the rest of us?”
“Do you want me to be like that idiot Yenukidze who has got to his fourth wife? Or Makhardze whose had three?” Stalin demanded. “Remember, we’re not members of a little underground party any more. We are the government. If we live lives of indulgence and dissipation, our enemies are going to find it difficult to attack us on our weak points. We must be responsible, comrades!
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 42

Stalin said, “Ilyich [Lenin] married Comrade Krupskaya in church. I married my first wife in church. The heads of the government must have faithful wives, not women to be married and dropped again in a few months. A wedding should be celebrated as an important event in our lives. We shouldn’t mate like dogs in the street!”
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 43

“I know,” he [Stalin] said, “that people criticize me for marrying Rosa. She’s 27 years younger than I. But I had to marry to set the example of an orderly life, free of any moral degeneration, to all our comrades who have come to power. The danger of loose morals is the gravest there is for revolutionary leaders who have passed all the earlier part of their lives in prison or exile, or simply in want and poverty. It’s a more serious danger then you might think.
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 127

“The French Revolution collapsed because of the degeneration of the morals of its leaders, who surrounded themselves with loose women from the Palais Royal, that ignoble cesspool which drowned the Revolution! I am determined to bear down with a white-hot iron to burn in the bud the loosening of morals. Everyone thinks that I am pursuing the faulty because I want another Thermidor here. That’s a stupid slander! It’s the others who would have brought on a Thermidor if they had been allowed to stay in power without being subjected to the effective control of the Party.” Thermidor 9, 1794, was the date of Robespierre’s overthrow. Thermidor was the month July-August in the republican calendar.

He paused for a moment, and then resumed. “Zinoviev and Kamenev will be rooted out soon. Do you know, Budu, when Zinoviev was president of the municipal government of Leningrad, he introduced the most abject practices there! He surrounded himself with loose women, some of whom were spies. His intimate friend, Slivkin, whom he made a diplomatic courier, smuggled in silk stockings, perfumes, and drugs from abroad. When I found that out, in 1924, I knew that some time or other I would have to cauterize that wound with a white-hot iron! As for Kamenev, I’ve never known a man as cynical as he, as ready to make jokes in the worst of taste about things which are most sacred to us revolutionaries. He became enamored of an Englishwoman who came here purporting to be a journalist and a sculptor and introduced her to Comrade Lenin. He brought her here, to the Crimea, among our comrades, and amused himself by writing love sonnets on Bank of England notes intended to be sent to Great Britain to help striking workers.
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 128

“And Muralov, a former worker-revolutionary! He married an obscene creature from those sewers, the Sandunov baths and paraded her at his side at youth meetings. Pah! It’s disgusting!” The Sandunov baths had a very bad reputation in Moscow as a place of debauchery.
I gazed at him closely. His eyes were filled with hatred and rage which he seemed to find it difficult to restrain. He stopped near a bush of kizil, tore off a branch with an angry gesture, and cried, “I’ll break the backs of all the rotten riff raff who want to plunge our country into corruption! I’ll have no mercy on them! None of them! None of them!”
I was amazed that he had worked himself up into such a state, he who was usually so calm and reflective.
He continued, “I once read a splendid speech of Robespierre’s, which he delivered to the Convention shortly before his death. That caught me hatred for the vermin which revolutions, unfortunately, bear with them on their crest– vermin which have to be destroyed without mercy in order not to see the same thing happen as at Paris, where the dregs of the Palais Royal became the mistresses and the wives of the republican chiefs–and even empresses! What a pity that Robespierre was overthrown! The struggle of humanity toward happiness would have been shortened by centuries if he had stayed in power!”
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 129

“Your Uncle Sosso was overwhelmed by Nadia’s death,” he said (that was hardly news to me). “But he insisted that the interests of the state made it necessary to continue to repress the opposition. He married Kaganovich’s sister after Nadia’s death, but he divorced her again almost immediately.”
This was not quite news to me either. Even in far-off Siberia, I had heard that my uncle had divorced his third wife, and, remembering what little I had seen of her, I was not particularly surprised. I had heard no details, however, so I was curious to know what reasons were being given for the extreme brevity of my Uncle Joe’s third marriage.
“Why didn’t it last?” I asked.
“She interfered in governmental matters. Besides, you know, there’s a lot of anti-Semitism around now. She’s Jewish.”
Privately, I thought that the first reason was probably the more important. I could very well imagine that Rosa would have interfered in governmental matters–in fact, my own contact with her had come pretty much under that head. I could not imagine my uncle putting up very long with that sort of conduct in his wife–particularly in a wife whom he had married more or

less as an act of policy, not because he was especially fond of her, if I might base that opinion on the conversation I had had with him on the beach at Saki.
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 139

Nothing could be more unlikely than the story spread in the West about “Stalin’s third wife”–the mythical Rosa Kaganovich. Aside from the fact that I never saw any ” Rosa” in the Kaganovich family, the idea that this legendary Rosa, an intellectual woman (according to the Western version, a doctor), and above all a Jewess, could have captured my father’s fancy shows how totally ignorant people were of his true nature; such a possibility was absolutely excluded from his life.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 382

Often, and also in front of others, he would criticize my [Svetlana] appearance, my clothes, reducing me, a teenager, to tears with such remarks as, “Why do you wear that tight-fitting sweater? You are a grown girl now, wear something lose!”
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 384

Women didn’t interest him. His own woman was enough for him, and he paid scant attention to her.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 106

From the end of July to the 3rd of November, we visited Sochi often. The summer cottage was located near Matsesta in the mountains. In 1932, I was assigned to this place as a personal guard to Stalin. We, the personnel, lived near this cottage. Stalin many times took salt baths in the small Matsesta –he had serious polyarthritis. Pain in his legs did not give him the opportunity to sit for a long time. If he was standing, he always had to move from one leg to another. He felt much better that way. When he walked, he felt better. Therefore, during working hours or meetings, he was always walking around in the office. He received this sickness from earlier revolutionary work, exile, deprivation, cold, and freezing discomfort.
Voroshilov, Kirov, and Kalinin were frequent visitors. Stalin liked very much to receive guests, but he hardly ever drank himself. He never touched vodka, cognac–not often. He only drank wine, called “Tsinandali” or “Teliani”.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 6

His attitude to sex is quite normal and healthy. He has married twice. He is supposed now to be living with the sister of Kaganovich, his first assistant. He is rather naive, apparently. One evening, dropping in to see his friend Radek, he noted on the table a volume by a German man named Fuchs, called Sitten Geschichte (History of Morals), a pseudo- scientific picture-book. Stalin turned the pages idly, saw one of the more fantastic illustrations. He turned to his friend: “Tell me, Radek: do people really do this sort of thing?”
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 532

Stalin was no womanizer: he was married to Bolshevism and emotionally committed to his own, in the cause of Revolution. Any private emotions were bagatelles compared to the betterment of mankind through Marxism-Leninism.

Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 15

Everyone who knew Stalin insists that he was no womanizer and he was famously inhibited about his body.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 292

Stalin has a decided puritan bend, and prefers “clean” plays and stories. On one occasion, after reading a story by a well-known young writer in a leading monthly magazine, Stalin was shocked by the author’s “obscenity.” The following morning he telephoned the editor and severely reprimanded him for printing pornographic matter. The editor tried to argue in vain that it was literature of a high order. To Stalin, it was a “smutty” story.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 325

Kyra said, “Your [Svetlana] mother was jealous of him [Stalin]; not only was he very busy with politics, but he said once in passing that he liked a particular singer at the opera. He had a good ear and liked to go regularly. Nadya [Stalin’s wife] had a fit of jealousy and everybody knew about it; she couldn’t stand it if a word was said about another woman. She had this burning passion, which dated from her childhood, from when she was 16 and met the hero from Siberian exile. She couldn’t cope with it: it was too much for her.”
“But,” Svetlana adds, “my mother was not a fool. She was very young; she fell in love, and they lived together for 14 years. There were happy moments to remember, and my father was absolutely loyal to her. He was not a ladies’ man, he was never chasing women. To say that a singer was good and that he liked her voice was enough to make her jealous. But there was never anything more than that.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin’s Shadow. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994, p. 86

STALIN IS NOT DICTORIAL BUT IS OPEN-MINDED

His handling of the Commissariat of Nationalities confirms these observations. Pestovsky, the Pole who became his first secretary in this department, writes “there were Lettish, Polish, Lithuanian, Estonian and other elements in the council of his secretariat. They were afflicted with the ideas of left bolshevism. I am almost certain that Trotsky, who accuses Stalin of “dictating,” would in three days have dispersed the oppositional council and surrounded himself with his own followers. But Stalin acted differently. He decided to educate us by slow and persistent efforts, and displayed much discipline and self-control. He had his conflicts with individual members of the council, but was loyal to the body as a whole, submitted to its decisions even when he disagreed, with the exception of such cases where there was a violation of party discipline.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 145

It was said later that Stalin got all his opponents out of the way and then carried out their programs. That is not so. At that time there was unanimity between all groups on certain questions of Soviet policy. All agreed that Russia must be industrialized. All agreed that the famous ‘scissors’ (the term was first used by Trotsky)–the abnormal gap between the prices for industrial goods and those for agricultural produce–must be closed…. This was agreed; what was at issue was the timing, and tempo. When should industrialization begin? When

should a start be made with the closing of the scissors? And then, at what rate? What should be the pace of industrialization?
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 132

Stalin was always receptive to what he called constructive criticism and discussion of alternatives. He was willing to consider various approaches to military, industrial, and foreign policies.
Sudoplatov, Pavel. Special Tasks. Boston: Little, Brown, c1993, p. 90

During the war a small top leadership group was needed. With this group, however, as Zhukov noted, Stalin worked collectively. “Today, after Stalin’s death,” he writes, apparently answering Khrushchev, “the idea is current that he never heeded anybody’s advice and decided questions of military policy all by himself. I can’t agree with it. When the person reporting knew what he was talking about he would listen and I know of cases when he reconsidered his own opinions and decisions. This was the case with many operations.” “As a rule the General Headquarters worked in an orderly, business-like manner. Everyone had a chance to state his opinion…. He [Stalin] listened attentively to anybody speaking to the point.”
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 125

Stalin was equally stern to everybody and rather formal. He listened attentively to anyone speaking to the point.
Incidentally, I know from my war experience that one could safely bring up matters unlikely to please Stalin, argue them out, and firmly carry the point. Those who assert it was not so are wrong.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987,
APPENDIX 1
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A detailed study of the ideological and political struggle that took place in the Bolshevik leadership from 1922 to 1934 refutes many well-ingrained lies and prejudices. It is patently false that Stalin did not allow other leaders to express themselves freely and that he ruled like a `tyrant’ over the Party. Debates and struggles took place openly and over an extended period of time. Fundamentally different ideas confronted each other violently, and socialism’s very future was at stake. Both in theory and in practice, the leadership around Stalin showed that it followed a Leninist line and the different opportunist factions expressed the interests of the old and new bourgeoisies. Stalin was not only careful and patient in the struggle, he even allowed opponents who claimed that they had understood their errors to return to the leadership. Stalin really believed in the honesty of the self-criticisms presented by his former opponents.
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 136-137 [p. 118 on the NET]

According to Zhukov and Vasilevsky, Stalin was always prepared to listen to views contrary to his own, provided they were based on facts and presented lucidly.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 367

The State Committee for Defense, whose sittings took place at any time of day or night in the Kremlin or at Stalin's country house, discussed and decided upon the crucial issues…. Often sharp arguments arose at the Committee sittings. Views were expressed in definite and sharp terms. Stalin would usually walk up and down the room past the table, carefully listening to those who argued. He himself was short-spoken and would often stop others with remarks like "come to the point," "make yourself clear." He opened the sittings without any preliminaries and spoke in a quiet voice and freely, and only on the main points. He was laconic and precise.
Zhukov, Georgi. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 267

As a rule, the General Headquarters worked in an orderly, business-like manner. Everyone had a chance to state his opinion.
Stalin was equally stern to everybody and rather formal. He listened attentively to anybody speaking to the point.
Incidentally, I know from my war experience that one could safely bring up matters unlikely to please Stalin, argue them out and firmly carry the point. Those who assert it was not so are wrong.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 281

Though the troops of the Voronezh and Steppe Fronts reached the FEBA of the enemy defenses on July 23, 1943, they were not able to undertake a counter-attack at once as the Supreme Commander-in-Chief [Stalin] demanded. They had to replenish stocks–fuel, ammunition, and other material, arrange for cooperation of all arms and thorough reconnaissance, and do some re-grouping, particularly of artillery and tanks. This required at least 8 days according to the most rigid calculations.
After heated debates, Stalin grudgingly endorsed our decision, there being no other alternative.
Stalin was pushing us with the operation. It cost Vasilevsky and myself great pains to convince Stalin that there should be no haste and that the operation should be started only when everything was absolutely ready. The Supreme Commander-in-Chief had to agree with our arguments.
Today, after Stalin's death, the idea is current that he never heeded anybody's advice and decided questions of military policy all by himself. I can't agree with it. When he realized that the person reporting knew what he was talking about he would listen and I know of cases when he reconsidered his own opinions and decisions.
This was the case with many operations.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 464

Stalin insisted on being informed about the decisions made by the staff. In the mornings he telephoned the chief of operations for a detailed survey of the front, whose intricacies he knew perfectly; in the evening around 11 o'clock the chief of staff, or his deputy, would come to the Kremlin to make a detailed report, which could last well into the night. The difference lay in Stalin's attitude. He seldom interrupted the reports. He allowed the staff to suggest operations; he came to insist that front commanders should be consulted for their views first. The soldiers slowly overcame their natural caution and began to argue openly with Stalin. It was discovered that Stalin could tolerate dissent, if forcibly and sensibly expressed. He liked to be told the truth, however unpalatable. He took advice and bowed to others' judgment.
Overy, R. J. Russia's War: Blood Upon the Snow. New York: TV Books, c1997, p. 231

I realized during the war that Stalin was not the kind of man who objected to sharp questions or to anyone arguing with him. If someone says the reverse, he is a liar.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 364

I remember a conversation between Zhukov and Stalin which I witnessed. Stalin had instructed Zhukov to carry out some minor operation, in the area of the railway station Mga, if I remember correctly, in order to help the Leningraders a bit. Zhukov insisted that a large-scale operation was necessary if the objective was to be achieved.
“That is all very well, Comrade Zhukov,” Stalin replied, “but we lack the means, and this must be taken into account.”
Zhukov stuck to his guns. “Nothing will come out of it otherwise,” he declared. “Wishful thinking is not enough.”
Stalin did not conceal his irritation, but Zhukov stood his ground. Finally Stalin said, “Think it over, Comrade Zhukov. You may go for the time being.”
I admired Zhukov’s straightforwardness, but when we left the room I remarked that I didn’t think he should have spoken so sharply to the Supreme Commander.
“It’s nothing to what goes on here sometimes,” Zhukov replied.
Rokossovsky, K., Ed. by Bob Daglish A Soldier’s Duty. Moscow: Progress Pub., 1985, p. 85

I realized that I should have to work hard to be able to cope with this new command and justify the trust of the Party and the Government. The details are hard to describe, but one episode impressed itself on my memory. Shortly before the Voronezh operation I came again to Moscow to report to the Supreme Commander. When I had finished and was about to leave, Stalin said,
“Don’t go yet.”
He phoned Poskrebyshev and asked him to call in a general just removed from the command of a Front. The following dialogue took place:
“You say that we have punished you wrongly?”
“Yes, because the GHQ Representative kept getting in my way.”
“How?”
“He interfered with my orders, held conferences when it was necessary to act, gave contradictory instructions…. And generally tried to override the commander.”
“So he got in your way. But you were in command of the Front?”
“Yes.”
“The Party and the Government entrusted the Front to you…. Did you have a telephone?”
“Yes.”
“Then why didn’t you report that he was getting in your way?”
“I didn’t dare complain about your representative.”
“Well, that is what we have punished you for: not daring to pick up the receiver and phone up, as a result of which you failed to carry out the operation.”
I walked out of the Supreme Commander’s office with the thought that, as a new-fledged Front Commander, I had just been taught an object lesson. Believe me, I made the most of it.
Rokossovsky, K., Ed. by Bob Daglish A Soldier’s Duty. Moscow: Progress Pub., 1985, p. 118

By mid-May that planning for ‘Bagration’ had been completed. From 22 to 24 May the draft plans were discussed in detail at a conference of the GHQ Supreme Command attended by Stalin and the commanders of the respective Fronts. On the first day of the conference an argument broke out between Stalin and Rokossovsky that became known throughout the Army….
The tall, highly popular army commander wanted to envelop the German armies in a powerful pincer movement. Stalin and some of his General Staff officers demanded a single offensive thrust. A number of generals including Rokossovsky himself have described the incident….
When Rokossovsky would not agree with him, Stalin ordered the marshal to go to the next room and think over Stavka’s [General Headquarters] proposal. After 20 minutes he came back. He said there was nothing for him to think over and he stuck to his view. Again Stalin sent him back to the next room to ‘think’ for 20 minutes. During the second interval (Rokossovsky calls it ‘confinement’. Foreign Minister Molotov and Stalin’s right-hand man, Malenkov joined him, saying that they disapproved of his quarrel with the Supreme Commander and suggested that he accept the Stavka proposal. But Rokossovsky replied that he was convinced of the correctness of his view and that if Stavka ordered him to mount an offensive according to its own plan, he would ask to be relieved of his Front command. He returned to the conference room, but again failed to convince Stalin and his advisers. So for a third time Stalin asked him to ‘think it over.’ In the next room, alone. But when he returned this time with his mind unchanged, Stalin went along with him. In acceding to Rokossovsky, Stalin said: ‘When a commander is so determined he probably knows what is best.’
Axell, Albert. Stalin’s War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 99

STALIN DID NOT RULE BY IMPOSING HIS WILL ON THE MASSES BUT BY PERSONALITY

That the Bolsheviks ever entertained the idea they could impose their solution on the masses is absurd, and that Stalin could impose his will on the Bolshevik party is equally absurd. That he expressed the will and power of the party more emphatically than any other man is more a tribute to his qualities as a collective worker than an indication of domination by personal power.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 172

It is authority rather than power that Stalin possesses. Though his standing is far higher than that of any man in the Soviet Union, though he is cheered and quoted at all congresses as high authority, men never speak of “Stalin’s will” or “Stalin’s power,” but of the “Party Line” which Stalin reports but does not make.
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 109

Nor did his authority within the party-state system rest on actual or threatened physical repression…. In dealing with Bolsheviks…his authority rested mainly on personality, on decisiveness and that capacity for non-physical intimidation that has served well so many successful bosses throughout history. Lenin was relying on this quality in January 1922

when he entrusted Stalin with an important commission concerning grain purchases abroad, a vital matter in a time of famine.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 48

STALIN WORKED VERY HARD AND SOUGHT OTHERS ADVICE

Stalin was, and is, a most systematic worker. His office at the headquarters of the Russian Bolshevik party is a model of simplicity and good order…. Stalin's serenity hid his tireless activity. And contrary to the common conception of his relationship with other people, he was always seeking collective decisions.
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 193

The Marshal is an extremely hard worker. He keeps long but unusual hours–probably a heritage from his early days in the revolutionary movement. He is seldom in the Kremlin in the morning. The afternoon is usually spent in his office, and following his evening meal, he works until the early morning hours, sometimes all night. In spite of long hours and a rigorous schedule, at 66 he looks the picture of health.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 10

In his 'secret speech' to the 20th Party Congress in 1956, Premier Khrushchev said: 'We should note that Stalin planned operations on a globe. Yes, comrades, he used to take the globe and trace the front line on it!'
But t two high-ranking military men with a reputation for veracity, who know more than Khrushchev about this matter (they met Stalin sometimes daily during the war), disagree. Marshal Zhukov says: 'The widespread tale that the Supreme Commander studied the situation and adopted decisions when toying with a globe is untrue.' And General Shtemenko, who daily took to the Kremlin an armful of detailed maps of the various Fronts for Stalin's perusal says that: 'The talk of the Fronts being directed by reference to a globe is completely unfounded.'
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 167

…Khrushchev's picture of Stalin deciding battle strategy on a globe of the world is clearly a caricature. Stalin took advice from the military experts, at least following the initial military setbacks.
Gill, Graeme. Stalinism. Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press International, 1990, p. 41

Antonov alternated with General Shtemenko as Stalin's principal duty officer, the former covering from noon until five or 6 a.m. and the latter from 7 p.m. until 2 p.m.. Thus, both officers were available when Stalin was at his best, from six or 7 p.m. until 5 a.m. They reported on the military situation three times daily, with a joint summary somewhere around midnight, using maps on a scale of 1:200,000 for each army group, showing the position of each division and sometimes of regiments. Shtemenko notes that there was indeed a globe in Stalin's Kremlin office, but he never saw it used in discussions of operations. This is one of several sources that discredits Khrushchev's polemical assertion in 1956 that Stalin planned Red Army operations on a globe.

McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 242

In practical work Stalin was not so much stronger as he was more persistent. That could be a disadvantage. He was a great specialist on the national question.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 129

Stalin had a rather singular daily schedule: he worked mainly in the late hours of the evening and at night, hardly ever rising before noon. He worked a lot, 12-15 hours at a stretch. Adapting themselves to Stalin's schedule, the Central Committee of the Party, the Council of People's Commissars, the Commissariats, and the major government and planning bodies would likewise keep working until late at night. Such a routine exhausted people.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987,
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This frank and great man is, we have already seen, a simple man. He is only difficult to meet because he is always working. When one goes to see him in a room in the Kremlin, one never meets more than three or four people altogether at the foot of a staircase or in the ante-rooms…. Stalin goes to bed regularly at four in the morning. He does not employ 32 secretaries, like Mr. Lloyd George; he has only one, Comrade Proskrobicheff. He does not sign what other people write. He is supplied with the material and does everything else himself. Everything passes through his hands. And that does not prevent him from replying or having replies sent to every letter he receives. When one meets him, he is cordial and unrestrained. His "frank cordiality," says Serafima Gopner. "His kindness, his delicacy," says Barbara Djaparidze, who fought beside him in Georgia. "His gaiety," said Orakhelashvili. He laughs like a child.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 277

The French writer Henri Barbusse (French writer (1873-1935) describes the simplicity of Stalin's life-style: "One goes up to the first floor, were white curtains hang over three of the windows. These three windows are Stalin's home. In the tiny hall a long military cloak hangs on a peg beneath a cap. In addition to this hall there are three bedrooms and a dining room. The bedrooms are as simply furnished as those of a respectable, second-class hotel. The eldest son, Jasheka, sleeps at night in the dining room, on a divan which is converted into a bed; the younger sleeps in a tiny recess, a sort of alcove opening out of it. . . . Each month he earns the five hundred roubles, which constitute the meagre maximum salary of the officials of the Communist Party (amounting to between £20 and £25 in English money). . . This frank and brilliant man is . . . a simple man. . . . He does not employ thirty-two secretaries, like
Mr. Lloyd George; he has only one. . . . Stalin systematically gives credit for all progress made to Lenin, whereas the credit has been in very large measure his own".
Barbusse, Henri. 'Stalin: A New World Seen Through One Man'; London; 1935; p. vii, viii, 291, 294).

In trying to recall all the comments about Stalin he had heard, Trotsky also quoted Bukharin to the effect that, above all, Stalin was an extremely lazy person. This opinion (if Bukharin really voiced it) is mistaken. Stalin was leisurely and unhurried in his actions but he was by no means lazy.

Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 89

Stalin had the reputation of a hard-working, reliable, and able Party worker….
He was a dynamic, fearless, indefatigable party workhorse, at least until his last, longest internment in 1913….
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 8

Stalin was very hard-working, according to Orlov, another of his personal guards. He worked day and night, especially during the war; usually he fell asleep only in the early hours of the morning, without even having undressed himself, in his gray military coat and his high boots.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 149

Yenukidze said, "The Bolshevist newspapers of the period in Tiflis were largely founded on Stalin," writes Yenukidze. "In addition to numerous revolutionary articles, on questions of historical materialism, the labor movement, the trade-union question, Stalin wrote a lot on the national problem. Incidentally, in this question he undoubtedly, with the exception of Lenin, is the leading theoretician of our party. In a word, Stalin was the ideological and practical guide of our organizations in Transcaucasia. In order to take care of this enormous task, it was necessary to work incessantly, to be swallowed up by it entirely, and constantly to replenish one's knowledge. Stalin actually gave all of himself to the work. For him, outside of the revolutionary activity, there was no life, nothing existed. When he did not attend meetings and conduct circles, he spent all his time in a little room piled with books and newspapers, or in the editorial office of a Bolshevist journal which was just as 'spacious.'"
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 58

Stalin works hard, but he also knows how to relax. The general impression notwithstanding, Stalin is fond of sports and recreation. He hunts, fishes, and reads a great deal.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 322

Having risen to political supremacy, he could have slackened his routines. But Stalin was a driven man. He thrashed himself as hard as he did his subordinates. He could no more spend a day in indolence than he was able to leap to the moon. Stalin, unlike Hitler, was addicted to administrative detail. He was also ultra-suspicious in his ceaseless search for signs that someone might be trying to dislodge his policies or supplant him as the Leader.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 571

CHURCHILL COMPLIMENTS STALIN

On September 7, 1942, after his first visit to Moscow, Mr. Churchill reported to the British house of Commons, "Premier Stalin also left upon me an impression of deep cool wisdom and a complete absence of illusions of any kind…"
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 237

Churchill said about Stalin, "Stalin also left upon me the impression of a deep, cool wisdom, and a complete absence of illusion of any kind."
Schuman, Frederick L. Soviet Politics. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1946, p. 442

Stalin cannot help but impress anyone who comes in close contact with him. This has been testified to by the many Allied leaders who saw him during the war. After Wendell Willkie's visit to Russia I asked him for his impressions of the Marshall. Willkie said, "Stalin would have made a great political leader or businessman if he had been born in the West. I'm glad he wasn't, for he would have given us too much competition." Cordell Hull, former Secretary of State, declared, "I found in Marshall Stalin a remarkable personality, one of the great statesman and leaders of this age." The testimony of Winston Churchill, since he bitterly dislikes even the mild socialism of the British Labor government to say nothing of communism, is even more impressive. "It is very fortunate for Russia in her agony to have this rugged chief at her head," said Churchill during the war. "He is a man of outstanding personality, suited to the somber and stormy times in which his life has been cast. He is a man of inexhaustible courage and will power, a man of direct and even blunt speech. Above all, he is a man with a saving sense of humor which is of high importance to all men and to all nations. Premier Stalin left upon me an impression of deep, cool wisdom, and a complete absence of illusions of any kind."
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 13

Churchill said as early as 1918 that Soviet power should be strangled in its infancy. But at our intimate dinners with Roosevelt in Tehran and Yalta, he said, "I get up in the morning and pray that Stalin is alive and well. Only Stalin can save the peace!" He was confident that Stalin would play that exceptional role which he had assumed in the war. His cheeks were wet with tears. Either he was a great actor or he spoke sincerely.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 49

It should be emphasized that Churchill obviously held Stalin in high esteem and, I felt, feared to enter into acute discussions with him. In all his arguments with Churchill Stalin was always extremely specific and logical.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 675

PEOPLE COMPLIMENT STALIN'S MIND AND COMPOSURE

Mr. Joseph Davies, formerly American ambassador to the Soviet Union, telling his daughter of his meeting with Stalin, says,
"He gives the impression of a strong mind which is composed and wise. His brown eye is exceedingly kind and gentle. A child would like to sit on his knee and a dog would sidle up to him…. He has a sly humor. He has a very great mentality. It is sharp, shrewd and above all things else, wise, at least so it would appear to me. If you can picture a personality that is exactly opposite to what the most rabid anti-Stalinist anywhere could conceive, then you might picture this man…."
Murphy, John Thomas. Stalin, London, John Lane, 1945, p. 238

… Stalin has a sly humor. He has a very great mentality. It a sharp, shrewd, and above all things else, wise, at least so it would appear to me. If you can picture a personality that is exactly opposite to what the most rabid anti-Stalinist anywhere could conceive, then you

might picture this man. The conditions that I know to exist here and his personality are just as far apart as the poles.
Davies, Joseph E. Mission to Moscow. New York, N. Y.: Simon and Schuster, c1941, p. 357

Yenukidze states, “Stalin then, as now, was not noted for verbosity. Brevity, clarity, exactitude from his early years were his distinctive qualities.
Life of Stalin, A Symposium. New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1930, p. 91

“I see quite clearly before me young Soso at Tiflis,” writes Yenukidze, “where I had my first business interview with him. Stalin even then, as now, was not distinguished by talkativeness. Brevity, clarity, accuracy were his distinctive qualities…. The natural simplicity of his speech and address, his absolute carelessness of his own private comfort, his inner hardness and complete absence of vanity, the fact that already he was politically educated, made this young revolutionary an authority among the Tiflis workers, who looked upon him as one of themselves.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 15

Yet despite the adulation to which he is constantly subjected, it is agreed by men who have had contact with him, and it is obvious from his works, that Stalin is no neurotic megalomaniac. Throughout the war he has maintained an active sense of proportion and a Russian sense of modesty. Stalin has never made any claims to supernatural guidance or claimed messianic wisdom, nor does he affect the personal mannerisms of a dictator. It cannot be shown anywhere that he ever boasted of adding any new principle to Marxism, though he has not opposed the use of the phrase Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism.
“I am merely a pupil of Lenin,” he likes to repeat, “and my aim is to be a worthy pupil of his.”…
Appreciation of the limitations of his own knowledge evidently saved Stalin from interfering disastrously with the work of experts. He never made the mistake of setting up headquarters at the front, and countermanding tactical plans, as Hitler did.
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 150

He studies assiduously in many branches of knowledge and he has the help of experts always in readiness for consultation. I never met anyone who talked to him who was not surprised by his ready fund of information on a wide variety of subjects, his ability to ask searching and highly pertinent questions, and his great capacity to listen.
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 156

…He [Stalin] is direct to the extent of bluntness or rudeness. He likes candor in other people too….
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 157

…As regards personal qualities, he had a very strong character, dogged determination, clarity of mind that most lacked.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 181

He had an exceptional memory.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 184

Stalin is in no sense a “misfit.” He won a scholarship as a boy. That feature of his ability is still evident in him. He has an unusual memory. He has an instinct for finding facts and culling from most unexpected sources information which he can use in a practical manner.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 322

Stalin was a fast learner and was quick to grasp anything new.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 226

SHAKHURIN: I am in a position to know that Stalin had very many positive qualities, because I met with him frequently–almost every day–for six years, Shakhurin said. I know personally of his many rare, positive qualities and how much he accomplished. He had unique attributes, the mind of the greatest of statesmen.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 308

Not the least of Stalin’s qualities is his ability to profit by experience.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 135

Unfortunately for his tranquility he secretly studied, at the Tiflis Seminary, books on the natural sciences and on sociology. He introduced into this well-ordered house the written poison of positive knowledge. The scandal was discovered by the authorities of the place. The need for genuine self-instruction being incompatible with the pure tradition of the Seminary, young Soso was expelled on the ground that he displayed a lack of “political balance.”
In 1898 he joined the Tiflis branch of the Russian Social Democratic Workers’ Party…. This intellectual, the son of a peasant worker, embraced the calling of “professional revolutionary,” first among the Tiflis railway workers and later among the tobacco workers and the workers in the boot factories and, later still, among the workers at the meteorological observatory–a little everywhere, in fact: a workman in the workers’ cause.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 8

Addressing the conference [at Tehran], Stalin spoke quietly and at times curtly. He had a highly disciplined mind and expressed himself with utmost economy. Nothing aggravated him more than woolly, long-winded oratory.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 381

I admit that there was something in his personality which revealed pre-eminence, a grasp of the essentials, the alert mind, which could not fail to impress and fascinate. He relied to a minimum on his assistants at the roundtable; he carried all the details in his head. Nor did he miss any weakness in the argument of his opponents, on which he would pounce like a bird of prey. I liked his slow, simple manner of expressing himself, which entailed no effort for his interpreter to follow his train of thought.
Birse, Arthur Herbert. Memoirs of an Interpreter. New York: Coward-McCann, 1967, p. 212

Zhukov detected in Stalin ‘an ability to formulate an idea concisely, a naturally analytical mind, great erudition and a rare memory’.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 233

Recalling Stalin traits, Marshal Vasilevsky singled out his phenomenal memory:

“I have never met anyone who could remember as much. He knew by name all the army and front commanders, of whom there were more than 100, and he even knew the names of some corps and divisional commanders…. Throughout the war Stalin had the composition of the strategic reserves in his head and could name any formation any time.”
Stalin’s ability to grasp the essence of a situation quickly also made a deep impression on Winston Churchill: ‘Very few people alive could have comprehended in so few minutes the reasons which we had all so long been wrestling with for months. He saw it all in a flash.’
It seems indisputable that Stalin had considerable intellectual powers, in addition to his highly developed purposefulness and strong will, and that it was more than force of circumstance or mere chance that made of him one of Lenin’s comrades-in-arms during the revolution and civil war. He was able to show these qualities at a time when they were most needed, and it was perhaps for that reason they became evident. Perhaps as a result Stalin came to believe in himself, and perhaps he was therefore able to do things that others found impossible.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 234

He [Stalin in] would recall his civil war years with pride: with the exception of Trotsky, he had probably been on more fronts than anyone.
He personally knew nearly all the officers from corps commander up, most of the marshals and army commanders since the civil war,…
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 316

One of his great characteristics was a phenomenal memory, at least in the matters which concerned him most. And he had the ability to master the facts in a variety of fields.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 193

In December 1941 Anthony Eden, the British Foreign Secretary, came to Moscow and saw Stalin. He had had an interview with him in 1935. Stalin had then ‘impressed me from the first: his personality made itself felt without effort or exaggeration. He had natural good manners, perhaps a result of his Georgian inheritance. Though I knew the man to be without mercy, I respected the quality of his mind and even felt a sympathy which I have never been able entirely to analyze.’
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 250

I was amazed at the rapidity of his judgments, at their accuracy, and at the ease with which he grasped the essentials of cases whose untangling sometimes required hours of work from me, so that I wondered at times if the local authorities had not purposely tried to make their acts too incomprehensible for us to understand them. I once expressed to him my surprise at the facility he showed in unraveling complicated matters.
He shrugged his shoulders.
“I’m used to spotting the essential link in each of these matters. After that, the rest is easy.”
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 178

I found my uncle sitting on the veranda of the Villa Nadejda, watching the sunset and reading Les Chouans, by his favorite author, Balzac….
“Well, Budu!” he said. “I read with interest your observations on Hungarian monetary reform which Sviridov sent on to me. Congratulations! Except, of course, for confusing the prewar

pengo with the one which circulated in Sub-Carpathian Russia, which was still tied to the Czech crown."
It was a fact that I had made this slip, of no great practical importance. I marveled once again at his [Stalin] ability to detect the errors of others in apparently every field, and said as much to him.
"There's nothing astonishing about my knowing that," he said. "I have nothing to do now and I'm reading and studying all sorts of economic problems of Central Europe."
"Why so?" I asked.
"It's obvious that we've got to take a hand there. As a result of my recent reading, I'm of the opinion that Molotov is wrong about the economic attachment of these countries to the USSR. It's a difficult problem to solve. Unfortunately, Voroshilov agrees with him and the other members of the Politburo are backing them out."
"He then put a series of questions to me on various financial and economic problems in the regions which we had occupied. He always went straight to the point on every question and showed a deep understanding of all these matters, which amazed me. This was my specialty, not his particularly, yet on many points I was obliged to admit that he was my master in my own field.
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 227

He was neither hot-tempered, nor openhearted, nor emotional, nor sentimental; in other words, he lacked all that was characteristic of a typically Georgian temperament.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 359

The fact, however, remains that my father was capable of flaring up, of flying into a temper, and using rude language. He slapped my face twice on an occasion when he lost his temper. He hit Vasily once, when Vasily was still a small boy. Such short outbursts were sufficient to cool him down…. But my father's grossness was limited, in essence, to his tongue.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 365

But Stalin has great power of mental concentration. He went through a test of a kind once. It was before the revolution. The Tsar's police and military were tired of his constant escapes from banishment and decided to put him through a torture which few survive with sanity. He was made to run the gauntlet of the Salyansky regiment and each soldier beat him as he passed with the butt end of his rifle. Stalin concentrated his thoughts upon some aspect of Marxism, gritted his teeth and walked the whole alley of yelling and buffeting soldiers. The man who could do that has some almost Indian power of thought over body. So one need not assume that in his long silences over his pipe Stalin has not thought out the development of the revolution and the next steps in his career.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 120

He [Stalin] is not an emotional man like Roosevelt, nor does he live on his nerves like Lloyd George or McDonald. He has nerves, he can get excited, but he is always under control. His nerves are not frayed by the difficulties of administration.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 122

Stalin recognized only the truth, no matter how bitter that truth was. To the end of his days, Stalin always had a steady character, a phenomenal memory, quick mind, sharp reflexes, and was very observant of life.

Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 104

Then, consider his patience, his tenacity. His perseverance, as Walter Duranty says, is "inhuman." He is a slow builder of bricks, so slow that often his followers are impatient, because they do not see the outline of the finished structure he is building. His line is undeviating; he takes only "the long view."
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 517

Again, there is his sense of detail, which is very great. His wary eye penetrates to the smallest elements in the national life,… Stalin reads everything, down to the last paragraph in Pravda. His day begins with the perusal of local reports, carefully sifted from all parts of the Soviet Union. W. H. Chamberlain (cf. Russia's Iron Age, p. 187), certainly no friendly critic, notes that Stalin, by personal intervention, remedied injustices in spheres very far removed from his normal business.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 518

His intelligence is wary, cautious, thorough…. witness his talk with H. G. Wells, wherein he more then held his own with that glib and eloquent interlocutor. And witness his remarkable interview in 1927 with an American women's delegation when he answered questions for four solid hours, questions of great diversity and difficulty. He talked strictly extemporaneously, but with perfect organization of material, of a kind only possible to a man completely sure of himself. The verbatim report, about 11,800 words, comprises one of the most comprehensive and discerning statements of Soviet aims ever made; it was a tour de force quite beyond the capacity of any but an exceptionally intelligent man.
When the delegation, thoroughly exhausted, had concluded its queries, Stalin asked if he might ask questions about America–and he did so for two hours more. His questions were penetrating and showed considerable knowledge of American conditions; Stalin, single-handed, answered the delegation's questions much better than they replied to him. During this 6 ours of talk, the telephone did not ring once; no secretary was allowed to interrupt–another indication of Stalin's habit of utter concentration to the job in hand.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 519

In the company of two such astute politicians as Churchill and Roosevelt [at Yalta], with their long experience of the turmoil of democratic politics, Stalin impressed all who sat around the table with him, or heard him speak, with his mastery of the business, his remarkable memory–he never made a note or consulted a paper–his skill in debate and the quickness with which he could switch from the "roughness" that Lenin had criticized to the charm that Churchill felt even when he resisted it.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 876

[After a meeting with Stalin in July 1941 shortly after the German attack Harry Hopkins stated in the American magazine: Not once did he repeat himself. He talked as he knew his troops were shooting–straight and hard. He welcomed me with a few, swift Russian words. He shook my hand briefly, firmly, courteously. He smiled warmly. There was no waste of word, gesture, nor mannerism. It was like talking to a perfectly co-coordinated machine, an intelligent machine. Joseph Stalin knew what he wanted, knew what Russia wanted, and he assumed that you knew. We talked for almost four hours on this second visit. The questions

he asked were clear, concise, direct. Tired as I was, I found myself replying as tersely. His answers were ready, unequivocal, spoken as if the man had had them on his tongue for years.
Only once while we talked did his telephone ring. He apologized for the interruption, telling me he was making plans for his supper at 12:30 that night. Not once did a secretary enter with dispatches or memoranda. And when we said goodbye we shook hands again with the same finality. He said goodbye once, just as only once he said hello.
No man could forget the picture of the dictator of Russia as he stood watching me leave –an austere, rugged, determined figure in boots that shone like mirrors, stout baggy trousers, and snug-fitting blouse. He wore no ornament, military or civilian. He's built close to the ground, like a football coach's dream of a tackle. He's about five feet six, about 190 pounds. His hands are huge, as hard as his mind. His voice is harsh but ever under control. What he says is all the accent and inflection his words need….
If he is always as I heard him, he never wastes a syllable. If he wants to soften an abrupt answer or a sudden question he does it with that quick, managed smile–a smile that can be cold but friendly, austere but warm. He curries no favor with you. He seems to have no doubts. He assures you that Russia will stand against the onslaughts of the German army. He takes it for granted that you have no doubts, either….
He offered me one of his cigarettes and he took one of mine. He's a chain smoker, probably accounting for the harshness of his carefully controlled voice. He laughs often enough, but it's a short laugh, somewhat sardonic, perhaps. There is no small talk in him. His humor is keen, penetrating. He speaks no English, but as he shot rapid Russian at me he ignored the interpreter, looking straight into my eyes as though I understood every word that he uttered.
Sherwood, Robert E. Roosevelt and Hopkins. New York: Harper, 1948, p. 343-344

Beaverbrook noted of Stalin, "We had got to like him; a kindly man, with a habit, when agitated, of walking about the floor with his hands behind his back. He smoked a great deal and practically never shows any impatience at all."
Sherwood, Robert E. Roosevelt and Hopkins. New York: Harper, 1948, p. 391

I met him [Stalin] several times towards the end of his life, and I was able to observe the facility with which he went straight to what was essential, even in technological spheres he knew nothing about. He had the gift of putting his finger on the weak points. An organizer of genius, he was able to create a service in a few minutes, give it a mission to perform, and obtain the result he wanted within the deadline fixed by him. In that he was better even than my father.
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 134

Far from being the head-case he is described as nowadays, Stalin was supremely intelligent….
Methodical in the extreme, Stalin's vast memory constituted a veritable collection of archives, and he drew from it at will the data he considered he needed in order to achieve an aim. He prepared carefully for every meeting, studying the questions he meant to raise. He swotted at his books like a good pupil, said my father, who did the same himself. Stalin's life was just as ordered, despite the distressing timetables that he inflicted on his collaborators, because he worked late into the night.
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 148

Stalin's gift, apart from his catechismic rhythms of question and answer, was the ability to reduce complex problems to lucid simplicity, a talent that is invaluable in a politician. He could draft, usually in his own hand, a diplomatic telegram, speech or article straight off in the clearest, yet often subtle prose….
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 98

He [Stalin] found the solution in a meticulous and pedantic study of international problems and of diplomatic history, as well as in keeping the closest watch on his diplomatists. This study yielded results. The extent of his knowledge in this domain began to surprise the statesmen who came into contact with him. Roosevelt, Churchill, Eden, Stettinius, T.V. Soong, and Victor Hoo, negotiating with Moscow in 1945, were astonished by the degree of his erudition and by his memory.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 196

The information which he received was as usual contradictory. In these circumstances Stalin adhered to his basic principle. He tried to obtain as much information as possible while endeavoring to perceive, through his personal informers, the realities which so often escaped them. By endeavoring to maintain an absolute objectivity, he detached himself from all the ideas inspired by his own theories and conceptions. In this he was entirely successful, which unfortunately cannot always be said of the majority of people at work in the international arena.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 223

Certainly in personal conversation or in the wording of his speeches, Stalin gives no sign of arrogance or undue self-esteem. This has been noted by everyone who comes into contact with him. Churchill, for instance, said: "Premier Stalin left on me an impression of deep, cool wisdom and absence of illusions… A man direct, even blunt in speech…with that saving sense of humor which is of high importance." Wendell Willkie said: "As I was leaving him after my first talk, I thanked him for the time he had given me in the honor he had conferred upon me in talking so candidly. A little embarrassed, he replied: 'Mr. Willkie, you know I grew up a Georgian peasant. I am unschooled in pretty talk. All I can say is I like you very much.' He is a simple man with no affectations or poses." Former Ambassador Davies in an official report to Secretary Hull, June 9, 1938, on his interview with Stalin, said: "His demeanor is kindly, his manner almost deprecatingly simple…. He gave me the impression of being sincerely modest."
Duranty, Walter. Stalin & Co. New York: W. Sloane Associates, 1949, p. 52

I associated with Stalin from February 1941, when I stepped into the post of Chief of General Staff. Stalin's outer appearance has been described many times. Though of moderate height and externally undistinguished, Stalin produced a strong impression on whoever spoke with him. Free of affectations and mannerisms, he won people's hearts by his simple ways. His uninhibited way of speaking, the ability to express himself clearly, is inborn analytical mind, his extensive knowledge and phenomenal memory, made even old hands and eminent people brace themselves and gather their wits when talking to him.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 365

All his life he devoted himself to accumulating knowledge. His attentiveness, memory, and analytical skills were razor-sharp even if he did not brag about this to others;…
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 115

STALIN IS NOT A DICTATOR

Assuming that we accept the primary meaning of the term dictator, as it is defined in the The New English Dictionary — “a ruler or governor whose word is law; an absolute ruler of the state — and who authoritatively prescribes a course of action or dictates what is to be done” — Stalin is not a dictator.
In May 1941 Stalin hitherto content to be a member of the Presidium, alarmed at the menace of a victorious German Army invading the Ukraine, took over, with the consent of the Presidium, the office a prime minister and Minister of defense, leaving Molotov as foreign Secretary; in exactly the same way, and for a similar reason–the world war–that Winston Churchill, with the consent of the house of Commons, became prime minister and Minister of defense with Chamberlain,…. Neither the prime minister of the British cabinet nor the presiding member of the Sovnarkom has anything like the autocratic power of the president of the USA, who not only selects his cabinet, subject merely to approval by a simple majority of the Senate, but is also commander in chief of the American Armed Forces and, under the Lend Lease act, is empowered to safeguard in one way or another, the arrival of munitions and food at the British ports. By declaring, in May 1941, a state of unlimited national emergency, President Roosevelt legally assumes a virtual dictatorship of the United States. He has power to takeover transport, to comandeer the radio for the purposes of propaganda, to control imports in all exchange transactions, to requisition ships and to suspend laws governing working hours, and most important of all, to decide on industrial priorities and, if necessary, to take over industrial plants.
Webb, Sidney. The Truth about Soviet Russia. New York: Longmans, Green, 1942, p. 16

Stalin’s opponents accuse him of absolutism, and it is true and false. Absolutism there is–not that Stalin wants it for his ambition or vainglory but because the circumstances in Russia demand it….
Outsiders may write nonsense about Stalin’s ego and the purely personal quality of “the struggle for power” between him and Trotsky or Rykov or Zinoviev.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 218

…To begin with, Stalin is anything but remote or autocratic in method. I doubt if any national leader has his ear so close to the ground, and by all accounts his method in meetings of the Politburo, which is the real government, is to let other people talk, after he has briefly indicated the lines of discussion, and to reach a conclusion by the process of summary, comparison, and the elimination of his colleagues’ views.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 225

Stalin does not rule personally…. When Emil Ludwig asked him who really made decisions, he answered: “Single persons cannot decide…. The leadership of our party is the Central Committee, which directs all the Soviet and Communist organizations, consists of about 70 people…. It is in this Supreme Council that the whole wisdom of our party is concentrated.

Each man is entitled to challenge his neighbor's opinion or suggestion. Each man may give the benefit of his own experience. If it were otherwise, if individual decisions were admitted, there would be serious mistakes in our work."
Strong, Anna Louise. This Soviet World. New York, N. Y: H. Holt and company, c1936, p. 110

At one point the head of our Regional Party organization requested that Comrade Stalin permit himself to be photographed with our delegation…. The photographer, whose name was Petrov, went to this camera and started to arrange the group for the picture. Petrov was a respected specialist in his trade. He had worked around the Kremlin for years and was well-known among Party workers. He started giving us instructions on which way to look and how to turn our heads. Suddenly Stalin remarked in a voice everyone could hear, "Comrade Petrov loves to order people around. But now that's forbidden here. No one may order anyone else around ever again." Even though he said this jokingly, we all took him seriously and were heartened by the democratic spirit he displayed.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 26

A similar incident occurred a few years later when my friend Rimsky took a group of students to Moscow to see the sights of the capital. Rimsky decided to ask Stalin if he would receive a delegation of these students. As Rimsky told me, "I called the Kremlin and was put straight through to Stalin. What accessibility! Stalin agreed to receive us. When we arrived in Stalin's office, I said, 'Comrade Stalin, we've come from the city formerly called Yuzovka which now bears your name. It's called Stalino. Therefore we'd like to ask you to send a letter of greeting back with us to the Stalino workers.'" And here is how Stalin answered this request: "What do you think I am? A big landowner? The workers in the factories aren't serfs on my farm. It would be insulting and completely unsuitable for me to write them a letter of greeting. I won't do it myself, and I don't like it when other people do that sort of thing." Rimsky was pleasantly surprised. When he got home he spread the story around to illustrate Stalin's democratic spirit, his accessibility, and his proper understanding of his place.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 27

…there are situations in which he [Stalin] does not have as much freedom as the President of the United States.
Roosevelt, for example, did not ask his Cabinet's permission when he chose to go abroad. In declining to attend the Quebec Conference, Stalin explained that his government–really the Politburo–thought it undesirable that he should leave at that moment….
"The decisions of single persons," said Stalin, in rejecting the Fuhrer principle of personal dictatorship, "are always, or nearly always, one-sided. Out of every 100 decisions made by single persons, that have not been tested and corrected collectively, 90 are one-sided. In our leading body, the Central Committee of our party, which guides all our soviet and party organizations, there are about 70 members. Each one is able to contribute his experience. Were it otherwise, if decisions had been taken by individuals, we should have committed very serious mistakes."
Snow, Edgar. The Pattern of Soviet Power, New York: Random House, 1945, p. 164

…The characterization of Stalinism as highly centralized can be applied to the decision-making process at the top of the Soviet hierarchy where Stalin's personal involvement was clearly immense, but it is less applicable when discussing the relations between central and lower-level political organs. Furthermore the term totalitarian, with its

connotations of all pervasive control, does not accord well with the severe limitations that existed on central power and the massive social upheavals over which it was physically impossible to exercise close control.
Gill, Graeme. Stalinism. Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press International, 1990, p. 56

…Although Stalin was clearly able to exercise considerable power at the lower levels of the political system, and certainly much more than his opponents, he was not able to build up an extensive, smoothly organized and disciplined political machine that would obey his will. Instead he had to proceed principally through gaining the support of other political leaders at all levels in a coalition-building process.
Gill, Graeme. Stalinism. Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press International, 1990, p. 65

Although by the end of the decade [1930s] he [Stalin] was unquestionably the supreme leader, he was never omnipotent, and he always functioned within a matrix of other groups and interests.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 7

The main causal element in the literature has always been Stalin's personality and culpability. In most accounts there were no other authoritative actors, no limits on his power, no politics, no discussion of society or social climate, no confusion or indecision. Stalin gave and everyone else received. The actions of others, or the environment within which he worked, were largely irrelevant or impotent. As a result, these accounts came perilously close to falling into the literary genre of fairy tales, complete with an evil and all-powerful sorcerer working against virtuous but powerless victims. Many existing historical treatments of the terror–including some quite recent ones–followed simple linguistic conventions and structures in order to illustrate their only point. Given the narrow focus, it was difficult to say more than "At this time Stalin decided to destroy…."
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 570

There can be no [one man] dictatorship in the Communist International and in the USSR. It cannot exist because Communism and the Soviet regime develop along the lines of an extremely definite doctrine, of which the most important people are merely the servants, whereas the characteristic of dictatorship, of personal power, is to impose one's own will, one's own fancies, in opposition to existing law.
There may be different interpretations of Marxism, especially in its reaction to events and, from this point of view, a particular interpretation or even a particular course of action may at any given moment predominate at the head of the State of the International. The question of whether such interpretation or course of action is a good one is solved automatically, and the leaders prove themselves to be right or wrong by contact with logical exigencies and the sequence of events. It would therefore be a great mistake to think that there is any supreme authority in the USSR, an individual sovereignty imposing itself on this great organization by artificial means, such as force of arms or intrigues. (The tyrant who, when anyone stands in his way, makes a sign to the executioner, like the Caliphs in the Arabian Nights or to hired assassins.)
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 147

[Interview of Yaroslavski with an American delegation of professors at the Central Council of the League of Militant Atheists, July 13, 1932]

QUESTIONER: In America there is the widespread opinion that (the Soviet Union) is an absolute dictatorship.
COMRADE YAROSLAVSKI: Of course, any talk of Comrade Stalin's dictatorship is utter nonsense. Comrade Stalin is not a dictator but the extremely beloved leader of our party, who enjoys unlimited trust and extraordinary prestige because he has carried out the correct line of the party for more than 30 years, never wavered at the most critical moments, and always walked side-by-side with Lenin. No one in our party ever considered, considers him, or could ever consider him a dictator because Comrade Stalin's proposals are discussed by the supreme bodies of our party, including the Central Committee, the Political Bureau, the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee, and the congresses, which may disagree with Comrade Stalin. If they do agree with him, it is because his policy is the correct one. In this respect, Lenin was also "justifiably" or, more probably, without any justification, called a dictator in his day, even though his authority was based on boundless trust and respect, not subordination. In Comrade Stalin's writings you can find a number of articles and letters in which he argues with his comrades who disagree with him and tries to persuade them. Of course, if the rumors you're talking about were true, he wouldn't even try to persuade or argue with his comrades.
QUESTIONER: We personally don't doubt that Comrade Stalin is a great man and a great leader, but have there not been cases, despite all his prestige, where the proposals he has submitted to the Central Committee have failed to win a majority of votes? After all, Lenin was sometimes in the minority.
COMRADE YAROSLAVSKI: I don't remember any instances where Comrade Stalin has submitted incorrect proposals. With respect to your comments that Lenin was sometimes in the minority, during the Brest peace negotiations many people disagreed with Lenin. I myself was opposed to the Brest Treaty, which I have always deeply regretted, because I was wrong and Lenin was right. Even then Comrade Stalin supported Lenin's policy.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 609

As Timothy Dunmore recently noted, "Few are now prepared to accept too literally Djilas's picture of senior Politburo members obsequiously following Stalin about and taking his orders down on a convenient note pad."
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 199

When I then asked him whether an individual was not governing in Russia, instead of a committee, he pointed to the 16 chairs round our table and said: "Three revolutions have taught us that of every 100 decisions an individual makes, 90 are wrong. Our committee of 70 members comprises the most intelligent leaders of industry, the shrewdest businessmen, the most skillful agitators, experts in agriculture and nationality. Each one of them can correct a single resolution by his experience."
Ludwig, Emil. Three portraits: Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin. New York Toronto: Longmans, Green and Company, c1940, p. 118

And yet it should be kept in mind that at the end of the 1920s Stalin certainly did not yet possess unlimited power. Major decisions were taken by a group of 20 to 30 individuals including certain key figures on the Central Committee who were the leaders of the most important provincial organizations.

Medvedev, Roy. On Stalin and Stalinism. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 66

Stalin apologized to Mikoyan and he often had to apologize to the others too. Dictators did not need to apologize.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 62

He [Stalin] discovered, moreover, that the President of the United States had more liberty of action than the master of the Kremlin, who had always to deal with his Politburo.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 347

On the eve of the Yalta Conference the Politburo appointed a Permanent Committee to follow the negotiations on the spot. The President of this committee was Molotov; it included Beria, Malenkov, Bulganin, Voroshilov, and Mikoyan. Stalin's authority was, of course, very great, but for once his traditional tactics of taking refuge behind the decisions of the Politburo turned against him. Carried away by Roosevelt's example, he wanted to form decisions which had not been previously considered by the committee. He even did so. But the Politburo was accustomed to being the supreme official authority; it jibbed at this, and sought to impose its actual authority.
…The result was that Stalin, contrary to the general belief, was less free in his decisions than Churchill and Roosevelt.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 369

But Stalin was not free to maneuver as he wished. The Permanent Committee was keeping a watch on him.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 370

It was then that Stalin made a series of confidences to Roosevelt, which Stettinius and Pavlov remembered: "You are mistaken in believing that I am a dictator like Hitler," said Stalin. "I am not. Of course, I exercise indisputable authority, and I could impose concessions which I am ready to make, but which my colleagues would not wish to allow. But in this case I have to show them the immediate or future advantages which I should expect from such concessions. Otherwise I should be diminishing my own authority."
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 374

This was his [Stalin] last act of homage [accepting Roosevelt's refusal to OK the Soviet demand for the right of veto concerning the questionss to be inscribed on the order of the day] to the memory of the great President, before whom he had accepted the liberty of discussion in the Security Council of the United Nations Organization. From this moment he once more became a prisoner of the aggressive obstinacy of his colleagues of the Politburo, who in the vertigo of victory thought they could impose their conceptions on the whole world.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 388

In the autumn of 1945 Stalin left for Sochi. This absence was justified by the prescription of semi-retirement, and by the state of his health, and his disappointments; it coincided with a fit of exasperation with the attitude of the majority of the Politburo, which disagreed with him on a number of questions.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 398

In the higher spheres of Communism no secret was made of this [others were making decisions challenging those of Stalin and making themselves his equal]. Thus, Zhdanov once said before Diaz and two other Spanish Communists who were refugees in Moscow, in explanation of the private ideas of the group of Stalin's successors: "The king is absolute when he does our will." This translation of Schiller's sentence: "Und der Konig ist absolute wenn er unseren Willen tut," shows plainly that the new bureaucratic caste which had been created in the USSR saw in Stalin merely an external symbol of the unity of the State, and no longer a source of immediate power. The "Supreme Arbiter" was relegated to Sochi for months at a time, and remained in the background, while others ruled the country in his name and under his authority. Stalin's superior astuteness consisted in accepting this "diminution" as though it were imposed upon him, whereas it was actually precisely what he desired.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 400

Harold Lasky, who went to Moscow in 1947, and who had the advantage of being able to speak Russian, explained in the Labor press that "Stalin was not a true personal dictator, since he is obliged to obey the majority of the Politburo."
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 401

But [my] four lengthy talks and one or two brief social meetings with Stalin were more than any other Western diplomat enjoyed during the period I was in Russia, and those opportunities to meet the leader of the Soviet peoples face-to-face, climaxing careful study of what he has said and what he has done during the past years, make it possible to differentiate the Stalin of fact from the Stalin of legend….
From that spirit, I had drawn certain conclusions about Stalin in the sixty-ninth year of his life and his 25th year in power:
He is not, for instance, an absolute dictator, on the one hand, nor a prisoner of the Politburo, on the other; his position, I would say, is more that of chairman of the board with the decisive vote.
Smith, Walter Bedell. My Three Years in Moscow. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1950, p. 55

Sometimes it is asserted that, whereas the form may be otherwise, the fact is that, whilst the Communist Party controls the whole administration, the Party itself, and thus indirectly the whole state, is governed by the will of a single person, Josef Stalin.
First let it be noted that, unlike Mussolini, Hitler, and other modern-day dictators, Stalin is not invested by law with any authority over his fellow-citizens, and not even over the members of the Party to which he belongs. He has not even the extensive power which the Congress of the United States has temporarily conferred upon President Roosevelt, or that which the American Constitution entrusts for four years to every successive president. So far as grade or dignity is concerned, Stalin is in no sense the highest official in the USSR, or even in the Communist Party. He is not, and has never been, President of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the All-Union Congress of Soviets–a place long held by Sverdlov and now by Kalinin, who is commonly treated as the President of the USSR. He is not (as Lenin was) the President of the Sovnarkom of the RSFSR, the dominant member of the Federation; or of the USSR itself, the place now held by Molotov, who may be taken to correspond to the Prime Minister of a parliamentary democracy. He is not even a People's Commissar, or member of the Cabinet, either of the USSR or of any of the constituent republics. Until 1934 he held no other office in the machinery of the constitution than that,

since 1930 only, of membership (one among 10) of the Committee of Labor and Defense. Even in the Communist Party, he is not the president of the Central Committee of the Party, who may be deemed the highest placed member; indeed, he is not even the president of the presidium of this Central Committee. He is, in fact, only the General Secretary of the Party, receiving his salary from the Party funds and holding his office by appointment by the Party Central Committee, and, as such, also a member (one among nine) of its most important subcommittee, the Politburo.
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, p. 333

If we are invited to believe that Stalin is, in effect, a dictator, we may inquire whether he does, in fact, act in the way that dictators have usually acted?
We have given particular attention to this point, collecting all the available evidence, and noting carefully the inferences to be drawn from the experience of the past eight years (1926-1934). We do not think that the Party is governed by the will of a single person; or that Stalin is the sort of person to claim or desire such a position. He has himself very explicitly denied any such personal dictatorship in terms which, whether or not he is credited with sincerity, certainly accord with our own impression of the facts….
This reasoned answer [his response to Emil Ludwig' questions] by Stalin himself puts the matter on the right basis. The Communist Party in the USSR has adopted for its own organization the pattern which we have described as common throughout the whole soviet constitution. In this pattern individual dictatorship has no place. Personal decisions are distrusted, and elaborately guarded against. In order to avoid the mistakes due to bias, anger, jealousy, vanity, and other distempers, from which no person is, at all times, entirely free or on his guard, it is desirable that the individual will should always be controlled by the necessity of gaining the ascent of colleagues of equal grade, who have candidly discussed the matter, and who have to make themselves jointly responsible for the decision.
We find confirmation of this inference in Stalin's explicit description of how he acted in a remarkable case. He has, in fact, frequently pointed out that he does no more than carry out the decisions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Thus, in describing his momentous article known as "Dizzy with Success," he expressly states that this was written on "the well-known decision of the Central Committee regarding the 'Fight against Distortions of the Party Line' in the collective farm movement…." "In this connection," he continues, "I recently received a number of letters from comrades, collective farmers, calling up on me to reply to the questions contained in them. It was my duty to reply to the letters in private correspondence; but that proved to be impossible, since more than half the letters received did not have the addresses of the writers (they forgot to send their addresses). Nevertheless the questions raised in these letters are of tremendous political interest to all our comrades…. In view of this I found myself faced with the necessity of replying to the comrades in an open letter, i.e. in the press…. I did this all the more willingly since I had a direct decision of the Central Committee to this purpose." We cannot imagine the contemporary "dictators" of Italy, Hungary, Germany and now (1935) the United States–or even the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom or France–seeking the instructions of his Cabinet as to how he should deal with letters which he could not answer individually. But Stalin goes further. He gives the reason for such collegiate decision. He points out that there is a "real danger" attendant on the personal decreeing by individual representatives of the Party in this or that corner of our vast country. I have in mind not only local functionaries, but even certain regional committee members, and even certain members of the Central

Committee, a practice which Lenin had stigmatized as communist conceit. “The Central Committee of the Party,” he said, “realized this danger, and did not delay intervening, instructing Stalin to warn the erring comrades in an article on the collective farm movement. Some people believe that the article ‘Dizzy with Success’ is the result of the personal initiative of Stalin. That is nonsense. Our Central Committee does not exist in order to permit the personal initiative of anybody, whoever it may be, in matters of this kind. It was a reconnaissance on the part of the Central Committee. And when the depth and seriousness of the errors were established, the Central Committee did not hesitate to strike against these errors with the full force of its authority, and accordingly issued its famous decision of March 15, 1930.”

The plain truth is that, surveying the administration of the USSR during the past decade, under the alleged dictatorship of Stalin, the principal decisions have manifested neither the promptitude nor the timeliness, nor yet the fearless obstinacy that have often been claimed as the merits of a dictatorship. On the contrary, the action of the Party has frequently been taken after consideration so prolonged, and as the outcome of discussion sometimes so heated and embittered, as to bear upon their formulation the marks of hesitancy and lack of assurance. More than once, their adoption has been delayed to a degree that has militated against their success; and, far from having been obstinately and ruthlessly carried out, the execution has often been marked by a succession of orders each contradicting its predecessor, and none of them pretending to completeness or finality. Whether we take the First Five-year Plan, or the determination to make universal the collective farms; the frantic drive towards “self-sufficiency” in the equipment of the heavy industries, and in every kind of machine-making, or the complete “liquidation of the kulaks as a class,” we see nothing characteristic of government by the will of a single person. On the contrary, these policies have borne, in the matter of their adoption and in the style of their formulation, the stigmata of committee control. If the USSR during the past 8 or 10 years has been under a dictatorship, the dictator has surely been an inefficient one! He has often acted neither promptly nor at the right moment; his execution has been vacillating and lacking in ruthless completeness. If we had to judge him by the actions taken in his name, Stalin has had many of the defects from which, by its very nature, a dictator is free. In short, the government of the USSR during the past decade has been clearly no better than that of a committee. Our inference is that it has been, in fact, the very opposite of a dictatorship. It has been, as it still is, government by a whole series of committees.

This does not mean, of course, that the interminable series of committees, which is the characteristic feature of the USSR Government, have no leaders; nor need it be doubted that among these leaders the most influential, both within the Kremlin and without, is now Stalin himself. But so far as we have been able to ascertain, his leadership is not that of a dictator. We are glad to quote an illustrative example of Stalin’s administration, as described by an able American resident of Moscow: “Let me give a brief example of how Stalin functions. I saw him preside at a small committee meeting, deciding a matter on which I had brought a complaint. He summoned to the office all the persons concerned in the matter, but when we arrived we found ourselves meeting not only with Stalin, but also with Voroshilov and Kaganovich. Stalin sat down, not at the head of the table, but informally placed where he could see the faces of all. He opened the talk with a plain, direct question, repeating the complaint in one sentence, and asking the man complained against: ‘Why was it necessary to do this?’

“After this, he said less than anyone. An occasional phrase, a word without pressure; even his questions were less demands for answers than interjections guiding the speaker’s

thought. But how swiftly everything was revealed, all our hopes, egotisms, conflicts, all the things we had been doing to each other. The essential nature of men I had known for years, and of others I met for the first time, came out sharply, more clearly than I had ever seen them, yet without prejudice. Each of them had to cooperate, to be taken account of in a problem; the job we must do, and its direction became clear.
There is, in fact, a consensus of opinion, among those who have watched Stalin's action in administration, that this is not at all characteristic of a dictator. It is rather that of a shrewd and definitely skillful manager facing a succession of stupendous problems which have to be grappled with. He is not conceited enough to imagine that he has, within his own knowledge and judgment, any completely perfect plan for surmounting the difficulties. None of the colleagues seated around the committee table, as he realizes, has such a plan. He does not attempt to bully the committee. He does not even drive them. Imperturbably he listens to the endless discussion, picking up something from each speaker, and gradually combining every relevant consideration in the most promising conclusion then and there possible. At the end of the meeting, or at a subsequent one–for the discussions are often adjourned from day-to-day–he will lay before his colleagues a plan uniting the valuable suggestions of all the other proposals, as qualified by all the criticisms; and it will seem to his colleagues, as it does to himself, that this is the plan to be adopted. When it is put in operation, all sorts of unforeseen difficulties reveal themselves, for no plan can be free from shortcomings and defects. The difficulties give rise to further discussions and to successive modifications, none of which achieves perfect success. Is not this very much how administration is carried on in every country in the world, whatever may be its constitution? The "endless adventure of governing men" can never be other than a series of imperfect expedients, for which, even taking into account all past experience and all political science, there is, in the end, and inevitable resort to empirical "trial and error."
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, p. 334-337

If he is a dictator, he is not of the obtrusive conventional variety. He does not believe in hero-worship and does not practice it. The trappings of power do not tempt him.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 301

Is Stalin a dictator? Like the mythical Atlas, he carries the world on his shoulders. That Stalin knows. But he does not regard himself as a dictator. It is unquestionable that his attitude defies the conventional idea of an absolutist ruler. He is not and does not want to be a Nero. He is not and does not seek to be a Napoleon. He has no ambitions of gain. Worldly prowess is alien to his nature. He believes that he is helping create a new order from which someday all happiness will automatically flow to mankind. He believes that it is imperative to traverse a road of untold travail to reach that ideal. The vivisection of 160 million people today he justifies as a sacrifice necessary to bring bliss to double that number tomorrow. To Stalin, only Lenin has charted the right course through the darkness to light. And Stalin is adamant in his belief that he alone understands Lenin's cosmography correctly.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 314

"Comrade Stalin, the press of the world is by this time in the habit of calling you a dictator," I said. "Are you a dictator?"
I could see that Voroshilov waited with interest for the answer.
Stalin smiled, implying that the question was on the preposterous side.

“No, I am no dictator. Those who use the word do not understand the Soviet system of government and the methods of the Communist Party. No one man or group of men can dictate. Decisions are made by the Party and acted upon by its chosen organs, the Central Committee and the Politburo.”
Lyons, Eugene. Assignment in Utopia. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, c1937, p. 387

[Stalin said to Ludwig in an interview] Just now you asked me whether everything in our country was decided by one person. Never under any circumstances would our workers now tolerate power in the hands of one person. With us personages of the greatest authority are reduced to nonentities, become mere ciphers, as soon as the masses of the workers lose confidence in them, as soon as they lose contact with the masses of the workers.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 13, p. 113

Powerful though he was, his powers were not limitless…constraints of power existed even for Stalin.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 9

The solution [to Stalin’s alleged tendency to have his way] was obvious. Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Bukharin were appointed to the Orgbureau. They could oppose Stalin’s schemes whenever they wanted.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 215

Though dominant in the Politburo, Stalin did not chair it. The tradition persisted that the chairman of Sovnarkom should perform this task.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 277

Yet this was not a totalitarian dictatorship as conventionally defined because Stalin lacked the capacity, even at the height of his power, to secure automatic universal compliance with his wishes. He could purge personnel without difficulty. But when it came to ridding the Soviet order of many informal practices he disliked, he was much less successful. In such cases it was like someone trying to strike a match on a block of soap….
Constraints continue to exist upon his rule. In 1937 he had told the Party Central Committee that he intended to eradicate the network of political patronage in the USSR. Yet clientele groups survived.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 371

“Stalin was no tyrant, no despot. He was a man of principle; he was just, modest and very kindly and considerate towards people, the cadres, and his colleagues.”
Hoxha, Enver. With Stalin: Memoirs. Tirana: 8 N‘ntori Pub. House, 1979. p. 14-15

Stalin’s opponents accuse him of absolutism, and it is true and false. Absolutism there is–not that Stalin wants it for his ambition or vainglory but because the circumstances and Russia demand it; because there is no more time for argument or discussion or even freedom in the

Western sense, for which Russia cares nothing, because, in short, a house divided against itself cannot stand in an hour of stress.
Outsiders may write nonsense about Stalin's egoism and the purely personal equality of "the struggle for power" between him and Trotsky or Rykov or Zinoviev. Personal elements do and must enter all human relations, but in default of familiarity with the new Russia these critics might study the early history of the Christian Church, which as wracked and torn far worse by "ideological controversy," as the Bolsheviki call it….
The parallel is sharper and closer than either Christians or Bolsheviki would care to admit….
Stalin did not do it–if the truth were known it was perhaps done despite him–but Russia did it, is doing it, and will go on doing it whatever happens.
Duranty, Walter. "Stalinism's Mark is Party Discipline," New York Times, June 27, 1931.

There is, incidentally, no doubt about responsibility for the disaster. Stalin must be primarily answerable as the leading advocate of excessive demands on the peasantry and the prime backer of hard-line collectivization. But there is plenty of blame to go around. It must be shared by the tens of thousands of activists and officials who carried out the policy and by the peasants who chose to slaughter animals, burn fields and boycott cultivation in protest.
Beyond fixing blame, however, the tempting conclusion of intentionality is unwarranted: the case for a purposeful famine is weakly supported by the evidence and relies on a very strained interpretation of it….
There are reasons why the majority of scholars have so far rejected the theory [Conquest's contention the famine was intentionally caused]. First, we actually know very little about the scale of the famine. Using census calculations of excess mortality, Conquest arrives at a figure of some 5,000,000 victims of the Ukrainian famine. Yet such respected economic and demographic experts as Wheatcroft, Barbara Anderson and Brian Silver have examined the same census data and have suggested that the numbers Conquest supports are much too high….
Second, Conquest has failed to establish a convincing motive for genocide. Certainly Stalin was capable of vindictive cruelty and cold-hearted repression, but those who knew and dealt with him during the war and after, and they include many Westerners, agree that he was not insane or irrational. Although he certainly mean to break peasant resistance to his brand of socialism, one must wonder why any national leader would deliberately imperil the country's survival, its military strength and thus his own security, by methodically setting out to exterminate those who produced the food–and then stopping short of completing the presumed genocide…. our knowledge of the sources suggests that a genocidal Stalin is unnecessary to explain the events of the famine as we know them. More convincing explanations can be advanced….
Conquest's argument for the terror-famine assumes a situation in which the Stalin leadership was always able to realize its will in the country. We might first observe that nearly all the students of the Thirties agree that Stalin's power was not absolute even in the upper leadership until the Great Purges of 1937-1939. Any intentional genocide would have been a joint project.
Second, the more scholars learn about the Thirties, the more they are struck by the limits and inhibitions on Moscow's exercies of power in the provinces. Kremlin orders, which were vague and frequently contradictory to begin with, were routinely stalled, transformed, ignored, or even reversed as they made their way down the chain of command. From the works of Lynn Viola, Peter Solomon, Sheila Fitzpatrick and others, we now have much evidence on this bureaucratic compartmentalization, inefficiency, and local autonomy in

agriculture, administration of justice, party structure and industry. Stalinist bureaucracy of the Thirties was more disjointed than efficient. Conquest himself cites numerous instances in which local implementation of collectivization differed sharply from Moscow's presumed intentions. In some places, Stalin's original projections for kulak expropriations were wildly exceeded. In others, local leaders minimised or even ignored Moscow's call for full collectivization.

Within rather broad and vague parameters, local party leaders ran their satrapies largely as they saw fit. Moscow was far away and the infrequent inspectors…from Moscow could often be ignored. Officials protected each other, lobbied and negotiated for themselves and their regions in Moscow, and ruled their territories arbitrarily….Insofar as the Stalinists set the broad policies of the period, they are responsible for the consequent tragedy. But we can no longer be sure that what happened on the ground accurately reflected their plans. It was surely easier to ignite a social revolution…than it was to predict or control the results….

Yet there is no more evidence for the claim that Stalin planned to destroy the Ukraine than there is for the theory that he wanted the Germans to invade.

Once the 1932 cataclysm unfolded, the Stalinists tried to cope with what they had done. As Conquest shows, some grain quotas were lowered, highly prized-grain exports were cut to 1 or 2 percent of the harvest and some grain reserves were opened. Although famine was limited to certain areas, food was not plentiful anywhere in the USSR in 1932. To contain the famine, to prevent runs on meager food supplies in non-famine areas, and to keep disaster from overwhelming the entire country, the Ukraine is said to have been partially sealed off. (The evidence for this isolation comes exclusively from memoir sources.) Such a cold, hard way to cope with the famine would resemble Stalin's 1941 decision to strip resources from Leningrad to save Moscow from falling to the Germans. His leadership contributed directly or indirectly to both disasters, and millions of Ukrainians and Leningraders paid the price for his policies and raison d'etat. But it's a long and polemical leap from this to the assertion that Stalin deliberately brought about either holocaust.

Getty, Arch. "Starving the Ukraine." Reviewing in The London Review of Books on January 22, 1987, The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine by Robert Conquest September,1986.

During my years in Moscow I never stopped marveling at the contrast between the man [Stalin] and the colossal likenesses that had been made of him. That medium-sized, slightly pockmarked Caucasian with a mustache was as far removed as could be from the stereotype of a dictator. The sweeping gestures of Hitler and Mussolini were lacking completely in him; he did not gesture even when making speeches, no matter how impassioned the words.

Tuominen, Arvo, The Bells of the Kremlin: Hanover: University Press of New England, 1983, p. 155

Nevertheless, the prevailing impression that he was an autocrat in all the initial stages of deliberation, a tyrant who dictated his decisions from on high to be executed by the party organizations and the government, was untrue. On the contrary, he was quite democratic and cooperative in certain matters, particularly when important questions were being resolved.

Tuominen, Arvo, The Bells of the Kremlin: Hanover: University Press of New England, 1983, p. 156

AUTHOR: In the documentary film ‘Zhukov’, Marshall Zhukov says that Stalin was not a dictator; that he, Zhukov, could argue with Stalin, that he was able to stand up to Stalin and say ‘nyet,’ Comrade Stalin, ‘nyet.’ Is this true in your opinion?
MARSHAL RUDENKO: Yes. A dictator in the formal sense to someone who never agrees with anyone else’s opinion, only his own. But you could argue with Stalin. Zhukov did, Rokossovsky did. Meretskov, did. When these marshals stuck to their guns and proved they were correct, Stalin changed his mind.
Axell, Albert. Stalin’s War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 50

STALIN’S BRAIN HAD BIG ROLE IN CREATING THE SU

But during the last year [1922] Stalin has shown judgment and analytical power not unworthy of Lenin. It is to him that the greatest part of the credit is due for bringing about the new Soviet Union, which history may regard as one of the most remarkable constitutions in human history. Trotsky helped him in drawing up, but Stalin’s brain guided the pen.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 103

STALIN EXPLAINS WHY HE BECAME A REVOLUTIONARY

In the case of Stalin, this remote reticent Lord of all the Russians, he gave me the key himself. He said he became a revolutionary because he could not stand the Jesuitic repression and martinet intolerance of the Orthodox church seminary where he spent some years.
He had in him a fire of revolt against tyranny and would brook no master.
Their Orthodox church, which was, in his land of superstitious peasants, a valuable tool of government.
Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 167

The Marxist conception is a scientific one. It becomes confused with the scientific conception. The Revolutionary always remains an apostle and a soldier, but he is, above all, a scholar who goes out into the highways and byways…
It made me smile to hear the German writer Ludwig ask Stalin, as he did two years ago: “Perhaps you were ill-treated by your parents in your childhood, to have become such a Revolutionary?”
The excellent Ludwig still firmly believed in the old adage of the wisdom of nations, which lays it down that, in order to be a Revolutionary, one must be vicious or embittered, and from one’s earliest youth, have been beaten by one’s parents. A poor argument, too paltry to be harmful. No doubt individuals and the masses are egged on by misfortune, but Revolutionaries are “far beyond any small personal grievances on the road to collective progress. Stalin replied patiently to Ludwig: “Not at all. My parents did not maltreat me. The reason that I became a Revolutionary is simply because I thought the Marxists were right.”
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 15

STALIN HATES THE WORD STALINISM

… but Stalinism–to use a word which Joseph Stalin deprecates and rejects.

Duranty, Walter. Duranty Reports Russia. New York: The Viking Press, 1934, p. 186

The Dominant principle in Russia today is not Marxism or even Leninism, although the latter is its official title, but Stalinisn–to use a word which Joseph Stalin deprecates and rejects.
Duranty, Walter, “Red Russia of Today Ruled by Stalinism, not by Communism,” New York Times, June 14, 1931.

According to Khrushchev, Kaganovich urged Stalin to replace ‘Leninism’ with ‘Stalinism’, only to be rebuffed by the Boss, who in fact never sanctioned the use of this term, so honorific in a highly ideological culture.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 153

STALIN IS ALWAYS CONSISTENT AND PERSISTENT

Any utterance of Stalin implies that he has thought out a problem and settled it, and anything he has once thought out and formulated he will continue to declare again and again. It may be possible to point to inconsistencies in Stalin’s policy (though even this is not so certain), but nobody will ever be able to trace inconsistencies in what he says.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 59

STALIN’S WIFE SHOWED NO SIGNS OF VIOLENT DEATH

It must be said, however, that as she lay in state Madame Alleluieva’s corpse showed not the slightest trace of a violent death.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: St. Maples Press, 1952, p. 228

Years later, in 1919, Stalin again met Nadya. They were soon married and live happily together. On November 8, 1932, she died of peritonitis following an operation for appendicitis. In her memory Stalin erected an impressive memorial designed by a famous woman sculptor, Mukhino. It is a rough shaft of white marble with the lovely head of his wife hewn out of the rock…. The statute is located at the Novo Devitchi (New Maiden) cemetery, which is at the site of the most beautiful convent in Moscow….
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 10

“I was a bad husband. I had no time to take her to the movies,” Stalin said.
People started a rumor that he had killed her. I had never seen him cry, but at Allilueva’s coffin I saw tears running down his cheeks….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 173

And yet, according to my aunts (my mother’s sister, Anna Redens, and her brother’s wife, Yevgenia Alliluyeva), Father was more shattered than anyone else, for he fully realized that this was a challenge and a protest against him. He couldn’t even force himself to go to the funeral. He was a broken, drained man. He had considered Mama his most faithful, devoted friend.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 146

A death of Nadezhda Allilueva was not, in all probability, murder, and it did not lead quickly to a morbid deterioration of Stalin's dealings with his political associates.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 168

Moreover, Trotsky, respected in the West as a presumed expert on Soviet politics and surely a man with a motive to blacken Stalin, did not accuse Stalin of arranging this murder.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 169

STALIN IS SHAKEN AND DEPRESSED BY HIS WIFE'S DEATH

Later, when I was grown up, I was told that my father had been terribly shaken. He was shaken because he couldn't understand why it had happened. What did it mean? Why had such a terrible stab in the back been dealt to him, of all people?…
The first few days he was in a state of shock. He said he didn't want to go on living either. I was told this by Uncle Pavel's widow, who with Aunt Anna stayed with us day and night. My father was in such a state that they were afraid to leave him alone. He had sporadic fits of rage. The reason is that my mother had left him a letter…. It was a terrible letter, full of reproaches and accusations. It wasn't purely personal; it was partly political as well. After reading it, it would have been possible for my father to think that my mother had been on his side only outwardly, but that in her heart she had been on the side of those who were in political opposition to him.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 112

He was shocked and incensed. At the civil leavetaking ceremony he went up to the coffin for a moment. Suddenly he pushed it away from him, turned on his heel and left. He didn't even go to the funeral….
It was a longtime before my father regained his equilibrium. He never went to visit her grave at Novo-Devichy. Not even once. He couldn't. He thought my mother had left him as his personal enemy.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 113

His daughter Svetlana asserted that he [Stalin] did not join in the funeral procession. The fact remains that many people saw him walking behind the coffin.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 289

…I remember this well. Stalin approached her coffin at the moment of farewell, his eyes filled with tears. And he said so sadly, "I didn't save her." I heard that and remembered it: "I didn't save her."
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 174

My father moved to a different apartment because he couldn't bear to stay in the one my mother had died in.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 122

My mother's death was a dreadful, crushing blow, and it destroyed his faith in his friends and people in general. He had always considered my mother his closest and most faithful friend. He viewed her death as a betrayal and a stab in the back. He was embittered by it. Probably

whenever he saw any member of her family it was a painful reminder of her. So he started avoiding them.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 136

Whatever the truth on this point might have been, Stalin was obviously overcome by the death of his second wife. After appearing at the elaborate funeral ceremonies upon which he had himself insisted, he retired to Gorinka and shut himself up there for a week, refusing to receive anyone–even Molotov. He made only one exception to this rule. Lisa Khazanova. This circumstance naturally set tongues wagging. It was for many a confirmation of the story that my Aunt Nadia had committed suicide because of a love affair between Stalin and her best friend. This I never believed myself for a number of reasons–first of all because I knew how great my uncle's affection for Nadia had been. Another reason for discounting the scandal was that Lisa Khazanova had a fiance, Division Commander Ivan Lepa of the Far East Army, a Latvian from Riga. Finally there was Stalin's evident great grief at Nadejda's death. All of these indications led me to accept the more charitable interpretation of Stalin's choice of a consoler, which attributed it solely to his desire to talk with his late wife's closest friend and to learn from her any last wishes which Nadia, if she had really intended to take her own life, might have expressed to Lisa Khazanova.
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 98

The death of his wife caused untold feelings in Stalin. He followed her casket to the Novodevichi cemetery all the way on foot. Thereafter, for a long time, Stalin at night used to visit her grave at the cemetery. Guards saw him talking sometimes to her while smoking his pipe, one after another….
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 9

Stalin walked beside it [his wife's casket], wearing no gloves in the freezing cold, clutching at the side of the coffin with tears running down his cheeks.
Stalin was weeping. Vasili left Artyom and ran forward toward Stalin and "hung on to his father, saying, "Papa don't cry!"
"I'd never seen Stalin cry before," said Molotov, "but as he stood there beside the coffin, the tears ran down his cheeks."
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 107-108

That Joseph was shaken by her [his first wife] death, though, is beyond dispute.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 71

Indisputably Stalin was deeply shaken. "I was a bad husband,' he admitted to Molotov: "I never had time to take her to the cinema.'
…Within a few weeks he was blaming her directly and worrying about the fate of their children. The attempt on his own life by young Yakov [Stalin's son] came back to mind, and at a dinner with his friends he blurted out: "How could Nadya, who so much condemned Yakov for such a step, go off and shoot herself? She did a very bad thing: she made a cripple out of me.'
…Steadily he came to take a less charitable view of Nadya's suicide:

“The children grew up without their mother; that was the trouble. Nannies, governesses, however ideal they might have been,could not replace the mother for them. Ah, Nadya, Nadya, what did you do and how much I and the children needed you!”
…For some weeks there were worries that he too might do away with himself. He was pale and inattentive to his daily needs. His characteristic earthy sense of humor disappeared. It was weeks before he started to pull himself around. Seeking companionship, he turned to his Politburo associates. Kirov was a particular chum.
…The Soviet Union’s ruler was a lonely widower. According to Kaganovich, he was never the same man again.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 294-295

They later said that he changed a lot after Nadya‘s death. But the same works emphasize what made him exceptional: will power, clarity of vision, endurance, and courage.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 297

‘It was a terrible shock to my father. He said to his sisters-in-law, “I can’t go on living after this,” and became deeply depressed. That frightened my two aunts, Anna and Eugenia, who stayed on for two weeks in our apartment because they were afraid to leave him alone. They tried to make things easier for him, not holding him responsible, trying to console and support him– “We all feel terrible about it.” Eugenia would take his side against Nadya. He was in a shambles, he was knocked sideways. Saying that he didn’t want to live anymore was something they had not heard before. They were shaken by that.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin’s Shadow. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994, p. 129

‘He wanted to resign from the General Secretaryship, He felt he could not continue. But the politburo said, “Oh no no no, you have to stay!” Molotov and others near to him saw to it that he carried on working and that he wouldn’t resign. They convinced him that he would be all right.
‘For my father it was a matter of trust betrayed. For this very strong, unsentimental man, trust was extremely important. When somebody betrayed trust, be it a colleague in business, or in the family, it really hit him. He had trusted her, and what did he get? A stab in the back; that was how he saw it. He couldn’t get over that. He felt deceived and betrayed.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin’s Shadow. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994, p. 130

“Father felt betrayed by Mother’s suicide: he kept asking Eugenia what was missing in him: he could not understand it.”
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin’s Shadow. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994, p. 133

“What was more disturbing to me was that my father never visited my mother’s grave–it was in Moscow, after all. He could not excuse her for what she did. It completely shocked him, he was bouleverse. He never visited it, never once, not even towards the end of his life when he began to talk about her for the first time, and to ‘forgive’ her.”
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin’s Shadow. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994, p. 202

STALIN IS KIND, DECENT, FORGIVING AND NOT REVENGEFUL

All foreign visitors to Stalin, without exception, describe him as an attractive personality. The American Ambassador, Joseph Davis, has written of him that he gives the impression that any child would be glad to snuggle up to him. An American journalist who was expelled from Russia, and who since then has been in the front rank of the haters of Russia, makes an exception for Stalin. He, too, describes him as full of charm, as a man radiating energy, but full of good nature.
All this is countered by the venomous descriptions given by Trotsky. Many of Stalin's other adversaries also speak of his revengefulness. He has steadily pursued, they say, all who at any time offered any sort of opposition to him.
This judgment is certainly too harsh. An inquiry into the facts supplies no evidence that Stalin is more revengeful than other people. It is very easy to start such a legend: mountain races in general and Caucasians in particular are described as revengeful…. But the shoemaker's son [Stalin] does not seem to share that quality. Stalin and Marshal Tukhachevsky, for instance, were more or less rivals in the Polish War, and Stalin could not endure Tukhachevsky's aristocratic manners; but he did nothing to interfere with the marshal's career. Tukhachevsky not only attained the highest rank in the Russian army, but was also proposed by Stalin as Deputy People's Commissar for War, the so-called Head of the Army, responsible if War should come for taking over the supreme command.
There is another incident that shows that Stalin himself can pass over an insult. There was an old Bolshevik, a man of great learning, who had been living for many years in England as an emigre. After the revolution he became one of the leading Soviet diplomats, an Ambassador, and finally a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs….. He was very outspoken by nature, and could be rather too direct. The fearful excesses of the collectivization campaign became more than he could stand, and in a talk with Stalin he grew decidedly rude. He brought up everything for which Stalin could possibly be blamed, and roundly condemned his policy. Stalin replied very quietly: 'you may, of course, be right; still, I think I am right.' The old professor came to no harm.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 233

There is, in fact, nothing to show that Stalin is particularly revengeful….
There have been many public instances, or instances that have become known to the public, of Stalin's good nature. Petitions addressed to Stalin have often been handled with the utmost goodwill. In the great trials that will be referred to later, it was common knowledge that Stalin exerted himself to save the lives of some of the defendants, against the opposition of the other members of the Politburo; this applied especially to Radek, and also to Christian Rakovsky and Gregory Sokolnikov. In the end these three were not executed.
It was a tactical move when, at the end of 1938, Stalin caused the maximum period of imprisonment to be extended from 10 to 25 years…. Stalin explained that the lengthening of the sentences that could be imposed would make it possible to restrict the death sentences and ultimately to do away with them entirely.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 234

And now that I was a candidate member of the Politburo, I had an opportunity to watch Stalin in action at close quarters, regularly. My admiration for him continued to grow. I was spell-bound by the patience and sympathy for others that he showed at Politburo meetings in the middle 30s.

I can think of various examples of what I mean, but I'll single out just one. It was a fairly unusual case, involving a young diplomat who had gone to some Latin American country with one of our trade missions and let himself be compromised by the local press. He was brought in to testify during a Politburo meeting and was obviously very embarrassed and upset. Stalin opened the discussion.
"Tell me, please, everything that happened. Don't hold anything back."
The young diplomat explained that just after he arrived in the Latin American country, he went to a restaurant to get something to eat. "I was shown to a table, and I ordered dinner. A man came up and sat down at my table. He asked me if I were from Russia. I said, yes, I was. Then he started asking all sorts of questions–what did I come to buy, had I served in the Army, did I know how to shoot? I told him that I'd been in the cavalry, that I wasn't a bad shot–things like that. Then, to my horror, an article appeared in the newspaper the very next day. It was full of all kinds of nonsense about how I was a real Caucasian cowboy and a crack shot; it was also full of lies about why I'd come, what I was going to buy, what prices I was going to pay, and so on. Shortly afterward the embassy told me I'd better return to the Homeland and report to you. That's what happened. I only ask you to take into account that I committed this blunder out of inexperience, and without any malicious intent."
I felt very sorry for this young man. He had obviously been a victim of his own naivete. Everyone squirmed in his seat and whispered to his neighbor–we were all waiting to see what would happen.
Suddenly Stalin said, "Well, as far is I can see, a trusting fellow was taken advantage of by a bunch of rascals. Is there anything more to it than that?"
"No."
"Then the incident is closed." Stalin looked the young diplomat in the eye and said, "See that you're more careful in the future." The poor fellow just sat there with his mouth open as the meeting was adjourned. He was so surprised by his good fortune that he couldn't move. Then he grabbed his briefcase and scurried out.
I was very impressed by the simplicity and compassion with which Stalin had handled the case. So was everyone else.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 50

…here was a man not of this world, laughing and joking like the rest of us! After a while I began to admire him not only as a political leader who had no equal, but simply as another human being.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 62

Yet it is a mistake to see in this some sort of grand plan for terror…. The cases of Zinoviev, Kamenev, Smirnov, Yenukidze, Postyshev, Yagoda, and especially Bukharin were hardly handled in such a way as to suggest a plan. In each of these cases, there were false starts and abrupt "soft" but apparently "final" resolutions that had to be contradicted later when the defendants' fates were otherwise decided. Had there been a plan, it would have been much easier and more convincing not to have let them off the hook so repeatedly and publicly.
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 578

In each case the final fatal texts had to explain previous embarrassing contrary decisions. An authoritative 1935 text exonerated Zinoviev and Kamenev of Kirov's murder; the next year's discourse maintained that, after all, they were guilty. Yenukidze was expelled and then readmitted, both apparently on Stalin's initiative and amid considerable confusion, then

finally arrested a year later. The Politburo criticized Postyshev, fired him, re-hired him, denounced his critics, fired him again. In January 1938 it decided to keep him in the Party and in days later expelled him. Yagoda was kept on at the NKVD long after he had been discredited, then removed but casually kept on the central committee. After several months he was kicked off the central committee and arrested in a sudden panic about his being at liberty "even one day." Bukharin was denounced at the 1936 trial and then publicly cleared in the press. He was denounced again in December but saved by Stalin at a plenum that remained secret for decades. Finally, in February 1937 he was expelled and arrested in a flurry of paperwork that raises enormous doubts about who wanted what. He was brought to trial an entire year later, and more than six months after he began to confess to the monstrous charges brought against him. Why all this delay and confusion?
…Our reading of the Central Committee plena from the 1930s, along with other documents, has convinced us that the usual explanations for support for the terror–that Stalin secured cooperation from his senior officials through fear, cunning, intimidation, and blackmail, and by forcing them to become accomplices–are in themselves inadequate. Not only are there no signs that Stalin was feared in the early phase when the terror was engendered, but there is no evidence of any reluctance or protest among senior party leaders about the terror at any point. Instead, there seems to have been a broad consensus at various stages on the need for repression of particular groups and on cleansing the party of unreliable elements. At several key junctures Central Committee members advocated repressive measures that defied and went beyond those prescribed by Stalin's closest [supporters]….
Getty & Naumov, The Road to Terror. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, c1999, p. 579

Vasilevsky had a very interesting encounter with Stalin. Alexander Mikhailovich told me about it. Stalin asked him to come over to his dacha and started questioning him about his parents. His father was a village priest, and Vasilevsky had been out of touch with him for a long time. "One shouldn't forget one's parents," said Stalin. "And it will be a long time before you pay off your debt to me!" He then walked over to his safe and took out a stack of money order receipts. It turns out that Stalin mailed money orders to Vasilevsky's father regularly. The old man believed the money came from his own son. "I couldn't find any words. I was just stunned," said Vasilevsky.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 303

My "watchdog" Klimov was also taken off the job in the autumn of 1943, when I started at the university. I begged my father to abolish this kind of protection because it made me feel ashamed in front of the rest of the students. To my surprise, my father understood and agreed.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 186

There was only one person who didn't like her [Granny] and that was my governess Lydia Georgiyevna, who tried to get her fired and later paid for it. My father thought highly of "Granny" and had nothing but respect for her.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 226

He [Stalin] had fought his political opponents without mercy or compunction, but had repeatedly shown himself willing to except their flimsy promises to mend their ways. On one occasion he had reminded Zinoviev and Kamenev that expulsion from the Party was worse than death for a Communist. When, after long forbearance, he had applied this extreme

measure to them and others, he had rescinded it at their request. Kirov, perhaps his closest friend, had encouraged Stalin's generosity, which made the murder of Kirov all the harder to forgive….
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 212

Hoxha, then fresh from leading the Albanian revolution, meeting Stalin in the 1940s, had the same impression: a "modest, kindly, wise man" who "loved the Soviet people wholeheartedly…his heart and mind worked for them."
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 124

…Stalin, however, was not an egocentric individualist–as Khrushchev implies–but a disciplined communist who, like all such communists, subordinated personal interest to those of the Party. In 1937, before he had met Stalin, U.S. Ambassador Joseph Davies reported to the Secretary of State: "He is generally considered to be a clean-living, modest, retiring, single-purposed man, with a one-track mine, devoted to communism and the elevation of the proletariat." On meeting Stalin these impressions were reinforced: "His demeanor is kindly, his manner almost deprecatingly simple, his personality and expression of reserve strength and poise very marked…. He gave me the impression of being sincerely modest." "Free of affectation and mannerisms," wrote Marshall Zhukov, "he won the heart of everyone he talked to. His visitors were invariably struck by his candor and his uninhibited manner of speaking, and impressed by his ability to express his thoughts clearly, his inborn analytical turn of mind, his erudition and retentive memory."
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 124

The other thought is that to me, a small cog in the machinery of negotiations, he [Stalin] was always amiable, friendly, and considerate, even more so than Molotov or Vyshinsky, with whom I had most to do. True, I belonged to the opposite side in the talks, and common decency demanded a certain amount of courtesy; he could be very sharp with his own interpreters. His recognition of obvious attempts to do the work as well as possible, which he acknowledged more than once, and of the smoothness of the talks, thanks to my being able to think in Russian as well as speak it, indicated the existence of a spark of human feeling. And there was more than a spark in his intelligence and skill as a negotiator….
Birse, Arthur Herbert. Memoirs of an Interpreter. New York: Coward-McCann, 1967, p. 212

Undoubtedly the members of the [Soviet] Delegation were friendly and Churchill thought it was typical of all Russians, except the leaders, though he thought Stalin the most human of them all. He said he had liked Vyshinsky, but Molotov was only a first-class civil servant who obeyed orders.
Birse, Arthur Herbert. Memoirs of an Interpreter. New York: Coward-McCann, 1967, p. 223

… there is the case at the Zinovievite Central Committee member Kuklin, serving a sentence of 10 years' imprisonment. When assured that Kuklin, a sick man, was at the point of death, Stalin permitted his immediate release.
There are several such stories. But the one most obviously due to a caprice was his sudden release from a labor camp in 1940 of the Georgian (Communist Kavtaradze, who was brought straight from prison to Stalin, and after a friendly conversation was immediately made Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs–Stalin adding at the end of the interview, in a gloomier tone, 'Still, you planned to kill me.' What can this signify about

Stalin? That he knew Kavtaradze to be innocent and just made his last remark as some sort of justification for his earlier treatment? Or that he still thought Kavtaradze to be guilty, and was explaining, even to himself, the extraordinary extent of his forgiveness?
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 205

An even more extraordinary example is that of another Georgian, Kavtaradze. He had been Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars in Georgia from 1921 to 1922, and had fallen with the rest of the Georgian leadership during Stalin's clash with them before and after Lenin's death. He was expelled from the party as a Trotskyite in 1927, and was among those not readmitted during the following years. He was arrested and sentenced in connection with the Ryutin affair, and is reported in Maryinsk and Kolyma labor camps in 1936, thoroughly disillusioned. In 1940, he was still in camp. One day the commandant called him, and he was sent off to Moscow. Much to his surprise, he was taken directly in his prison clothes to see Stalin, who greeted him affably, asking him where he had been all these years. He was at once rehabilitated, and sent to the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, where he shortly became Assistant People's Commissar. After the war, he was ambassador to Rumania for a time. In his biography, as given in various Soviet reference books, a bare mention is made of the 13 year gap in his Party membership between December 1927 and December 1940!
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 68

All are familiar with the demands for the good of the people by Stalin. But not too many are familiar with the goodness, humility, and dedication of Stalin.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 26

Going with our car among the ruins [of Stalingrad], we somehow collided with another car with a woman chauffeur in a Red Army uniform. The chauffeur, seeing that her car crashed into that of Stalin, got out, started to cry. Stalin came up to her, made her feel at ease by saying:
Don't cry…our car is bullet-proofed, and you will be able to fix your car soon.
Soon, the militia came to the scene, ready to pounce on the unlucky lady chauffeur. Stalin intervened:
Do not touch her. She is not to blame.
We then went on our way.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 45

After returning to Moscow, Stalin went to the steam bath which was built for him, since it was the only cure that seemed to have helped Stalin with his feet. The steam bath was locked. Stalin waited and the poor bodyguard who was not supposed to be there, but thinking that Stalin was away, just went in. When he heard Stalin's voice, he practically jumped wet into his uniform, apologizing. Stalin told Dubinin [the bodyguard] that it's fine, stay awhile and wished him:
May you have a light steam bath, Comrade Dubinin!
That is the kind of leader we had. He made everyone feel at ease.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 54

We were returning to Moscow, a very heavy rain was falling, and Stalin saw on the highway some collective farmers standing, waiting for a bus. He made us stop the cars and told us to shuttle all the people to their village, so that they would not get soaked to the skin. But the collective farmers did not move when they were asked to by Sokolov. Stalin himself got out of the car, went over to the collective workers, explained and invited them to the cars. They talked about problems, about the last war and the deaths of loved ones. Stalin sighed and said:
I also lost my son….
Hearing about the wonderful event of riding with comrade Stalin, in the village square, more than 100 people gathered, hoping to also get such a privilege… but we were almost out of gas and we nearly did not make it to Moscow.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 56

At the Kremlin, Stalin, on his nightly walk before going back to work in his office, asked the guard Melnikov:
How many hours do you stand here?
Every six hours I stand three here without moving.
When do you receive new uniforms?
Once per year, comrade Stalin.
How much do you get paid?
600 rubles, comrade Stalin.
That is not much at all….
After this, all the guards received new uniforms twice a year and a raise in their pay. Stalin was always concerned about others. He always demanded that prices on goods be lowered. He always thought about these problems.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 57

Met face-to-face, Stalin is not by any means the unattractive personality which some writers have depicted. Indeed, he has genuine charm when he chooses to exercise it.
I scarcely noticed the pockmarks which some American writers have emphasized. The most attractive feature of Stalin's face is his fine dark eyes, which light up when he is interested. They did not impress me either as "gentle," as one observer thought, or "cold as steel," as others have remarked, but they are alert, expressive and intelligent. His manner is calm, slow and self-assured, and when he wishes to warm up during a conversation he seems at times actually benign.
Smith, Walter Bedell. My Three Years in Moscow. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1950, p. 59

"I do not know Stalin sufficiently well to have a strong personal opinion of him," Dmitrievsky writes. "But I do know that all those who have come in contact with him intimately hold that he is a very decent man. He lives like an ascetic. He works like a giant."
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 315

In the fall of 1927, an American trade-union delegation, consisting of half a dozen liberal labor leaders, a dozen advisors holding various Ph.D. degrees, and a secretarial staff of college graduates, altogether about 25 men and women, went to the Soviet Union to conduct

an inquiry into the entire system of government there. An unusual interview was arranged with Stalin. It lasted about five hours.
“I have never seen a politician so anxious to be explicit, so little inclined to be cryptic or laconic, as the proverbially taciturn head of the most powerful party in the world,” writes Anne O’Hare McCormick, who was in Moscow at the time and who was present at the session.
…The rudeness Lenin complained of is probably the roughness of his steamroller methods. His manner as he greeted us was affable and self-possessed, almost gentle; and in contrast to the carelessness affected by many Bolsheviks, he was trim and well-groomed in his neat khaki uniform….
He was the steadiest and most assured of all the Soviet leaders I saw. In the thick of the last bitter battle with the opposition he was unworried, under the tedious ordeal of the long pauses in a translated interview he was not fidgety…. His smile was frequent and genuine, and it was the reserved smile of the East rather than the open smile of the West…. Lacking brilliance, Stalin gives an impression of craft and suppleness. He is the shrewd manipulator, quite obstinate, ruthless without passion. Trotsky is the agitator, bold and vivid, and Stalin is the organizer, composed and wary…. The Bolshevik chief answered questions like a teacher. He was bland and patient.”
…Stalin in the course of the lengthy interview showed, as far as the unpublished minutes are concerned, his unmistakable superiority to the entire American delegation.
…But when Stalin turned the tables and interviewed his guests, the conference assumed an illuminating aspect. It was not only that the replies he received were a pathetic commentary upon the intellectual paucity of the Americans who endeavored to enlighten him. Stalin’s probing questions, which follow, show a stubborn and honest desire to penetrate and understand the American scene.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 341-343

One cannot live in the shadow of Stalin’s legend without coming under its spell. My pulse, I am sure, was high [as I prepared to interview him]. No sooner, however, had I stepped across the threshold than diffidence and nervousness fell away. Stalin met me at the door and shook hands, smiling. There was a certain shyness in his smile, and the handshake was not perfunctory. He was remarkably unlike the scowling, self-important dictator of popular imagination. His every gesture was a rebuke to the thousand little bureaucrats who had inflicted their puny greatness on me in these Russian years.
We followed him to the extreme end of a long conference table, where he motioned us affably to chairs and sat down himself. His personal interpreter, a young man with bushy black hair, was there. Stalin pushed over a box of cigarettes, took one himself, and we all lighted up. The standardized photographs of Stalin show him smoking a pipe and I had a feeling of faint disappointment that he was not measuring up to the clichEs, even in this regard.
In my letter the previous day, I had specifically asked for “only two minutes” and I had assumed that the interview was to be no more than a brief formality to enable at least one reporter to testify that Stalin was still fully alive. But I saw him stretch out his feet and lean back in leisurely fashion as though we had hours ahead of us. With that natural gesture of relaxing in his chair, Stalin turned a straitjacketed interview into an unhurried social call. I realized that there would be no time limitations.
And here was I, unprepared for this generosity, with only one question ready–the superfluous question whether he was alive or not! I cursed myself inwardly for a bungler not

to have mapped out an organized campaign of interrogation that would probe to the very center of the Soviet situation.
“Tell Mr. Lyons,” Stalin addressed his interpreter, “that I’m sorry I could not receive him before. I saw his letters, but I cannot easily find the opportunity for interviews.”
…To this day I do not know precisely why, among the score of permanent correspondents in his capital–many of them less outspoken in their criticism of the regime and more amenable to the discipline of the Press Department–he had selected me for this first interview since his rise to supreme power. Any one of a dozen other correspondents would have served Moscow’s purpose just as well. But unquestionably my letters over more than a year played a part in the selection.
“Comrade Stalin,” I began the interview, “May I quote you to the effect that you have not been assassinated?”
He laughed….such close range, there was not a trace of the Napoleonic quality one sees in his self-conscious camera or oil portraits. The shaggy mustache, framing a sensual mouth and a smile nearly as full of teeth as Teddy Roosevelt’s, gave his swarthy face a friendly, almost benignant look.
“Yes, you may,” he said,
The room in which we sat was large, high-ceilinged, and furnished simply almost to bareness. Its only decorations were framed pictures of Karl Marx, Lenin, and Engels –there was no portrait of Stalin:… Stalin wore the familiar olive -drab jacket with stand-up collar, belted at the waist, and his trousers were tucked into high black boots. The negligent austerity of his attire was of a piece with that room.
For over an hour I asked questions and answered them. Again and again the talk debouched into argument; I was aware afterwards, though not at the time, that I did not hesitate to interrupt him: another proof of the essential simplicity of a powerful ruler who could put a reporter so completely at his ease. The “ethics of bourgeois journalism” came in for considerable discussion; though at the moment he had sufficient cause to be indignant with that journalism, there was no bitterness in Stalin’s comments.
I asked him about Soviet-American relations, about the chances for world revolution, the progress of the Piatiletka [Five Year Plan], and such other obvious matters as came to my mind. He listened without the slightest sign of impatience to my labored Russian and repeated sentences slowly when he thought I might not have grasped the meaning. Often I reached a linguistic impasse from which Charlie and the other interpreter retrieved me. Stalin never once spoke impetuously, never once resorted to mere cleverness or evasion. Sometimes he thought for many seconds before he replied, his forehead furrowed in lines of concentration, and the answers came in a strangely stigmatized array:…
“I don’t want in any way to interfere with what you may write,” Stalin said, “but I would be interested to see what you make of this interview.”
“On the contrary,” I said, “I am anxious that you read my dispatch before I send it. Above all things I should hate to misrepresent anything you have said. The only trouble is that this is Saturday night and the Sunday papers go to press early. Getting the story to you and back again may make me miss the early editions.”
“Well, then, never mind.” He waved the matter aside.
I thought quickly.
“But if I could get a Latin-script typewriter,” I said, “I could write my story right here and now and show it to you immediately.”
Stalin thought that was a good idea. With Charlie and myself at his heels, he walked into the adjoining room, where several secretaries were standing around chatting and asked whether

they couldn't dig up a Latin typewriter. The relation between Stalin and his immediate employees was entirely human, without so much as a touch of restraint. To them, obviously, he was not the formidable dictator of one-sixth of the earth's surface but a friendly, comradely boss. They were deferential without being obsequious.

The typewriter was found and I was installed in a small room to do my stuff. I could hear Stalin suggesting that they send in tea and sandwiches as he returned to the conference room. I was nearly an hour in writing the dispatch. Several times Stalin peeked in, and inquired whether we were comfortable and had everything we needed.

Voroshilov was still with Stalin when I took in the typewritten sheets. Both leaders smiled as the dispatch was translated, particularly at my detailed description of Stalin's looks and manner, Voroshilov's boyish exuberance and the references to Stalin's family. Four or five times Stalin interjected minor corrections and suggestions, none of them of a political character. That finished, I said:

"Would you be good enough to sign this copy for me? It may simplify matters in getting the story by the censors. You know, there is a censorship on news here."

He wrote: "More or less correct, J. Stalin." That autographed copy is still in my possession. Then I wrote a few words of thanks for his patience on one of the carbon copies, signed it, and left it with him.

The unthinkable interview was over. The two minutes had stretched to nearly two hours. As we left the building and hailed a droshky, I said to Charlie:

"I like that man!"

Charlie agreed, but in a lower emotional key.

But in the years that followed, with ample time to reassay my impressions, I did not change my mind about his essential reaction to Stalin's personality. Even at moments when the behavior of his regime seemed to me most hateful, I retain that liking for Stalin as a human being. I could understand thereafter the devotion to the man held by certain writers of my acquaintance who had come to know him personally. There was little in common between the infallible defied Stalin fostered as a political myth and the Stalin I had met. In the simplicity which impressed me more than any other element in his make-up, there was nothing of make-believe, nowhere a note of falseness or affectation. His friendliness was not the back-slapping good-fellow type of the politician, but something innate, something that rang true. In his unpretentiousness there was nothing pretentious

Subsequently another American correspondent was received by Stalin. We compared notes, and it was as if we had met totally different men, our impressions were so completely at variance. He carried away the imprint of a ruthless, steel-armored personality, with few of those human attributes which I had seen to relieve its harshness: a picture more consistent with Stalin's public character. For years I wondered which of us was closer to the truth, or whether there were two truths. Then I read the autobiography of H. G. Wells, where he gives a vivid word picture of his interview with Stalin. His reactions to the man were so close to my own that he used almost the same words to convey his impression of Stalin's essential humaneness and simplicity. It was reassuring to know that if I was wrong, I had eminent company in my error.

My description of Stalin as a likable human being seemed to touch the world's imagination. "Congratulations to the United Press," said an editorial in the New York Daily News, "on the most distinguished piece of reporting of this year, if not of the last four or five years."

Lyons, Eugene. Assignment in Utopia. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, c1937, p. 384-391

[At a We-Have-Been-to-the-USSR Dinner] a microphone was brought to the table and for 15 minutes I read into it on a coast-to-coast broadcast. The subject I had chosen was Stalin. My pleasant impression of the man in personal contact was still fresh in my mind and the talk was consequently in a key of appreciative analysis of his character.
In my peroration, therefore, I drew a parallel between Stalin and Abraham Lincoln–the same humble origin, the same readiness to make costly decisions in the interest of their social faith, etc. The comparison was far-fetched and I am not too proud of it. A number of professional patriots were scandalized, perhaps not unjustly, and protested against the blasphemy in vigorous language in the course of the next few days. Certain communists, on the other hand, professed to be no less scandalized. “Why must you drag Stalin down to Lincoln’s level?” one of them complained.
Lyons, Eugene. Assignment in Utopia. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, c1937, p. 407-408

When he came back from Siberia, acquaintances had warned of the unpleasant features in his character, and these had been discussed at the April Party Conference. But he had gained a better reputation in the following months. Not once did he come to notice for insensitivity, or egocentrism.. If anything was held against him, it was that he was too supportive towards Lenin on the national question.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 147

This is what a Amakyan Nazaretyan wrote about working “under Koba’s firm hand”:
“I can’t take offense. There’s much to be learned from him. Having got to know him at close hand, I have developed an extraordinary respect towards him. He has a character that one can only envy. I can’t take offense. His strictness is covered by attentiveness to those who work with him.
On another occasion Nazaretyan added:
He’s very cunning. He’s hard as a nut and can’t be broken at one go. But I have a completely different view of him now from the one I had in Tiflis. Despite his rational wildness, so to speak, he’s a soft individual; he has a heart and knows how to value the merits of people.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 225-226

For all his denigration of Stalin, Khrushchev found him a man who was ‘incorruptible and irreconcilable in class questions. It was one of his strongest qualities and he was greatly respected for it.’
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 312

AUTHOR: Did you ever meet Stalin?
MARSHAL RUDENKO: Yes. I remember being summoned to Stalin’s office after I had made some mistakes. So I was prepared to take the consequences. I have to admit that when I was on my way–and I knew I had made some real blunders–I thought I would be severely punished. As the Japanese put it, I was in a ‘hara-hiri situation’. And in the presence of our chief commanders, Stalin was kind enough to listen to my report and, instead of hara-hiri, of punishing me, I actually got a promotion and was assigned to another post. That is, everything said by Zhukov –about Stalin giving you a chance to explain your side of the question-I think is true….

Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 50

STALIN TRIED TO RAISE HIS CHILDREN WELL

They told my father that my nurse was "untrustworthy" and that her son had undesirable friends.
My father had no time to go into these things himself. He liked having the people whose job it was to go into such matters thoroughly and only bring them to his attention when they had "closed their case." When I heard there was a plot afoot to get rid of my nurse, I set up an outcry. My father couldn't stand tears. Besides, maybe he, too, wanted to express some inner protest against all this insanity. In any case, he got angry all of a sudden and commanded them to leave my nurse in peace.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 124

My father seemed very remote from all of us. Once in a while he gave our unofficial guardian Vlasik overall directives on how we were to be brought up. We were to be fed, clothed, and shod at state expense, not luxuriously or with frills, but solidly and well. No one was to spoil us;…
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 131

Stalin is a stern father. He son Yasha has been giving him considerable trouble. When he was 20, after a poor record in the technological institute, he announced that he did not want an education. Stalin engaged a tutor for the youth, but the teacher was compelled to give up Yasha as a hopeless case. He was then placed in a manual training school to learn a trade.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 325

STALIN EXERCISES MODESTY AND OPPOSES THE CULT OF THE INDIVIDUAL

What distinguished Stalin…was the way he came before the public. It would be difficult or impossible to find in any speech of Stalin's the little word 'I'. When he spoke, he did so always in the name of the party, in the name of the Soviet Union, or, in recent years, as Prime Minister, in the name of the Soviet Government. His appearances in public were as modest as his clothing. He had long been the foremost man in the great realm, but when in the past, for instance, he attended a meeting of the Central Executive Committee, of whose Presidium he was a member, he invariably appeared when the meeting had already begun, and sat down modestly in one of the back rows. He would be seen for all that. There would be long ovations. When the applause was dying away, some woman would jump up and shout in a shrill, hysterical voice: 'long live the great Stalin!' And there would be a "further storm of applause. Stalin would sit there as if it all had nothing to do with him. Later on it would often be necessary for him to sit in the front row of the Presidium; but he never appeared alone, but always among some dozens of other people, just as he never takes the salute alone at a military parade and at the parades in the Red Square he always stands in the midst of some dozens of other people. When he appears in the Supreme Council or at a festivity on the stage of the Great Theater in Moscow, and the audience starts wild acclamations in the Russian fashion, Stalin remains seated. He behaves as if the ovation

was not for him, and he also joins in the applause. That has been interpreted as applauding himself, but it is not that; it is the attitude he has adopted in order to ignore the ovation. He neither stands up nor bows as he sits; he simply joins in the applause as if the ovation were for somebody else. In this way he becomes indistinguishable from the rest of the people present. He tries to become one of a collectivity.
This was also the style of his speeches. The party had long been described in official language as the party of Lenin and Stalin, as if Lenin and Stalin had founded it and had been its sole organizers. On one occasion at a meeting of the Central Executive Committee Stalin was speaking and had to read letters from young Communists. In one of the letters he came to a mention of the party of Lenin and Stalin. After those words he put down the letter for a moment, turned to his hearers, and added: 'As people put it!' indicating disagreement with the phrase.
From time to time Stalin repeats that he does not approve the wild propaganda in his personal favor….
He certainly warns the party and the Government, indeed the whole country, continually against extravagance of outlook, against being led by successes into a loss of the sense of proportion. One gets the impression that Stalin is warning himself against presumption. It may be that this is one of the secrets of his success; this may be the moral he has drawn from observation of his opponents. For they have all had too good an opinion of themselves, and Stalin has no intention of making that mistake.
Basseches, Nikolaus. Stalin. London, New York: Staples Press, 1952, p. 237

She [Aunt Anna] never judges or condemns. She's beside herself when people talk about the "cult of personality." She gets worked up and talks on and on. "They're exaggerating. They always exaggerate in this country," she'll say indignantly. "Now they're blaming everything on Stalin. But he didn't have an easy time either. We know his life wasn't easy. It wasn't as simple as all that. Think of all the time he spent in Siberia. We mustn't forget that. And we mustn't forget the good things he did!"
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 63

Svetlana tells us that her father used to let his salary checks pile up unused on his desk and that he hated public adulation. Applause for his speeches at a Party Congress he would except as directed at the Party leadership and not at himself as a person. The development of the "cult" was not his doing….
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 124

Stalin was not a stupid man…. He tried to convey the impression… that relations based on personal loyalty were not worthy of state affairs. For instance, replying to a letter from party member Shatunovsky, he wrote:
"You speak about your 'devotion' to me. Maybe the phrase just slipped out. Maybe…. But if it didn't just slip out, I would advise you to discard the 'principle' of devotion to individuals. It is not the Bolshevik way. Be devoted to the working-class, to its party, its state. That is what is needed and what is good. But don't get it mixed up with devotion to people, which is just an empty and superfluous fad of intellectuals."
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 201

Occasionally Stalin would indicate to the party and the people that he was against all the glorification and idolatry…. There is, for instance, the following letter in the archives:

“To Comrades Andreyev and Smirnova.
I am decisively against publishing Tales of Stalin’s Childhood. The book is full of factual errors. But that’s not the main thing. The main thing is that the book has the tendency to instill in the minds of the Soviet people (and people in general) a cult of personalities, of leaders and infallible heroes. That is dangerous and harmful. The theory of ‘heroes’ and the ‘crowd’ is not a Bolshevik one, but is SR [Socialist Revolutionary]…. The people make heroes, the Bolsheviks reply. I advise you to burn the book. Feb. 16, 1938. J. Stalin

It pleased him [Stalin] most to hear others remark on his modesty. At the February-March 1937 plenum, Mekhlis said that ‘as early as 1930, Comrade Stalin sent me the following letter for Pravda. I will allow myself to read it out without his permission:
“Comrade Mekhlis. There is a request to publish the enclosed instructive work of a kolkhoz. I have deleted what it says about ‘Stalin’ as the ‘vozhd of the party’, the ‘leader of the party’ and so on. I think such laudatory embellishments can only do harm. The letter should be printed without these epithets. J. Stalin.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 241

He had told Feuchtwanger that adulation was distasteful to him, but forgivable in the circumstances…. More privately, he prevented publication of a book called Tales of Stalin’s Childhood as not only ‘full of factual errors’ but also as instilling a ‘cult of personalities of leaders’: but in this case perhaps the ‘errors’ loomed largest. Similarly he stopped Malenkov and Poskrebyshev from sponsoring a Russian translation of his youthful poems; here too, he may have wished not to lay himself open. On a slightly different note, early in 1938, citing ‘workers’ suggestions’, Yezhov proposed to the Politburo that Moscow should be renamed Stalinodar. Stalin pronounced against this.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 214

Then Stalin asked:
“Don’t you think we should celebrate the defeat of Fascist Germany with a victory parade in Moscow and invite the most distinguished heroes from among the soldiers, NCO’s, officers, and generals?”
I cannot recall exactly the day, but I think it was somewhere around June 18 or 19, that I was summoned by Stalin to his dacha. He asked whether I had not forgotten how to ride a horse.
I replied:
“No, I haven’t, in fact I still ride even now.”
“Good,” said Stalin, “you will have to take the salute at the Victory Parade. Rokossovsky will command it.”
I replied:
“Thank you for the honor, but wouldn’t it be better for you to take the salute? You are Supreme Commander-in-Chief and by right you should take the salute.”
Stalin countered:
“I am too old to review parades. You do it, you are younger.”
On June 22 the newspapers carried the following order of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief:
“To mark the victory over Germany in the Great Patriotic War I hereby order a parade of troops of the active army, navy, and the Moscow garrison, a Victory Parade, to be held on June 24, 1945, in Red Square, Moscow….

The salute at the Victory Parade shall be taken by my deputy, Marshal of the Soviet Union Zhukov; the parade shall be commanded by Marshal of the Soviet Union Rokossovsky."
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 652-653

On July 16 a special train was to bring Stalin, Molotov, and others of Stalin's party.
The day before, Stalin called me on the phone and said:
"Don't try and bring up any honor guards with bands to meet us. Come to the station yourself and bring along those you feel necessary."
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 668

He [Beria] had spoken to Stalin about the objections to the cult of his personality, and Stalin had expressed agreement. Nevertheless, his [Stalin] whole entourage encouraged him in that direction–then, later, declared him guilty of everything.
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 159

Footnote: a very critical and even unfriendly, biographer gives the following characterization of him: "Stalin does not seek honors. He loathes pomp. He is averse to public displays. He could have all the nominal regalia in the chest of a great state. But he prefers the background…. He is the perfect inheritor of the individual Lenin paternalism. No other associate of Lenin was endowed with that characteristic. Stalin is the stern father of a family, the dogmatic pastor of a flock. He is a boss with this difference: his power is not used for personal aggrandizement. Moreover, he is a boss with an education. Notwithstanding general impressions, Stalin is a widely informed and well-read person. He lacks culture, but he absorbs knowledge. He is rough towards his enemies but he learns from them."
[Stalin: A Biography, by Isaac Don Levine, 1929, pages 248-249]
Webb, S. Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation. London, NY: Longmans, Green, 1947, p. 333

Stalin does not seek honors. He loathes pomp. He is averse to public displays. He could have all the nominal regalia in the chest of a great state. But he prefers the background…. He is the perfect inheritor of the individual Lenin paternalism. No other associate of Lenin was endowed with that characteristic. Stalin is the stern father of a family, the dogmatic pastor of a flock. He is a boss with this difference: his power is not used for personal aggrandizement.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 301

"I am resolutely against the publication of Tales of Stalin's Childhood. The book abounds in a mass of factual improbabilities, distortions, exaggerations, undeserved eulogies. The author has been led astray by story-lovers, by fabulists, by sycophants…. But that is not the main point. The main point is that the book tends to instill in the consciousness of Soviet children (and people in general), the cult of personalities, of leaders, of infallible heroes. This is dangerous [and] harmful. The theory of 'heroes' and the masses is not a Bolshevik theory…. Any book such as this… will harm our common Bolshevik cause. I recommend you burn the book. I. Stalin."
Rittersporn, Gabor. Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications, 1933-1953. New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, c1991, p. 208

There was, for example, an immense special effort to teach children the benign stories of their ultimate father. Stalin personally determined that this myth should not emphasize one of the obvious devices at the disposal of the propagandists: didactic legends about the young Soso. In 1938, the editors of the state publishing house sent Stalin a book manuscript entitled Stories of Stalin's Childhood, which he rejected, observing that it was harmful 'to inculcate in the consciousness of Soviet children (and people in general) a cult of personality, of leaders, of flawless heroes'. This, he said, was not Bolshevik but Socialist-Revolutionary, meaning non-Marxist, in its concept of historical determination.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 227

Sometimes, though, he aimed his ridicule at himself. Writing to Voroshilov in March 1929, he mocked his own grandiose image: "World Leader [Vozhd]? Go fuck his mother!'
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 280

"No, individual persons cannot decide. Decisions of individuals are always, or nearly always, one-sided decisions. In every collegium, in every collective body, there are people whose opinion must be reckoned with. In every collegium, in collective body, there are people who may express wrong opinions. From the experience of three revolutions we know that out of every 100 decisions taken by individual persons without being tested and corrected collectively, approximately 90 are one-sided."
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 13, p. 109

"Dear Comrade Bazhanov,
I have received your letter ceding me your second Order as a reward for my work.
I thank you very much for your warm words and comradely present. I know what you are depriving yourself of in my favour and appreciate your sentiments.
Nevertheless, I cannot accept your second Order. I cannot and must not accept it, not only because it can belong only to you, as you alone have earned it, but also because I have been amply rewarded as it is by the attention and respect of the comrades and, consequently, have no right to rob you.
` Orders were instituted not for those who are well known as it is, but mainly for heroic people who are little known and who need to be made known to all.
Besides, I must tell you that I already have two Orders. That is more than one needs, I assure you. I apologize for the delay in replying."
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 13, p. 241

Lenin, a connoisseur of power, had the best opportunity to evaluate Stalin in this respect, and he rendered his judgment in a debate in 1922. Replying to a complaint about the concentration of power in general and in particular Stalin's responsibility for two peoples' commissariats, Lenin called Stalin 'a person of authority'. On what did this aura of authority rest? Not on a heroic image. Stalin was not a highly visible hero of the Revolution and Civil War in these years. The fame of Trotsky, the organizer of the Red Army and eloquent speaker and writer, was far greater, and a number of others–such as Zinoviev, Kamenev and Bukharin –probably received more attention in the Soviet media than did Stalin. This incidentally, suggests that he was in these years, at least, much more concerned with getting on with his practical work than in preening himself in public. An unbalanced thirst for popular glory, a 'cult' could more easily be attributed to some of his comrades than to him.

McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 48

Stalin seated himself at the head of the banquet table, and the rest of us took our places in the order determined by that moment's prestige-exchange quotation. Tensely we waited to see what would happen next. Careful preparations had been made in the Politburo and the Comintern's Presidium for long thorough speeches extolling the virtues of the great Stalin, who then was approaching the zenith of his power. We considered it only natural that these festivities had been arranged for the glorification of Stalin. Four or five Politburo man had speeches tucked away in their pockets, while in the Comintern's Presidium we had agreed that Dimitrov and Manuilsky would express our most heartfelt sentiments.
As soon as we were seated, Stalin, to our surprise, clinked his glass for silence, rose and spoke ceremoniously in this manner:
"Comrades! I want to propose a toast to our patriarch, life and sun, liberator of nations, architect of socialism, omniscient genius (he rattled off all the appellations applied to him in those days) and great leader of our peoples, Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin and I hope that this is the first and last speech made to that genius this evening."
Tuominen, Arvo, The Bells of the Kremlin: Hanover: University Press of New England, 1983, p. 162

After salutations had been exchanged, he [Leon Feuchtwanger] asked whether Stalin was not disgusted with the phenomenal Stalin-worship that was practiced throughout the Soviet Union. Stalin's portraits were everywhere, and his praises were sung, but the height of everything was seeing, amidst the great old art at the Tretiakov Gallery, some propaganda painter's version of Stalin staring out from almost every wall.
Stalin was absolutely flabbergasted and asked whether it was really true even in the Tretiakov.
"Yes. You can send your men to take a look."
"That's strange," said Stalin. "That's downright sabotage."
And he jotted down something on the paper before him, obviously a notation ordering the removal of his portraits from that gallery.
Feuchtwanger related that Stalin declared himself to be as disgusted as any foreigner with the ubiquitous pictures and their worship. But there was an explanation for them: over the centuries the Russian people had become accustomed to thinking concretely. Such things as the Soviet state, the Communist Party, and everything pertaining to it were an abstraction to the ordinary peasant and worker, a purely abstruse concept, whereas Comrade Stalin was concrete, a tangible fact.
In the old days, Stalin continued, the Russian people had God and the Czar. Both were concrete in that even the most wretched hovel had a picture of the Holy Virgin, and a picture of the Czar in a corner and, if the means permitted, a candle burning before them, at least on holidays. When God and the Czar were removed from the corner the people had to have something as a replacement, and so one must bear with the fact that Stalin's picture was put there and that a candle is lighted before it if the means permit in. They know that such a person exists, have heard his voice over and the radio, perhaps a few have even seen him with their own eyes and can attest to his existence. Thus, idolatry is a necessity from the standpoint of governing and the socialist building of Soviet power, and for such a great cause personal antipathy must be overcome.

As we can see, this explanation seems quite logical and natural and makes one doubt whether he actually believed in his semi-divinity as his closest colleagues and friends subsequently claimed.
Tuominen, Arvo, The Bells of the Kremlin: Hanover: University Press of New England, 1983, p. 164

STALIN WAS CRUEL TO THOSE WHO DESERVED IT

Those who accused Stalin of brutality in the execution of the State Plans cannot ignore the fact that he has never denied the suffering and the pain, answering the charge as Ivan answered it before him: “Many among you say that I’m cruel; it is true that I am cruel and irascible, I do not deny it. But toward whom, I ask, am I cruel? I am cruel toward him who is cruel toward me.”
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 72

Stalin is not wantonly cruel, but he is not soft or sentimental, nor just nor legalistic.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 124

STALIN WAS NOT FOOLED BY FALSE PRAISE

…Stalin is quick to detect false praise from the genuine article. No one indulged in more extravagant flattery than Zinoviev and Kamenev. Each time they were caught out in treachery, they burst into paeans of praise in order (as Zinoviev put it) “to crawl back into the party on our bellies.” They were even foolish enough to imagine that, because Stalin forgave them time after time, they were successfully hoodwinking him. It needed the Treason Trials of 1936 to 1938 to show them the real truth.
Cole, David M. Josef Stalin; Man of Steel. London, New York: Rich & Cowan, 1942, p. 92

Did Stalin believe (and if so, in what sense) all this adulation? His daughter puts it in this way: ‘Did he perceive the hypocrisy that lay behind “homage” of this sort? I think so, for he was astonishingly sensitive to hypocrisy and impossible to lie to.’ A veteran Soviet diplomat and soldier wrote: ‘Anyone who imagines that Stalin believes this praise or laps it up in a mood of egotistical willingness to be deceived, is sadly mistaken. Stalin is not deluded by it.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 213

He [Stalin] could be snared by neither flattery nor threats, neither favors nor trickery.
Lyons, Eugene. Assignment in Utopia. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, c1937, p. 263

STALIN SHOWS DEEP SYMPATHY FOR ROOSEVELT’S CONDITION

At Yalta Roosevelt became ill and the session was deferred for the day. Stalin wanted to visit him and he asked Molotov and me to accompany him. We went to the president’s rooms on the first floor of the Livadia Palace where the empress had once slept. The window opened on to a beautiful view of the sea.
The president was delighted to see us, as he was confined to his bed and had hardly any visitors. He was clearly tired and drained, though he tried not to show it. We sat with him for

maybe twenty minutes, while he and Stalin exchanged polite remarks about health, the weather and the beauties of the Crimea. We left him when it seemed that Roosevelt had become detached, strangely remote, as if he could see us, yet was gazing somewhere into the distance.
We descending the narrow staircase when Stalin suddenly stopped, took his pipe out of his pocket, filled it unhurriedly and, as if to himself, said quietly, but so that we could hear: ' Why did nature have to punish him so? Is he any worst than other people?'
Despite his basic harshness of character, Stalin did just occasionally give way to positive human emotions.
Next day Roosevelt was back to normal and the sessions restarted, though the fatigue did not leave his face throughout the conference. He had only two months to live.
I repeat: Stalin sympathized with Roosevelt the man and he made this clear to us. He rarely bestowed his sympathy on anybody from another social system,…
Gromyko, Andrei. Memoirs. New York: Doubleday, c1989. p. 98

Koba called me to discuss future relations with the United States. He said: "We don't want merely to continue diplomatic relations on the basis of the 1933 Agreement…. No. We must establish the closest and most intimate relations with Roosevelt and his group and give them moral guarantees that we shall be on their side in the event of a decisive world conflict…. Roosevelt is a man who takes a broad view in international affairs…. He looks far ahead…. He is no Chamberlain, with Birmingham ties and petty bargaining instead of a really broad policy…."
Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 252

STALIN SAYS SEMINARY TURNED HIM INTO A REVOLUTIONARY

But, when I asked Stalin whether the privations of his childhood had made him what he was, he answered in the negative and offered me the following astonishing explanation:
"My parents had no education, but they did much for me. Such things as you tell me about Masaryk did not make me into a socialist, either at the age of six or at the age of 12. I became one at the seminary, because the character of the discipline enraged me. The place was a hotbed of espionage and chicanery. At nine in the morning we assembled for tea, and when we returned to our bedrooms all the drawers had been rifled. And just as they went daily through our papers, they went daily through our souls. I could not stand it; everything infuriated me.
Ludwig, Emil, Stalin. New York, New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1942, p. 19

In the case of Stalin, the remote reticence lord of all the Russians, he gave me the key himself. He said he became a revolutionary because he could not stand the Jesuitic repression and martinet intolerance of the Orthodox Church seminary where he spent some years. Those are his own words, and came right from his heart, although he gave other reasons, about his poor birth and surroundings and revolutionary friends, all in the proper Marxist manner.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 169

STALIN IS FLEXIBLE AND NOT HARD-HEADED

Sometimes if you persistently opposed Stalin and if he became convinced you were right, he would retreat from his position and accept yours. Of course, such flexibility and reasonableness is a positive quality in any man.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 93

STALIN AND MOLOTOV HAVE NO RESPECT FOR TRUMAN

However, at this time Truman was president, and Stalin had no respect at all for Truman. He considered Truman worthless. Rightly so. Truman didn't deserve respect. This is a fact.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 221

Roosevelt was an imperialist who would grab anyone by the throat…. Roosevelt knew how to conceal his attitude toward us, but Truman–he didn't know how to do that at all. He had an openly hostile attitude.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 51

And Truman had a very anti-Soviet mindset. That's why he began in that tone; he wanted to show who was boss…. He was far from having Roosevelt's intellect. A big difference. They had only one thing in common– Roosevelt had been an inveterate imperialist, too.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 55

Truman was least of all interested in either friendship or cooperation with Russia.
Werth, Alexander. Russia; The Post-War Years. New York: Taplinger Pub. Co.,1971, p. 56

STALIN EXPRESSED HIMSELF BRIEFLY, CONCISELY, AND COMPREHENSIVELY

I want to give Stalin his due here. Right up to his very death, Stalin could express himself clearly and concisely. His formulations were short, comprehensible, and to the point. It was one of Stalin's great gifts. In this regard Stalin was possessed of a tremendous power which can neither be denied nor debased. Everyone who knew Stalin admired this talent of his, and because of it we were proud to work with him.
Talbott, Strobe, Trans. and Ed. Khrushchev Remembers. Boston: Little Brown, c1970, p. 275

He accomplishes a great deal during his working day because he possesses an orderly and self-controlled mind and a marvelously retentive memory. Foreign statesmen are usually amazed at the extent of his knowledge, down to the most minute detail, on matters in which he is interested. Yenukidze, Secretary of the Soviet executive committee, says that Stalin's distinctive characteristics in speaking, writing, and working are brevity, clarity, accuracy. This was evident in my interviews with Stalin. He answered questions instantly in clear, brief statements, frequently listing his points in one, two, three order.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 10

At Politburo meetings he was brief and to the point, he sought not so much to polemicize against others as to summarize in a few words the opinion of the majority. A man of strong

will, Stalin was at the same time extremely cautious and, on occasion, indecisive as well…. Stalin was not interested in women.
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 89

Stalin was not interested women… He was neither unintelligent nor devoid of common sense.
Medvedev, Roy. On Stalin and Stalinism. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 33

STALIN LIVED A VERY FRUGAL, SPARTAN LIFE WITHOUT WEALTH

The story of Stalin is a success story…. No orator in the traditional sense, and betraying a Georgian accent, he nevertheless has perfect self-possession in speaking….
He is a quiet man…. There is little to be said about his personal life since the Soviet leaders do not consider their personal lives something to be spread over the front pages. As a result fantastic rumors have spread throughout the world that Stalin loves luxury and lives amid great splendor and pomp. Nothing could be further from the truth, and nothing can give such a misleading idea of the man and his aims. The fact is that Stalin does not care for money, is extremely modest and simple in his dress, in his habits, and in his home. He has a small four room apartment in the Kremlin. When his children were small one of them slept on a sofa in the dining room. Except for the worst period of the winter Stalin lives in Gorky in the little house where Lenin lived before his death.
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 9

Stalin was very frugal. He had no clothes in which to be buried. He was buried in his old military suit which had been cleaned and repaired….
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 210

My father never cared about possessions. He led a puritanical life, and the things that belonged to him said very little about him. The ones he left behind–his house, his rooms, and his apartment–give no clue to what he was like.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 15

My father lived on the ground floor. He lived in one room, in fact, and made it do for everything. He slept on the sofa, made up at night as a bed, and had telephones on the table beside it. The large dining table was piled high with documents, newspapers, and books…. The great, soft rug, and the fireplace were all the luxury my father wanted.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 20

The garden, the flowers, and the woods that surrounded the dacha were my father's hobby and relaxation.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 21

There was no need to make a Puritan of my mother–her tastes were simple enough already. Besides, in those days it was a matter of course for the leaders, especially leaders of the Party, to live in what was almost puritanical style.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 54

Often he spent days at a time in the big room with the fireplace. Since he didn't care for luxury, there was nothing luxurious about the room except the wood paneling and the valuable rug on the floor.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 205

He [my father] let his salary pile up in packets every month on his desk. I have no idea whether he had a savings account, but probably not. He never spent any money–he had no place to spend it and nothing to spend it on. Everything he needed–his food, his clothing, his dachas, and his servants–was paid for by the government.
Sometimes he'd pounce on his commandants or the generals of his bodyguard, someone like Vlasik, and start cursing: "You parasites! You're making a fortune here. Don't think I don't know how much money is running through your fingers!"
But the fact was, he knew no such thing. His intuition told him huge sums were going out the window, but that was all. From time to time he'd make a stab of auditing the household accounts, but nothing ever came of it, of course, because the figures they gave him were faked. He'd be furious, but he couldn't find out a thing. All-powerful as he was, he was impotent in the face of the frightful system that had grown up around him like a huge honeycomb, and he was helpless either to destroy it or to bring it under control. General Vlasik laid out millions in my father's name. He spent it on new houses and trips by enormous special trains, for example. Yet my father was unable even to get a clear explanation of how much money was being paid out, where, and to whom.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 209-210

[Zhukov said] "He [Stalin] never tolerated any luxury in clothing, furniture, or his life in general."
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987, p. 124

People who laugh like children love children….
Footnote: I can hear Stalin's laughter from here if he ever heard the monumental ineptitude of the Vermot Almanac which says: "Stalin spends 250,000 francs a year for his personal needs."
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 278

As a person, however, Stalin had changed greatly. He had power and position, but showed no interest in possessions and luxuries. His tastes were simple and he lived austerely. In summer he wore a plain military tunic of linen and in winter a similar tunic of wool, and an overcoat that was some 15 years old. He also had a short fur coat with squirrel on the inside and reindeer skin on the outside, which he started wearing soon after the Revolution and continued to wear with an old fur hat until his death. The presents, many of them valuable and even priceless works of craftsmanship, sent to him from all parts of the country and, on the occasion of his 70th birthday, from all over the world, embarrassed him. He felt that it would be wrong to make any personal use of such gifts. And, as his daughter noted: "He could not imagine why people would want to send him all these things." It was an insight into the paradoxical humility of this extraordinary man.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 235

After an official dinner in the Kremlin on August 14, 1942, there was a more informal final meeting on the following evening. Churchill was saying goodbye when Stalin proposed that

they go to his apartment for a farewell drink. He led the way along corridors into a narrow street, still within the Kremlin, and into another building, followed by Churchill and Birse, the British interpreter, and two or three NKVD guards. Stalin's apartment comprised a dining room, work room, bedroom, and a large bathroom, all very simply furnished. There was no trace of luxury. An elderly housekeeper in white overalls, wearing a head scarf, was setting the table.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 352

Shortly before midnight Churchill said he would like to wash his hands, so Stalin led him through the adjoining bedroom to a bathroom beyond. I accompanied them, and thus became the first foreigner to see Stalin's bedroom. It was as simply furnished as the dining room, with a marked absence of luxury. A bed and bedside table, a rug or two on the floor, a few chairs, and a large bookcase made up the total. There may have been a clothes cupboard as well, I cannot remember. I had a look at the books. They were a collection of Marxist literature, with a good many historical works, but I could see no Russian classics.
Birse, Arthur Herbert. Memoirs of an Interpreter. New York: Coward-McCann, 1967, p. 103

… Stalin always dressed simply and lived modestly. He displayed no taste for luxury or desire to enjoy the good things of life. He lived in the Kremlin in a modestly furnished apartment formerly occupied by a palace servant. At a time when Kamenev had already appropriated a magnificent Rolls-Royce, Stalin rode around Moscow in an old "Russo-Balte."…
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 89

Among party leaders in the '20s Stalin was known for the ascetic simplicity of his personal life, and echoes of that lifestyle persisted. For example, at his dacha in Kuntsevo there was hardly any furniture in the rooms he used for leisure or sleep. There was a clothes closet, a shelf with a small number of books (his main library was at his Kremlin apartment), a plain lamp without a shade, and a bed….
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 843

They [Stalin and Churchill] set off on their way along the Kremlin passageways. They came out into a small yard, crossed a street, and finally found themselves in Stalin's apartment, which the British prime minister later described as "modest in style and size": a dining room, a living room, a study, and a large bathroom. Stalin made no mention of the fact that the place had previously belonged to Bukharin. They switched apartments after Stalin's life, Nadezhda Alliluyeva, committed suicide.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin's Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 299

Stalin's son, Vasili, was born in 1921 and a few years later came Svetlana. Shortly after she was born, they were joined by Yakov, their father's son by his first marriage. Stalin's wife, Nadezhda, who was 22 years his junior, went about the task of setting up a simple household with zeal and dedication. They lived modestly on Stalin's salary until she went to work, first, for the journal Revolution and Culture then in the Sovnarkom secretariat, and finally to study at the Industrial Academy. One day at dinner Stalin suddenly said to her, 'I've never loved money, because I usually never had any.'…

Like all the other leaders at that time, Stalin lived in simple circumstances, in keeping with the family budget and party norms….
… Stalin had a natural bent for physical asceticism. When he died, he was found to have owned very few personal items–some uniforms, a pair of embroidered felt boots and a patched, peasant sheepskin coat. He did not love objects,…
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 102

The leadership of the 1920s lived rather modestly. At first, Stalin lived in a small apartment he had been given on Lenin's orders. A letter from Lunacharsky of November 18, 1921, requests that Stalin be found something more comfortable. When Lenin saw the letter he sent a note to the head of security, Belenky: "This is news to me. Can nothing else be found?" There is also a note from Lenin to Yenukidze, requesting that the matter of Stalin's apartment be expedited and asking to be informed by telephone when it had been settled. And indeed Stalin was soon re-housed in former servants quarters in the Kremlin, an inelegant dwelling with some of the original furniture, a worn floor, and small windows.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 145

In his last years, he [Stalin] had a small wooden house built next to the large villa and he moved into it. As Shelepin, (at one time head of the KGB and a member of the Politburo in the early 1970s), told me [Volkogonov]:
"When Stalin died and an inventory of his possessions had to be made, it turned out to be a very simple job. There were no antiques or valuable objects of any kind, apart from a government-issue piano. The furniture was cheap and the armchairs had loose covers. There was not even a single good 'real' picture, they were all printed reproductions in plain wooden frames. Hanging in the central position in the sitting room was an enlarged photograph of Lenin and Stalin, taken at Gorky in September 1922 by Lenin's sister, Maria. There were two rugs on the floor. Stalin slept under an army blanket. Apart from his marshal's uniform, his clothes consisted of a couple of ordinary suits, one of them in canvas, embroidered felt boots, and a peasant's sheepskin."
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 146

Stalin's own material demands were modest; his flat, furniture, pictures, clothes were simple and inexpensive. His salary simply accumulated in a drawer.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 311

I [Budu] felt that I had been away from Moscow for too long of time and I wanted someone to fill in the gaps for me with all the rumors and gossip of the capital. Mikeladze was just the man to do me that service.
Among other things, he told me how my Uncle Sosso had been living during the period when I had not been able to see him.
"He's the simplest man in the government," he told me. "He's also the most conservative in his daily habits. He's still living in the same little apartment in the Kremlin that he has had since the start of his career. He goes for a couple of months in the summer to his country house in Gorinka–you've been there–and goes hunting with Voroshilov and Budenny in the Perlovka woods or the forest of Bolchevo."
"Do you know his place at Sochi?" I asked.
"Yes. He has a villa built on the foundations of the old convent of St. Tamar. It was constructed by Auphane according to Comrade Stalin's own plans. It's modern and

comfortable, but there's no ostentatious luxury about it, as there is in the villas of some of the members of the government.
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 140

"Svetlana," he [Stalin] said, "you haven't run over your budget this month?"
"No, papa."
"Let's see your accounts." And, turning to me [Budu], he added, "She cheats. By the end of the year I have quite a deficit."
"Oh, papa, the state publishing house still owes you more than one million rubles for your books, and all you spend is 120,000 rubles year. How can you have a deficit?"
"You forget my donations," my uncle said. "Besides that, I took 500,000 rubles of bonds of the military loan. I have just 120,000 rubles left for my personal expenses. That's not bad either, when you add the same amount that I get as head of the government."
"Yes," said Svetlana, "and then you spend your own money for official ceremonies! When Churchill had dinner with us in your apartment at the Kremlin, I spent more than 10,000 rubles out of my budget then you never asked to be paid back for it."
"Yes, I did." My uncle laughed. "I asked Molotov to pay half of it, for that was really a private dinner which he and I gave to Churchill. He said he'd pay half if he could take it out of the secret funds of the Foreign Ministry."
"You see, papa, Molotov is smarter than you!"
"He's poorer than I am, too. He doesn't publish any books." He laughed maliciously.
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 202

Until the Second World War, he [Stalin] dressed with traditional Bolshevik modesty in a plain brown military coat and dark trousers stuffed into leather boots. He lived unpretentiously in a small house in the Kremlin, formerly part of the Tsars servants' quarters. Ownership and money as such played no part in his life. In the 1930s, his official salary was about 1000 rubles a month–in purchasing power, perhaps $40. One of his secretaries accepted and dealt with this small sum, paying the superintendent of the Kremlin a modest rent for his apartment, and dealing with his Party dues, his payment for his holiday, and so on…. His country villa at Borovikha and his seaside Government Summer House No. 7 at Sochi were "State property."
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 59

But he [Stalin] has now his country seat or summer residence. He lives in the house where Lenin died, outside Moscow, Gorky, a fine white house with Greek columns. It is a nice place with white walled rooms, pictures in gilded frames, armchairs and sofas upholstered in white and gold, antique marble vases, crimson curtains, palms and ferns in big pots. There are portraits of gentry of a bygone age. Not much has been disturbed since the original owners quitted the scene. Stalin lives there as if he had leased a furnished house for the season. He does not order the bourgeois luxury to be removed. Neither does he profit by it very much. It does not interest him. He sits in his own cabinet with masses of papers and books and works. Here for a while he tried to learn English, but gave it up, finding it too difficult.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 117

He does not play cards like most of the other leaders and also, unlike other comrades, takes little pleasure in sitting around a table drinking and gossiping.

In the winter he moves his family back to the Kremlin, to his rooms there. That is less comfortable, but perhaps more to his liking. He engages no cook. The meals are sent in on a tray from the Communal restaurant. It is true he dines more amply than the working man; he does not stint his stomach. He has his mince stewed in grape leaves, his shashlik, his cranberry cream, all washed down with abundant wine from his native Georgia. He is not a vodka drinker and does not care for beer. Red table-wine such as one can get at any dukhan in the Caucasus, is all he asks. He enjoys good health; his abdominal trouble does not recur.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 118

The dinner is served on nationalized plates, some of them still bearing the initials of the Tsars. His rooms are simply furnished; no armchairs, divans or anything of the kind; white-curtained windows; wooden chairs; no tablecloth; a portrait of Lenin. He sits down to dinner in the afternoon and to supper in the evening with his new young consort, Nadia, and his children. There are seldom any visitors at these meals. Stalin eats and drinks and says little. He does not discuss politics with his wife nor tell her the events of the day. When the meal is over he moves back his chair, lights his pipe and seems to fall into a reverie.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 119

In those years, the 1920s, Stalin led a very simple life. He always wore an ordinary outfit, of a military cut, with boots and a military cap. He had neither the taste for luxuries nor the wish to enjoy the pleasures of life. He lived in the Kremlin, in a small and simply furnished apartment, where palace servants had lived before. Whereas Kamenev, for example, with his new understanding of cars, had a splendid Rolls-Royce, Stalin was content with a Russo-Balt (an old Russian model) that was powerful but old and modest.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 109

A couple of times the Supreme Commander-in-Chief invited us to dinner in his Kremlin apartment.
Stalin led a rather modest life. The food was always very simple, mostly Russian cuisine, sometimes Georgian national dishes. He never tolerated any luxury in clothing, furniture, or his life in general.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 495

Stalin inspected the villa [at Potsdam] placed at his disposal and asked whose it had been before. He was told it had belonged to General Ludendorff. Stalin never liked any lavishness. After he had inspected the quarters he asked for some of the furniture to be removed.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 668

Stalin inspected the villa placed at his disposal [at Potsdam] and asked who it had belonged to before. He was told it had belonged to General Ludendorff. Stalin never liked any lavishness. After he had inspected the quarters he asked for some of the furniture to be removed.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 442

I later found out that Stalin was very frugal, economizing on everything and thus trying to set an example to others. He had to be convinced to get something new. As an example, to get

summer suits. He wore his boots and shoes until they nearly fell off his feet. He raised his children also without luxury. In order to please Svetlana (Stalin's daughter) Vlasik gave her a small cabin to herself which was empty.
Stalin, finding this out later, said:
"Vlasik, you should not do this, it's against the law. Who is she, a member of our Politburo, a member of our Central Committee? Vacate the cabin and give her a place together with the others."
Here is another example. It was a September day. The ocean was calm. Antonov was sunning himself under a large tree. All of a sudden, a dark storm blew up. I stood nearby. The downpour was horrendous, while Antonov, the guard, bravely stood at his post in the open, not moving from his guard duty. It was the most frightful storm I have ever witnessed…but the bodyguards stood where they were placed throughout this deluge. Stalin, during this event, saw through the window as Antonov was practically drowned by the rain and nearly blown off his feet. After the storm subsided, Stalin, together with commissar Bogdanov, wanted to see this dutiful man, Antonov.
Antonov said: I'm listening, comrade Stalin!
You certainly got a soaking…. I saw everything.
It's nothing, comrade Stalin, soon my uniform will dry.
Why hasn't a small shelter for the guards been built here?, asked Stalin of Bogdanov. You should be put in his place so that you can see what it is to suffer through such a downpour. I want this small shelter built immediately, within two hours.
In two hours, Stalin came out to see whether this had been done and seeing a new shelter, said:
Something like this should not have to be ordered by me. Bogdanov should have thought of this himself. All of us must carry out our responsibilities!
Thank you from the bottom of our hearts, comrade Stalin, for being so concerned about us! Altshuler, the guard who had replaced Antonov who had gone to dry himself, thanked Stalin.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 11-13

On July 16, 1945, Stalin came to Berlin to attend the Potsdam Conference. Yefimov and Orlov provided Stalin with a luxurious room in a hotel, got him gold-embossed furniture. When Stalin saw this, he made them take it out and replace it with ordinary furniture and he blasted them for this bootlicking, fawning attitude to him.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 49

After the death of Stalin, in his bedroom on his small night table, Starostin found Stalin's bank book–only 900 rubles had he saved. The bank book was given to Svetlana.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 107

His habits were modest enough. He dressed simply, worked in his ostentatious lodgings in the Kremlin, drank sparingly of vodka and Georgian wines and ate traditional Russian food.
Overy, R. J. Russia's War: Blood Upon the Snow. New York: TV Books, c1997, p. 35

There the dictator occupies two plain rooms in an annex. His living quarters in another part of the Kremlin, where he lives with his family, is just as unpretentious. His office looks more

like the hygienic surgery of a doctor, and the man in the light gray jacket, a kind of military tunic without buttons or badges, also looks thoroughly washed. Everything stands in precise and tasteless order on the long table, the carafes, ashtrays and sheets of paper. If Marx's magnificently domed forehead, which always reminds me of someone dear to me, did not look down from the wall, one might feel himself in Department X of the Y ministry in the capital of Z.
Ludwig, Emil. Three portraits: Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin. New York Toronto: Longmans, Green and Company, c1940, p. 117

In his memoirs Bazhanov gives us a description of Stalin in 1923-25 that has the ring of truth about it…. He [Stalin] lived very modestly in a Kremlin apartment formerly occupied by a palace servant. He always wore simple clothes and had little taste for luxury or other creature comforts. At time when Kamenev had already appropriated a magnificent Rolls, Stalin drove around Moscow in an old "Russo-Balte."…
Medvedev, Roy. On Stalin and Stalinism. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 33

On one occasion, Stalin asked the two Germans to come unobtrusively to his apartment in the Kremlin. What impressed his visitors was the modest style in which Stalin lived: He occupied a single-story, two-room house in the former servants' quarters of the Kremlin, shabbily furnished, despite the fact that he was the organizer of "tens of thousands of salaried employees, including the state police… and could offer party jobs and state jobs, give influential assignments in Russia and abroad, and very often "responsible party tasks" combined with substantial material advantages–apartments, automobiles, country residences, special medical care, and jobs for members of the family."
The simplicity of Stalin's life-style was not a pose. He was interested in the substance not the trappings of power. Bazhanov and other witnesses confirm this: "This passionate politician has no other vices. He loves neither money nor pleasure, neither sport nor women. Women, apart from his own wife, do not exist for him."
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 181

Now, in 1952, Stalin is an old, white-haired man .
His private life is quiet and modest. Luxury, sumptuous dwellings, adorned with works of art, brilliant receptions and recherche dinners, have no attraction for him. In Moscow he is still living in the same small house, in the courtyard of the Kremlin, in which he received Matsuoka in 1941 and Churchill in 1942.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 414

Stalin and his family occupy a small two-room apartment within the Kremlin, formerly tenanted by the attaches at the palace. One passes through a dark corridor and climbs up a stairway to reach the Stalin abode. You enter an antechamber. An army coat is on the rack. Stalin is home.
The dining-room, which is also the living-room, is rather small and elongated. The Stalins are at the table. All their meals are brought from the Kremlin restaurant, which supplies all the other high officials. The dinner is perhaps superior to that of the ordinary Russian restaurant, but it is the kind of food that an American railway conductor would disdain. No luxuries, no delicacies, with the exception of the fine wine.

The furniture in the apartment is of the simplest character. White canvas curtains are hanging over the windows. On the couch in the dining-room the oldest son will go to sleep after dinner. That is his bedroom.
During the meal, there is little conversation. Stalin is not loquacious. He eats heartily. After dinner he will sit down in an armchair near the window and puff away at his pipe.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 323-324

His own savings were depreciated by the devaluation decree [of 1949]; but he had never been a materialistic man. Unopened pay-packets were found at his dacha when he died.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 497

Iremashvili informs us,… “He was least of all concerned with his personal welfare. He made no demands on life, regarding them as incompatible with Socialist principles. He had sufficient integrity to make sacrifices for his ideal.” Koba was true to that vow of poverty which was taken unostentatiously and without any ado by all the young people who went into the revolutionary underground.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 51

Volodya says, “I have read a lot of contemporary books and I disagree completely with the way he is described. He was a man dedicated fully to his cause. He never wanted anything for himself–he left no possessions after his death. He gave his life to Russia, to the Soviet Union….
Volodya says, “It is all too easy today to call Stalin a fool, a paranoiac and a mass- murderer. It was not so at all!
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin’s Shadow. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994, p. 274-275

STALIN HAD A SENSE OF HUMOR

One always receives the impression with Stalin of a flaming enthusiasm kept in bounds by an iron will….
Stalin has a good, if somewhat heavy footed, sense of humor. Once Stalin received Arnold Kaplani and Boris Goldstein, youthful piano and violin stars, and awarded them each a government grant of 3000 rubles. When the youngsters had the money in their hands, he quizzed them, “Now that you are capitalists will you recognize me on the street?”…
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 11

He has a sense of humor, though it is heavy to Western ears;… Addressing the 1930 congress of the party, he ticked off the Right Opposition of Bukharin and Rykov by asserting that if Bukharin saw a cockroach he proceeded at once to smell catastrophe, foreseeing the end of the Soviet Union in one month. “Rykov supported Bukharin’s theses on the subject,” said Stalin, “with the reservation, however, that he had a very serious difference with Bukharin, namely that the Soviet government will perish, in his opinion, not in one month, but in one month and two days.”
At the 1934 congress he took time out to deal with those who indulged in the great Russian habit of talkativeness:

“I had a conversation with one such comrade, a very respected comrade, but an incorrigible chatterbox, who was capable of submerging any living cause in a flood of talk. Well, here is the conversation:
I: How are you getting on with the sowing?
He: With the sowing, Comrade Stalin? We have mobilized ourselves.
I: Well, and what then?
He: We have put the question bluntly.
I: And what next?
He: There is a turn, Comrade Stalin; soon there will be a turn.
I: But still?
He: We can observe some progress.
I: But for all that, how are you getting on with the sowing?
He: Nothing has come of the sowing as yet, Comrade Stalin.”
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 530

Stalin has a sense of humor. His cynicism is deep, his irony open. He has a genuine appreciation of satire.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 327

STALIN STOOD FIRM WHEN OTHERS PANICKED

In political debate Stalin’s humor turns to acid–and it is most effective. When attacking Rykov, Tomsky, Bukharin and the opposition from the right in the party, he ridiculed their fears of every new policy. Said Stalin: “These features take on particularly ridiculous forms when difficulties appear, when the slightest cloud makes its appearance on the horizon. If any difficulty or hitch has appeared anywhere, they fall into a panic, lest something may happen. A cockroach somewhere stirs, without having time even to crawl out of its hole, and they are already starting back in terror, and beginning to shout about a catastrophe, about the ruin of the Soviet government.”
He continued: “We try to calm them down, we try to convince them that nothing dangerous has happened yet, that it is only a cockroach, and there is no need to be afraid, but all in vain. They continue to shout as before: “What cockroach? That’s no cockroach, it’s a thousand wild beasts! It’s not a cockroach, but the abyss, the ruin of the Soviet government!” And volumes of paper begin to poor in.”
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 11

STALIN COULD BE WITTY AND ASK SHARP QUESTIONS

If at times his intent is softer his wit is no less pointed. In our group interviews with Stalin in 1927, after we had questioned him for six hours, he finally turned to us and said, “If the delegation is not too tired, I would ask it to permit me to put several questions.” Stalin then slyly asked the sociologists and economists: “How you account for the small percentage of American workers organized in trade unions?” I can still see Stalin chuckling to himself at our contradictory answers….
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 11

STALIN SUCCESSFULLY OVERCAME ONE CRISIS AFTER ANOTHER

There is no question but that he is accustomed to facing and overcoming the most formidable obstacles. There has not been a single year since 1899 but what has involved some sort of crisis for him. First were the revolutionary struggles in Tsarist times with consequent imprisonments and exile. The civil war and intervention followed. The death of Lenin came next, with the explosion of bitter rivalry within the party. Almost numberless crises developed on the fronts of economic and social change. There were three great Five-Year Plans–and the threat of war always lurked ominously in the background. Hitler's march into Russia in 1941 precipitated the titanic struggle so long expected. Now there is the herculean task of reconstruction.
Experience has made Stalin intensely practical–and when theory does not workout in practice it's too bad for the theory….
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 11

But, in spite of apparently insoluble difficulties, in spite of the fact that each spring the regime seemed to be tottering on its last legs, the man's [Stalin] indomitable energy did succeed in giving the USSR a new industrial equipment. After a few more years of intense effort, the results of the terrific, almost superhuman strain, would show themselves in an increase of general prosperity and happiness. In spite of everything, therefore, our devotion to Stalin was colored with a determined enthusiasm. It was infectious: it penetrated even the ranks of the Opposition. How else explain the frequent surrender of its members? "Stalin's work, cruel and clumsy though his methods of carrying it out may be"–they argued–"is more important than our differences with him"; and they abjured their dissident faith.
Barmine, Alexandre. Memoirs of a Soviet Diplomat. London: L. Dickson limited,1938, p. 237

STALIN DISLIKES ALL THE PRAISE HEAPED ON HIM

Paradoxically enough, in view of his very real modesty and unassuming nature, Stalin permits his statue and his picture to be plastered from one end of the country to the other. He has said the reason he does not object to pictures, memorials in his honor and the like, is because the people are merely using him as a symbol of the Soviet state. There are indications, however, that he finds the fulsome tributes to him, which are regulation oratorical flourishes in Russia, somewhat distasteful. In a speech to the workers of Tiflis he alluded to this in a half-mocking way:
"I must, in all conscience, tell you, that I have not deserved half the praise that has been given me. It appears that I am one of the heroes, the director of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union… a peerless knight and all sorts of other things. This is mere fantasy, and a perfectly useless exaggeration. This is the way one speaks at the funeral of a revolutionary. But I'm not preparing to die…."
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers' Press, Inc., c1946, p. 12

Twice in my life I called Stalin a genius. Once it was in some sort of a welcoming speech which I didn't write, and it was signed by a group of us. Stalin got angry, ordered that it be deleted, and said, "How did you end up in this?"
The second time was at his funeral.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 165

Stalin regretted that he had agreed to become Generalissimo. He always regretted it. And that was right. Kaganovich and Beria overdid it…. Well, the commanders also insisted on it…. He had no need for that title. No, he regretted this very much. …Twicethey tried to give him that rank. He rejected the first attempt, then agreed and came to regret it.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 175

At one time there were persistent suggestions that Moscow be renamed the city of Stalin. Very persistent! I objected. Kaganovich proposed it. He said, "There's not only Leninism, there's Stalinism too!"
Stalin was outraged.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 176

After the Tehran conference, Stalin once told me he was sickened by the way they were deifying him, and that there were no saints. He said there was no such man as Stalin as depicted, but if the people created such a Stalin, if they believed in him, it meant this was necessary in the interests of the proletariat and should therefore be supported.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 302

He [Stalin] hated the futile homage the Georgians paid him. He thought about Georgia only when he was an old man.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 67

My father had unpleasant memories of his journey here [Kutaisi railway station] because he couldn't stand the sight of a crowd applauding him and shouting "Hurrah!" His face would twitch with annoyance each time it happened. Here, at the Kutaisi railway station, his Georgian countrymen had given him such a reception that he'd been unable to leave the train and get into his car. People literally threw themselves under the wheels. They crawled and shouted and threw flowers and carried their children on their shoulders. Here if nowhere else, it was warm-blooded, unfeigned, and sincere. Here if anywhere it was straight from the heart, but my father was angry anyway. He was accustomed by this time to having the stations empty and cleared for his arrival and to the roads he traveled on being empty. He wasn't used to people shouting and hurling themselves at his car. He had altogether forgotten that feelings of this kind could be sincere and not put on.
I was horribly embarrassed even by the more modest "homage" paid us when we went to the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow and at the banquets in honor of my father's 70th birthday. I was always afraid my father might at any moment say something that would throw cold water on everyone, and also I could see his face twitching with annoyance. "They open their mouths and yell like fools," he would say in a tone of angry contempt.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 201

… Though he [Stalin] had been chairman at the recent meeting of the Party which had resolved to encourage the cult of his greatness he now remarked how wrong it was to ascribe the country's successes to any single leader!
Tokaev, Grigori. Comrade X. London: Harvill Press,1956, p. 34

Stalin was, in fact, not a vain, self-obsessed man who had to be surrounded by fawning and flattery. He detested this mass adulation of his person, and throughout his life he went to great lengths to avoid demonstrations in his honor. Indeed, he was to be seen in public only at party congresses and at ceremonial occasions on Red Square, when he was a remote figure standing on Lenin's mausoleum. He had the same lack of personal vanity as Peter the Great and Lenin, but like them he had the same supremely arrogant conviction, transcending mere vanity, that he was the man of destiny, who held the key to the future….
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 234

I must, in all conscience, tell you, that I have not deserved half the eulogy that has been given me. It appears that I am one of the heroes, the director of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the head of the Communist International, the peerless knight, and all sorts of other things. This is mere fantasy, and a perfectly useless exaggeration. That is the way one speaks at the grave of a revolutionary. But I am not preparing to die.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 3

[Despite Stalin's opposition to hero worship] nothing could be allowed to jeopardize the facade. When in 1938 Stalin criticized the cult of personality, it was necessary to suppress his remarks. In a letter to a minor publishing house, Stalin advised against the publication of a hagiographical Stories about Stalin's Childhood:
Stalin stated, "The book abounds in a mass of factual improbabilities, alterations, and unearned praise. The author is led astray by lovers of fables, by impostors (even by impostors "in good faith"), by flatterers…the book tends to instill… the cult of personalities, of leaders, of infallible heroes. This is dangerous and harmful. The theory of "heroes" and masses is not a Bolshevist theory… I recommend burning the book."
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 205

In 1937, when the Children's Publishing House (Detgiz) produced a book of "Stories about Stalin's Childhood" and sent it to Stalin for approval, he sent Detgiz the following letter:
"February 16, 1938
I am strongly opposed to the publication of "Stories about Stalin's Childhood." The book is filled with a mass of factual distortions, untruths, exaggerations, and undeserved encomia. The author has been misled by lovers of fairy tales–by liars (perhaps "honest liars") and timeservers. A pity for the author, but facts remain facts. But that isn't the main thing. The main thing is that the book has the tendency to inculcate in Soviet people (and people in general) the cult of the personality of chiefs and infallible heroes. That is dangerous, harmful. The theory of "heroes and the mob" is not Bolshevik but Socialist-Revolutionary. The Socialist-Revolutionaries say the "Heroes make a people, turn it from a mob into a people." "The people make heroes," reply the Bolsheviks. The book is grist for the Socialist-Revolutionaries mill; it will harm our general Bolshevik cause. My advice is to burn the book.
Signed J. Stalin

Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 818

Stalin even denounced the cult of personality. In 1932, when the Society of Old Bolsheviks asked for permission to open an exhibition of documents concerning his life and activity, he refused. “I am against it because such enterprises lead to the establishment of a ‘cult of personality,’ which is harmful and incompatible with the spirit of the party.”… In 1930 he wrote a letter to a certain Shatunovsky, urging him not to speak of devotion to Stalin or to any individual. “That is not a Bolshevik principle. Have devotion to the working-class, to its party, to its state, but don’t mix that up with devotion to individuals, which is an inane and unnecessary toy of the intelligentsia.”…
In a 1928 speech Stalin uttered the following words,…
“The fact that the chiefs rising to the top become separated from masses, while masses begin to look up at them from below, not daring to criticize them–this fact cannot but create a certain danger of isolation and estrangement between the chiefs and masses. This danger may reach the point where the chiefs get conceited and consider themselves infallible. And what good can come of the leaders on top growing conceited and beginning to look down on the masses from above? Clearly nothing but disaster for the party can come from this.”
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 850

It is manifestly irksome to Stalin to be idolized as he is, and from time to time he makes fun of it.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 75

The story goes that at a little dinner which he gave on New Year’s Day to a circle of intimate friends, he raised his glass and said: “I drink to the health of the incomparable leader of the people, of the great genius Comrade Stalin. There, friends; and that is the last time I shall be toasted here this year.”
Of all the men I know who have power, Stalin is the most unpretentious. I spoke frankly to him about the vulgar and excessive cult made of him, and he replied with equal candor. He grudged, he said, the time which he had to spend in a representative capacity, and that is easy to believe, for Stalin is, as many well-documented examples have proved to me, prodigiously industrious and attentive to every detail, so that he really has no time for the stuff and nonsense of superfluous compliments and adoration. On an average, he allows to be answered no more than one of every hundred telegrams of homage which he receives. He himself is extremely objective, almost to the point of incivility, and welcomes a like objectivity from the person he is talking to.
He shrugs his shoulders at the vulgarity of the immoderate worship of his person. He excuses his peasants and workers on the grounds that they have had too much to do to be able to acquire good taste as well, and laughs a little at the hundreds of thousands of enormously enlarged portraits of a man with a mustache which dance before his eyes at demonstrations.
He thinks it is possible even that the “wreckers” may be behind it in an attempt to discredit him. “A servile fool,” he said irritably, “does more harm than 100 enemies.” If he tolerates all the cheering, he explained, it is because he knows the naive joy the uproar of the festivities affords those who organize them, and is conscious that it is not intended for him personally, but for the representative of the principle that the establishment of socialist economy in the Soviet Union is more important than the permanent revolution.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 76-77

With the same aim of protecting himself, Yezhov initiated the plan to rename Moscow "Stalinodar" in the beginning of 1938. This aim inspired an appeal by all categories of workers to change Moscow's name. The question was raised at a session of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. Stalin, however, reacted entirely negatively to this idea, and, for this reason, the city remained Moscow.
Getty and Manning. Stalinist Terror. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 37

Enthusiasm for a leader is a characteristic effect of successful leadership. Stalin's leadership during the last nine years produced for him a wave of enthusiasm which, because his triumphs have been spectacular in creating, for example, a record-breaking heavy industry and progressively raising the standard of living, has exceeded in cumulative strength even that felt for Lenin. The hangers-on of the Revolution, place-seekers, and bureaucrats have at times, by their motivated flattery, exceeded reason and justification. For that reason it is all the more important to distinguish between such spurious flattery, which many have mistaken for currency between the masses and Stalin, and the genuine praise which the masses lavish on him. If a newspaper critic can refer to a tennis player, a boxer, an actor, or a buffoon as great, is it unreasonable that millions of people supporting and benefiting from the Stalin policy should refer to him as "Bolshoi Stalin"–the great Stalin? Stalin has himself repeatedly deprecated complacent praise of himself, and insisted on a critical approach to all questions of policy and administration.
Edelman, Maurice. G.P.U. Justice. London: G. Allen & Unwin, ltd.,1938, p. 135

In August 1931,… there were attempts to immortalize Stalin in works of political biography. There is a letter in Stalin's archive from Yaroslavski [to Stalin], which includes the following: "As he was leaving today, Ordjonikidze rang to say he'd spoken to you [Stalin] about the book called Stalin that I [Yaroslavski] want to write…" Stalin's customary pencilled remark on the note reads: "Comrade Yaroslavski, I'm against it. I think the time has not yet come for biographies."
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 191

He [Stalin] was on the whole punctilious about awards. For instance, in 1949 he would not agree to Malenkov's suggestion that his 70th birthday be marked by conferring on him his second Gold Star Hero of the Soviet Union. He decided enough was enough after receiving the Order of Victory and he stopped the flow of decorations,… In all, Stalin had about as many decorations as, say, Mekhlis, and four or five times fewer than Brezhnev. He was similarly punctilious about the indiscriminate award of medals to others and would cancel decorations if he thought them undeserved. 'Medals are for fighters who distinguish themselves in battle with the German aggressors, and not to be dished out to anyone who comes along,' he wrote to the commander-in-chief of the 1st Baltic front on November 16, 1943, when he was told that general Yeremenko had been awarding medals without the agreement of the War Council.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 477

Stalin's 70th birthday was approaching. He knew that from the Politburo down, everyone was hectically making arrangements. He called in Malenkov and said, 'Don't even think of presenting me with another Star!'

‘But, Comrade Stalin,’ Malenkov protested, ‘for a jubilee like this, the people won’t understand….”
‘Leave the people out of this. I’ve no intention of arguing about it. Don’t insist! Got it?’
Mention of the ‘Star’ had not been accidental. After the Victory Parade and reception in honor of the front commanders in June 1945, a group of marshals had suggested to Molotov & Malenkov that they should mark the ‘leader’s extraordinary contribution’ by conferring on him the country’s highest award, the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. They referred to the fact that for his 60th birthday Stalin had been awarded the title of Hero of Socialist Labor, and that during the war he had received three decorations, the Victory Order No. 3–numbers one and two having gone to Zhukov and Tolbukhin–the Suvorov 1st Class, and the Red Banner, which he was given ‘for service in the Red Army’.
Over the next day and half, Molotov and Malenkov had debated the matter with their colleagues and on June 26 two decrees were issued by the Supreme Soviet ordering that the title of Hero of the Soviet Union and a second Victory Order be conferred on Marshal of the Soviet Union, Stalin. The same day, the title of Generalissimo of the Soviet Union was created and on the 27th it was conferred on Stalin. This was probably the only occasion when they disobeyed their leader. That morning before breakfast, Stalin unfolded his copy of Pravda as usual and flew into a rage. They had not consulted him! They had not asked him!
‘Say what you like,’ Stalin had said conclusively, ‘I will not accept the decoration. Do you hear me, I will not!’
The comrades tried another two or three times to persuade him, even recruiting Poskrebyshev and Vlasik in their cause. But in vain…. Finally, on the eve of the May Day celebrations of 1950, Shvernik managed to hand Stalin the medals he had been awarded in 1945, plus an Order of Lenin for his 70th birthday of 1949.
‘You’re indulging an old man,’ Stalin muttered. ‘It won’t do anything for my health.’
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 525-526

The Politburo resolved to celebrate Stalin’s birthday with a splash. Shvernik was appointed to handle the festivities….
The organizers also prepared a surprise in the form of the Stalin Prize, the cost of which was calculated at 7 rubles 64 kopeks per medal, while the total quantity of metal for one million medals was worked out at 24 tons of bronze and six tons of nickel. There was also to be an international Stalin Peace Prize. Thirteen versions of the medal were submitted for Stalin’s approval by the artists. Everything was set for the presentation of this most prestigious decoration, when at the last moment Stalin dug his heels in, despite having given his preliminary approval of the idea.
Having looked over all the designs and read all the draft decrees (while his comrades-in-arms were waiting in hopes of being the first to receive the new prize), Stalin suddenly declared: ‘I will only approve the decree on the international prize.’ After a pause he added: ‘And orders of this kind are only to be given posthumously.’
Nearly an hour before the ceremony was due to start, the carefully selected and screened audience had filled the Bolshoi Theatre. Half an hour later Stalin entered the room set aside for the Presidium (as the Politburo was now called) where he exchanged greetings with such luminaries of the Communist world as Togliatti, Mao Tse-tung, Walter Ulbricht, Dolores Ibarruri, and Rakosi, among others.
When the Presidium went out on to the stage, the audience could not contain themselves. The day before, Stalin had altered Malenkov’s seating plan, which had placed him [Stalin] in

the center, but he compromised over his usual custom of sitting ‘modestly’ in the second row at all such meetings and put himself well to the right of the chairman, placing Mao on his right and Khrushchev on his left.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 527-528

He [Stalin] seldom went back to Georgia after the Revolution, and particularly after a stunning rebuff he received there in 1921. But when he did (especially in later life), he would stay at such secluded spots as the Likani Palace in the mountain spa of Borzhomi, on a gorge of the upper Kura–never going to nearby Gori, or even to Tiflis (though at one point he did set off for Gori, but was so disgusted by the uproarious welcome of villages in between that he turned back).
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 14

The open hardness and trust of Georgians irritate my father….when during his trip through Georgia in 1952 he was met on the roads by entire villages. He couldn’t bring himself to have a good talk with those sincere peasants–maybe he was already afraid of everything. He refused to accept their offerings, their greetings, and, turning the car around, would leave them behind.
…In him everything was the other way round, and cold calculation, dissimulation, a sober, cynical realism became stronger in him with the years.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 360

My father alone [compared to other Politburo members] was in the habit of giving to museums the numerous gifts sent by workers to their leaders.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 401

On a few occasions, Stalin himself was mildly critical of the excessive praise heaped on him as unbecoming to the Bolshevik tradition.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 16

From the stories of his guards Stalin appears to have been a self-effacing, fatherly person. On various occasions he angrily protested having watched documentary films showing him in situations that had never taken place. When Beria and Malenkov argued that the scenes were “needed for history,” he opposed them, saying: “Leave me alone with such history.”
… Beria’s book on the history of Bolshevism in the Caucasus, which heaped praise on Stalin, was not written (as generally believed) upon Stalin’s request; rather, it was written on Beria’s initiative, because Beria wanted to ingratiate himself with Stalin.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 149

The Central Committee had decided to award Stalin the medal of Socialist Hero. Stalin appreciated this honor since he was so heavily involved in all of the five-year plans. The Politburo also wanted to give him the Hero of the Soviet Union medal for his role in the Great Patriotic War. When Stalin heard about this from Tukov, he called this disgraceful:
This is toadyism by jesters! Such a high award must be only given to soldiers, who showed heroism on the battlefield! I was never in the front lines with a rifle in my hands and did not show any heroism!

Finding out Stalin's unceremonious feelings towards this, Malenkov was elected to approach Stalin on this… but being very cagey he asked Poskrebyshev to do this instead. Poskrebyshev was also afraid, since he knew that Stalin does not approve of such "ceremonious glorification." He assigned this task to Orlov, the Commandant of the personal bodyguards of Stalin…let him do it. Orlov knew better than that… the medal was never given and Stalin never accepted it.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 48

Before the Victory Parade in 1945, the Central Committee decided to make Stalin happy by designing him a new parade-oriented uniform as Generalissimo. Khalev, head of the bodyguards now, was given the task of getting three different uniforms designed and sewn. He got a young, well-built soldier to model for the uniform and showed it to the assembled Central Committee. Stalin, coming from his office, seeing this young athletic man in a General's uniform with sashes, epulets, gold braid and gold buttons asked:
What is this peacock doing here?
Comrade Stalin, these are three proposed designs for your uniform for the Victory Parade, that you will wear.
Stalin refused all of them, had them taken away. He received the parade in his usual uniform.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 49

Stalin loved to fish and there were many rivers there [the lake at Ritsa], so in some free time, we managed to fish and cook, together, as one family, not as head of the USSR and his bodyguards. He never wanted us to raise a glass of wine to his health. In this case, he proposed that we should raise a glass to the health of Elizarov, the one who caught the most fish.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 53

In private, for example, he [Stalin] repeatedly affected disdain for adulation. In 1930, for example, he ended a letter to Shatunovsky, an Old Bolshevik, by saying, "You speak of your 'devotion' to me. Perhaps that phrase slipped out accidentally. Perhaps. But if it isn't an accidental phrase, I'd advise you to thrust aside the 'principle' of devotion to persons. It isn't the Bolshevik way. Have devotion to the working class, its party, its state. That's needed and good. But don't mix it with devotion to persons, that empty and needless intellectuals' bauble."
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 146

August 1930: "You speak of your devotion' to me. . . I would advise you to discard the `principle' of devotion to persons. It is not the Bolshevik way. Be devoted to the working class, its Party, its state. That is a fine and useful thing. But do not confuse it with devotion to persons, this vain and useless bauble of weak-minded intellectuals".
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 13, p. 20.

On June 8, 1926, he [Stalin] talked in Tiflis to the workers in the local railroad shops…. He said, "In all honesty I should tell you, comrades, that I do not deserve as much as half of

those praises which here have been bestowed upon me. It would appear that I was the hero of October, the leader of the Communist Party and the Comintern, a veritable miraclemaker. All that is fantasy, comrades, a completely needless exaggeration. One talks in such terms over the grave of a revolutionary…. But I am not ready for the grave."
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 288

…writers and artists vie in idolizing him unreservedly. But the admiration of the crowd irritated him.
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 148

Some title you've [Koniev suggested to Molotov and Malenkov that Stalin be called Generalissimo] thought up! Chang Kai-shek's a Generalissimo. Franco's a Generalissimo–find company I find myself in!" Kaganovich, proud inventor of "Stalinism," also suggested renaming Moscow as Stalinodar, an idea that had first been suggested by Yezhov in 1938. Beria seconded him. This simply "outraged" Stalin: "What do I need this for?"
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 494

Three days after the parade [in June 1945] , Pravda announced Stalin's new rank and medals. He was furious and summoned Molotov, Malenkov, Beria, Zhdanov, and old Kalinin, who was already extremely ill with stomach cancer. "I haven't led regiments in the field…. I'm refusing the star as undeserved." They argued but he insisted. "Say what you like. I won't accept the decorations."
…Malenkov and Beria were left with the gold star of the Hero of the Soviet Union: how to get him to accept it? Here Stalin's court dissolves into an opera bouffe farce in which the cantankerous Generalissimo was virtually pursued around Moscow by courtiers trying to pin the medal on him. First Malenkov agreed to try but Stalin would not listen. Next he recruited Poskrebyshev who accepted the mission but gave up when Stalin resisted energetically. Beria and Malenkov tried Vlasik but he too failed. They decided it was best to ambush Stalin when he was gardening because he loved his roses and lemon trees so they persuaded Orlov, the Kuntsevo commandant, to present it. When Stalin asked for the secateurs to prune his beloved roses, Orlov brought the secateurs but kept the star behind his back, wondering what to do with it.
"What are you hiding?" asked Stalin. "Let me see." Orlov gingerly brought out the star. Stalin cursed him: "Give it back to those who thought up this nonsense!"
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 495

There is little doubt that this Stalin-worship–for that is what it amounts to–could be stopped by him if he so desired, but that does not necessarily mean that he likes it. In point of fact on more than one occasion he has shown displeasure at excessive flattery. The Bolshevik (the official Party monthly) in March, 1947, reported Stalin's comment on a military history written by one Colonel Razin, in which the Soviet leader said "the panegyrics" (of himself) " grate upon the ear," and "it is really uncomfortable to read them." The New York Times, March 9, 1947, reports that Stalin had recently used a blue pencil on a biography of Lenin in which he (Stalin) was praised excessively. He left only one sentence about himself, that "he was and remains a loyal disciple of Lenin."
Duranty, Walter. Stalin & Co. New York: W. Sloane Associates, 1949, p. 50

[In reply to the railway workers in Tiflis on June 8, 1926 Stalin stated] I must say in all conscience, comrades, that I do not deserve a good half of the flattering things that have been stated here about me. I am, it appears, a hero of the October Revolution, the leader of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the leader of the Communist International, a legendary warrior-knight and all the rest of it. That is absurd, comrades, and quite unnecessary exaggeration. It is the sort of thing that is usually said at the graveside of a departed revolutionary. But I have no intention of dying yet.
…I really was, and still am, one of the pupils of the advanced workers of the Tiflis railway workshops.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 8, p. 182

“And what is Stalin? Stalin is only a minor figure.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 10, p. 176

“Your congratulations and greetings I place to the credit of the great Party of the working class which bore me and raised me in its own image and likeness.”
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 12, p. 146

[In a December 30, 1926 letter to Ksenofontov Stalin stated] I object to your calling yourself “a disciple of Lenin and Stalin.” I have no disciples. Call yourself a disciple of Lenin; you have the right to do so, notwithstanding Shatskin’s criticism. But you have no grounds for calling yourself a disciple of a disciple of Lenin’s. It is not true. It is out of place.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 9, p. 156

[In a letter to Comrade Shatunovsky in August 1930 Stalin stated] You speak of your “devotion” to me. Perhaps it was just a chance phrase. Perhaps…. But if the phrase was not accidental I would advise you to discard the “principle” of devotion to persons. It is not the Bolshevik way. Be devoted to the working class, its Party, its state. That is a fine and useful thing. But do not confuse it with devotion to persons, this vain and useless bauble of weak-minded intellectuals.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 13, p. 20

He asked for limits to the praise [being heaped upon him] and muttered to his propagandists that they were overstepping them. In 1945, discussing plans for the first volume of his collected works, he proposed to restrict the print run to 30,000 copies because of the paper shortage. Other participants in the meeting got him to agree to 300,000 copies, arguing that the public demand would be enormous.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 541

He both loved and detested excesses of flattery. For such reasons he chose to place technical limits on his iconography to a greater extent than did most contemporary foreign rulers.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 545

STALIN DENOUNCES THOSE REJECTING THE USE OF ARMS

Stalin strongly attacked those he thought guilty of dilatory tactics and opportunism. A friend described a speech by Stalin at this time. He wrote that Comrade Stalin mounted the platform and addressed the audience; “You have one bad habit,” he said, “of which I must plainly warn you. No matter who comes forward, and no matter what he says, you invariably greet him with hearty applause. If he says, ‘Long live freedom’ you applaud; if he says ‘Long live revolution’ you applaud. And that is quite right. But when somebody comes along and says, ‘Down with arms,’ you applaud too. What chance is there of a revolution succeeding without arms? And what sort of a revolutionist is he who cries ‘Down with arms’? The speaker who said that is probably a Tolstoian, not a revolutionary. But, whoever he is, he is an enemy of the revolution, an enemy of liberty for the people…. What do we need in order to really win? We need three things, understand that and bear it well in mind. The first is arms, the second is arms, and the third is arms.”
Davis, Jerome. Behind Soviet Power. New York, N. Y.: The Readers’ Press, Inc., c1946, p. 17

STALIN WAS AN ATHEIST

G.Glurdjidze, a boyhood friend of Stalin’s relates:
“I began to speak of God. Joseph heard me out, and after a moment’s silence said:
“‘You know, they are fooling us, there is no God….
I’ll lend you a book to read; it will show you that the world and all living things are quite different from what you imagine, and all this talk about God is sheer nonsense,’” Joseph said.
Yaroslavsky, Emelian. Landmarks in the Life of Stalin. Moscow: FLPH, 1940, p. 8

“Comrade Stalin brought these books to our notice. The first thing we had to do, he would say, was to become atheists.
Yaroslavsky, Emelian. Landmarks in the Life of Stalin. Moscow: FLPH, 1940, p. 12

It must be noted that Stalin was not a member of the “League of Militant Atheists.” He was, of course, first and foremost a revolutionary, and he continued Lenin’s anticlerical line.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 188

I once asked him [Stalin] if he believed in luck. I didn’t put the question very seriously, but thought it would be a sort of human interest touch at the end of an interview. To my dismay he became indignant and replied sharply, “Do you think I’m an old Georgian granny to believe in things like that? I’m a Bolshevik, and I don’t believe in gods or devils or any form of obsolete superstition.”
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 147

Glurdzhidze recalls in his turn that the 13-year-old Joseph told him once: “You know, they are deceiving us. There is no God….” In reply to the amazed cry of his interlocutor, Joseph suggested that he read a book from which it was evident that “the talk of God is empty chatter.” What book was that? ” Darwin. You must read it.”
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 12

STALIN EXPELLED FROM SEMINARY FOR HIS POLITICAL ACTIONS

But the real reason for his expulsion was his political activities. He was expelled from the seminary as a person who harbored views dangerous to Tsardom.
Yaroslavsky, Emelian. Landmarks in the Life of Stalin. Moscow: FLPH, 1940, p. 17

STALIN WAS AN EXCELLENT ORGANIZER OF THE PROLETARIAT

Working in Baku in this difficult period of reaction, Comrade Stalin displayed his talents as an organizer and propagandist to a greater degree than ever. He literally won Baku for Bolshevism. That was a great service Comrade Stalin performed.
Yaroslavsky, Emelian. Landmarks in the Life of Stalin. Moscow: FLPH, 1940, p. 52

Somebody had to look after that vast mass of agitators, shop-stewards, and members of the Soviets. Somebody had to keep in touch with them from day to day, convey to them the decisions of the Central Committee and instruct them how to vote in the Soviets and behave vis-a-vis the other parties. This arduous job was carried out by Stalin and Sverdlov.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 144

As an organizer, he was supreme. He was a stickler for details that were undertaken to be done, and if they were not done, he made certain that they were done.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 104

STALIN WAS A GREAT POLITICAL TACTICIAN

MOLOTOV: Stalin was the greatest tactician. Hitler, after all, signed the nonaggression pact with us without the acquiescence of Japan! Stalin made him do that. Japan was deeply resentful toward Germany and gained no benefit from their alliance. Our talks with the Japanese Minister of foreign affairs, Matsuoka, had great significance. At the end of Matsuoka's visit Stalin made a gesture that caught the whole world's attention. He personally went to the station to see off the Japanese minister. No one had expected this; Stalin never met or saw off anyone. The Japanese and the Germans were stunned.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 21

MOLOTOV AND STALIN DID NOT EXPECT AN ATTACK UNTIL ENGLAND LOST

CHUEV: And maybe Stalin overestimated Hitler? Maybe he thought Hitler was smart enough not to attack us until he finished the war with England?
MOLOTOV: That's right, that's right. Not only Stalin had this feeling but I and others did, too. On the other hand, there was nothing left for Hitler to do but attack us. He would never have finished his war with England–you just try to finish a war with England!
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 23

Zhukov said that 'most of the people around him supported Stalin in the political judgments he made before the war, especially the notion that, as long as we did not rise to any

provocation, or make any false step, then Hitler would not break the pact and attack us. This line was most ardently advocated by Molotov who, after his trip to Berlin in November 1940, continued to insist that Hitler would not attack the USSR.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 371

The wily Boss, a leader whose first rule was “trust no one,” whose whole strategy consisted in misleading the enemy, suddenly proves gullible in his dealings with the archenemy, is suddenly himself so easily gulled that he pays not the slightest attention to repeated warnings, but puts implicit trust in the liar Hitler, who has betrayed so many and broken his word so often….
It would be believable if it were talking about a different man, and not our Stalin. He had proved conclusively in the 60 years of his life that he was not a bit like that.
What, then, did happen?
As early as March 1941 his intelligence service had supplied him in effect with the full details of Barbarossa. The date set for the German invasion was somewhere between May 15 and June 15. But the Boss was a pragmatist and expected people to behave rationally. Hitler simply could not afford such a risky venture. As a Marxist, Stalin respected economic realities. It seemed incredible to him that Hitler would wage war simultaneously on several countries whose combined resources were incomparably greater than those of Germany.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 450

STALIN HELPED OTHERS AND PEOPLE GRUMBLED

CHUEV: Many people are displeased that we help others too much. They say it’s time to take care of ourselves….
MOLOTOV: In Stalin’s time we helped, too, though we had less wherewithal. Then people grumbled, too….
If tiny Vietnam, with help from friends, can stand up to American imperialism, what does the Soviet Union have to fear? Only its own helplessness, faintheartedness, slackness of discipline.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 66

STALIN WOULD NOT EXCHANGE HIS SON FOR A NAZI GENERAL

Svetlana writes that Stalin did not get along with his son Jakov.
He [Jakov] served in the artillery. As a prisoner of war of the Germans, he bore up bravely and nobly. He perished, a hero. Stalin would not exchange a captured German General for Jakov. He said, “All of them are my sons.”
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 209

STALIN GAVE HIS CHILDREN NO SPECIAL PRIVILEGES AND DID NOT PLAY FAVORITES

CHUEV: Artem Fedorovich told me: “…Once he [Stalin] gathered his sons together: Jakov, Vasily, and me. ‘Boys, war is coming. You will have to become soldiers.’
“Jakov and me,” said Artem, “joined the artillery, and Vasily became a pilot. All of us went to the front–from the first day; Stalin telephoned to have us taken there immediately. It was the

only privilege we got from him as a father. There remain several letters from Vasily to his father. In one of them from the front, he asked his father to send him money. A snack bar had opened in his detachment and he wanted a new officer's uniform. His father replied: '1. As far as I know, the rations in the air force are quite sufficient. 2. A special uniform for Stalin's son is not on the agenda.' Vasily didn't get the money."
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 210

…Even my wife was arrested when I was a Politburo member.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 282

She (my wife, Polina) was in prison for a year and in exile more than three years.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 323

"How are you [Svetlana] getting on there? Have you made friends with anybody in Kuibyshev?" he [my father] asked casually. "No," I said. "They've set up a special school there for children who've been evacuated, and there's a whole lot of them." It never occurred to me that this remark might cause any special reaction.
My father suddenly turned a pair of darting eyes on me as he always did when something made him mad. "What? A special school?" I saw that he was getting angrier by the minute. "Ah, you–" he was trying to find a word that wasn't too improper–" Ah, you dammed caste! Just think! The government and the people from Moscow come and they give them their own school. That scoundrel Vlasik– I bet he's behind it!" By this time he was furious and was distracted only because there were pressing matters to attend to and other people in the room.
He was quite right. It was a caste, a caste of bigwigs from the capital that had come to Kuibyshev. Half the population had to be evicted to make room for all these families, who were used to a comfortable life and felt cramped in modest provincial apartments.
But it was too late to do anything about it. The caste was already in existence, and it lived by laws of its own.
I visited Moscow in November, 1941, and in January, 1942, for a day or two each time, to see my father. He was just as irritable and busy as on my first visit and had absolutely no time for me and my foolish, domestic concerns.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 166

My father didn't object when I told him I was leaving the Zhdanovs'. "Do as you like," was all he said. Still, he was unhappy about the divorce and didn't like it.
…He was pleased when I moved into an apartment of my own; he felt I'd been provided for long enough. No one tried harder than he to imbue his children with the idea that they had to support themselves. "Apartments, dachas, cars–don't think they're yours. It doesn't any of it belong to you," he said to me again and again.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 211

My father saw the state he [Vasily] was in. He scolded him unmercifully. He humiliated him and browbeat him like a little boy in front of everyone, but of course it did no good. Vasily was ill, and what he needed was to be cured. But he didn't want to be cured and nobody dared suggest it.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 213

My father was the one who signed the order removing Vasily as chief aviation officer of the Moscow Military District.
…"I'm 70 years old," my father used to say to him [Vasily], pointing to the books he was reading on history, literature, and military affairs, "yet I still go on learning."
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 214

It is sometimes said that Stalin was harsh, but fair. The case is cited of his treatment of his younger son, Vasili, whom he mercilessly removed from his post because he was not doing his job, but in fact because Vasili had discredited his father. Stalin fired his son both during and after the war. On May 26,1943 Beria reported to Stalin that Vasili's drunkenness was causing trouble again. Vasili had by now become commanding officer of an air regiment. Furious, Stalin at once dictated the following order to Marshal of the Air Force Novikov:
1. Vasily Stalin is to be removed at once from the post of commanding officer of his air regiment and be given no other command post without my orders.
2. Both the regiment and its former commander, Col. Stalin, are to be told that Col. Stalin is being removed from his post as regimental commander for drunkenness and debauchery and because he is ruining and perverting the regiment.
3. You are to inform me that these orders have been carried out.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 468

As for Stalin's younger son Vasily, he continued to get undeserved promotion in the Air Force, becoming a lieutenant general at the age of 29–all this not because Stalin intervened for him, which he seems not to have done, but because it was seldom that anyone dared do otherwise. Bulganin, Malenkov, Beria and Kaganovich did him favors.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 293

[Footnote] Yasha was killed by the Germans in a camp of Russian prisoners of war in 1944. Stalin offered a reward of one million rubles to anyone who could locate his grave.
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 100

I was obliged to admit that Aunt Rosa was at least a well educated person.
"I don't think we adults want to stay for the play," Rosa said, "but I'll leave my son Basil with you. Will you keep an eye on him? I'm going with my friends for a walk in the Gorky Culture and Rest Park. I'll, back for Basil in about three hours."
"Have you a car?" Rosanelle asked.
"No. We'll take a taxi."
"I'll let you have mine," the theater manageress said.
I was somewhat surprised that Stalin's wife had no car, while all the other women of her circle seemed to be provided with one. I learned afterward that my uncle forbade her to use official cars for private purposes. Apparently he was the only beneficiary of official cars who had such scruples.
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 112

Vasily was transferred to Moscow, and for while my father was pleased to hear his son being praised as "very capable." But pretty soon he became convinced that alcoholism had destroyed the thirty year old general, and in 1952 he was obliged to discharge Vasily from his high military post. His sons had not brought any glory to his name, either in the army or in politics.

Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 371

But Stalin finally removed Vasili from his command for drunken incompetence. And it does not seem that he ever intervened directly to advance his career.
Conquest, Robert. The Great Terror. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 58

In the course of the East Pomeranian operation, I think it was on March 7 or 8, 1945, I had to make an urgent flight to the General Headquarters on an order from the Supreme Commander.
Straight from the airfield I went to Stalin's country house where he was staying. He was not quite well.
Stalin asked me a few questions about the situation in Pomerania and on the 0der, heard out my answers, then said: "Let's stretch our legs a little, I feel sort of limp."
From the way he looked, talked, and moved you could tell that he was greatly fatigued. After four war years he was badly overworked. He had worked too much and slept too little all that time, taking reverses, particularly those of 1941-42, close to heart. All of that could not but tell on his health and his nervous system.
On our way back I said:
"I've been meaning to ask you for a long time about your son Yakov, have you heard anything about his fate?"
Stalin did not answer at once. We had made a good hundred steps before he said in a kind of subdued voice:
"Yakov won't be able to get out of captivity. They'll shoot him, the killers. From what we know, they are keeping him separately from the other POWs and are persuading him to betray his country."
Stalin was silent for a minute, then he said: "No, Yakov will prefer any kind of death to betrayal."
It was obvious that he was worrying about his son. At the table, Stalin sat silent for a long time, not touching food.
Then, as though continuing his thoughts aloud, he said bitterly:
"What a terrible war. How many lives of our people it has carried away. They'll probably be very few families left who haven't lost a relative."
Stalin then told me about the Yalta Conference. I understood that he was pleased with the results, and thought highly of Roosevelt.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 582

He also took to task the first husband of his daughter, Svetlana, whose husband took advantage of a tailor enterprise, getting his suits sewn… but not only his own, but with the gang of friends which began to have loose morals and behavioral problems. When Stalin found this out, he called Svetlana on the carpet and stated:
You are still a student, he is also a student, both of you are married. Do both of you think that you will take advantage of your father and of the State? This will not happen!
After that, the whole gang was thrown out and none of them were allowed to receive any sort of privileges.
The counter-revolutionary assassin of Lenin, Kaplan, was in jail, but it was found out that she had her garden and land near Solovkah. When she died in prison and Stalin was told about this, he said:
Everything has it's time.

Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 54

It is needed to be said that Stalin's son Vasily was also captured by German fascists who wanted him exchanged for Von Paulus, the Marshal that was captured in Stalingrad. Stalin would not concur in this.
This act alone showed the courage, the dedication of Stalin who said, "All Red Army soldiers are my sons, I cannot choose one over the others!"
Lucas and Ukas. Trans. and Ed. Secret Documents. Toronto, Canada: Northstar Compass, 1996, p. 187

His [Yasha] entire short life shows that he stayed loyal to his father. When the Germans took him prisoner in July 1941 they wanted to make use of him, but Yasha was inflexible. They offered to exchange him for Paulus. Stalin refused, saying that mere officers were not exchanged against Field Marshals. Svetlana told me how her father felt when he took that decision. He was in such anguish that he asked her to stay with him in his bedroom several nights in succession, something he had never done when she was small. He couldn't sleep, talked to her about his youth, his first marriage, Yasha's childhood. He also recalled her childhood. "I felt then that he did love us, in his own way," she told me. He aged a lot in that period. Later I asked my father how he thought Stalin should have acted when faced with such a dilemma. "You know, he could not have acted otherwise," he replied.

On two occasions Stalin opposed a promotion for Vasili and refused to let him be given command of a division, giving as his reason that the young man lacked the necessary experience. He gave in, though, when it was pointed out to him that men less gifted and less deserving had obtained higher appointments than this.
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 154

Soon afterwards, Vasily entered an artillery school, along with other leaders' children including Stepan Mikoyan; his teacher also wrote to Stalin to complain of Vasily's suicide threats: "I received your letter about Vasily's tricks," wrote Stalin to Martyshin [his son's teacher]. "I'm answering very late because I'm so busy. Vasily is a spoilt boy of average abilities, savage (a type of Scythian), not always honest, uses blackmail against weak 'rules,' is often impudent with the weak…. He's spoilt by different patrons who remind him at every step that he's 'Stalin's son.' I'm happy to see you're a good teacher who treats Vasily like other children and demands he obey the school regime…. If Vasily has not ruined himself until now, it's because in our country there are teachers who give no quarter to this capricious son of a baron. My advice is: treat Vasily MORE STRICTLY and don't be afraid of this child's false blackmailing threats of 'suicide.' I'll support you…."
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 180

The refusal to swap Yakov has been treated as evidence of Stalin's loveless cruelty but this is unfair…. it is hard to imagine that either Churchill or Roosevelt would have swapped their sons if they had been captured–when thousands of ordinary men were being killed or captured. After the war, a Georgian confidant plucked up the courage to ask Stalin if the Paulus offer was a myth.
He "hung his head," answering "in a sad, piercing voice": "Not a myth… Just think how many sons ended in camps! Who would swap them for Paulus? Were they worse than Yakov? I

had to refuse…. What would they have said of me, our millions of Party fathers, if having forgotten about them, I had agreed to swapping Yakov? No, I had no right….” Then he again showed the struggle between the nervy, angry, tormented man within and the persona he had become: “Otherwise, I’d no longer be Stalin.” He added: “I so pitied Yasha!”
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 445-446

On May 26, Stalin ordered air-force Commander Novikov to “1. dismiss Col. VJ Stalin immediately from…command of air regiment; 2. announce to the regimental officers and VJ Stalin that Col. Stalin is dismissed for hard drinking, debauchery, and corrupting the regiment.”
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 451

Zhenya Alliluyeva was sentenced to 10 years, her daughter Kira to five years, “for supplying information about the personal life of [Stalin’s] family to the American Embassy.” Anna Redens also got five years.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 574

In the course of the East Pomeranian operation, most likely on March 7 or 8, I had to urgently fly to the General Headquarters on order from the Supreme Commander. Straight from the airfield I went to Stalin’s country house where he was staying. He was not in the best of health.
Stalin asked me a few questions about the situation in Pomerania and on the Oder, heard out my answers, then said: “Let’s stretch our legs a little, I feel sort of limp.”
From the way he looked, talked, and moved you could tell that he was extremely fatigued. After four years of war he was utterly overworked. He had worked overly hard and slept too little all that time, taking reverses, particularly those of 1941-1942 close to heart. All was bound to tell on his health and nervous system.
As we were strolling through the park, Stalin unexpectedly began telling me about his childhood….
On our way back I said: “Comrade Stalin, I’ve been meaning to ask you for a long time about your son Yakov. Have you heard anything about him?”
Stalin did not answer at once. We took a good hundred steps before he said in a kind of subdued voice:
“Yakov won’t be let free. The fascists will shoot him first. From what we know, they are keeping him separate from the other POWs, and are putting pressure on him to betray his country.”
Stalin was silent for a minute, then said firmly: “No, Yakov will prefer any kind of death to betrayal.”
It was obvious that he was deeply worried about his son. At the table, Stalin sat silent for a long time, not touching his food.
Then, as though continuing his thoughts aloud, he said bitterly:
“What a terrible war. How many lives of our people it has carried away. There are probably very few families of us left who haven’t lost someone near to them…. Only the Soviet people, tempered in battle, and imbued with great spirit by the Communist Party, could endure trials and tribulations of this magnitude.”
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 339=340

STALIN WAS ABRUPT BUT FAIR

In your opinion, did Stalin have negative features?
He was by character an abrupt person, but at the same time fair.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 214

Stalin and his system were apparently genuinely popular; he was an excellent father figure for tens of millions of his subjects, strict but fair and wise.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 14

STALIN WILL EVENTUALLY BE REHABILITATED AND HONORED BY THE SOVIET PEOPLE

In time Stalin will be rehabilitated in history. There will be a Stalin Museum in Moscow. Without fail! By popular demand.
The role of Stalin was tremendous. I do not doubt that his name will rise again and duly win a glorious place in history.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 215

Molotov remarked that, "Stalin will be rehabilitated, needless to say."
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 335

STALIN'S RETURN COULD BRING BETTER TIMES

GOLOVANOV: If Stalin were alive today, the Soviet people would live much better, there would be five times greater aid to Vietnam, and we would have excellent relations with China and India.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 302

STALIN'S JUDGMENT NEAR THE END WAS OCCASIONALLY POOR

Stalin had undergone so many years of ordeal and had taken so much on his own shoulders that in his last years he suffered from impaired judgment. Impaired in the sense that a simple mistake might seem to him evidence of some dastardly plot.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 317

STALIN CARRIED A HEAVY BURDEN AND BURNED OUT AT THE END

Stalin shouldered a burden so heavy that it naturally left him burned out…. but the main thing is that he was utterly drained in every way. Also he was afraid of taking medicine. He had good reason. Stalin had enemies enough who might put one over on him. His fear that someone might slip some poison either into his food or into his medicine, however, went beyond all limits….
To a certain extent this is understandable, because really it was very difficult to bear the entire burden on his own two shoulders. Apparently he had all kinds of doubts whether anyone induced to take up this burden would have the patience, the will, and the strength to bear it. That was his predicament.

Although these events did not leave me untouched, and although I might not have remained in one piece had he lived on, I have regarded him and still regard him as a great man who fulfilled such immense and arduous tasks as none of us, none of those in the party back then, could have fulfilled.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 327

STALIN SOMETIMES ERRED ON THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM

CHUEV: Some kind of demarcation must be drawn between socialism and communism.
MOLOTOV: That goes without saying. The line is already sharply drawn. Under communism there is no state, while Stalin allowed for the existence of the state under communism. That is absurd from the point of view of Leninism. Stalin said, under communism there should be no state, but if capitalist encirclement remains….
CHUEV: There will be an army and state apparatus.
MOLOTOV: What kind of communism is that? Good housing, good living conditions, everything provided for–this is enough from the philistine's point of view. If all the poor live more or less well, they say, that means we already have socialism, not capitalism. But this in itself is not complete socialism….
Marx holds that in a society based on collectivist principles, producers will not engage in exchange of their commodities. There will be no trade. Will they then dump their goods into a garbage pit? No, they will get along without trade, without commodity-money relations. Here you have socialism.
CHUEV: In that case, what distinguishes communism from socialism?
MOLOTOV: A lot. The point, you see, is this. When classes do not exist, when there are no money-commodity relations, and the level of production is still not high enough so that each receives according to his needs….
CHUEV: To fully satisfy his needs?
MOLOTOV: No, not fully, but for the most part. Generally speaking, maximum satisfaction of human needs will never be achieved. Stalin's assertion that it would be is empty, a banality so to speak. What does maximum satisfaction of needs mean? Everyone gets himself a piano? everyone gets himself an automobile? That is absurd. Socialism means satisfaction of all basic needs, not maximum satisfaction. Everyone will have the right to use publicly owned facilities. Along with the other former ministers–and not only ministers–I will have my meals at a public dining facility. I pay sixty rubles per month and take my meals. Having completed 100 work days, you would be entitled to a certain remuneration….
CHUEV: What kind of accounting would be practiced? Socialism is accounting.
MOLOTOV: The most rigorous, rigorous accounting. Communism is a higher stage than socialism, because there will be such abundance that it will be possible to eliminate the distinction between physical and intellectual labour as well as to eliminate social classes. It will also be possible to eliminate the distinction between town and country, but differences in standards of living will remain.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 378-380

A socialism in which money dominates is not the socialism of Marx, Engels, and Lenin. There is no such socialism.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 383

The party proclaimed from the lofty tribune of the party congress, “The present generation of Soviet people will live under communism.” This proposition is so remote from reality that the people have ceased believing anything. As never before, the slogan “The people and the party are one” rang true. The party deceived the people, and the people having lost faith and working slapdash, began to deceive the party.
I have often thought about this and have come to the conclusion that this happened because there was no correct conception of what constitutes socialism.
Chuev, Feliks. Molotov Remembers. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1993, p. 394

STALIN: The society which we have built cannot possibly be called “state socialism.” Our Soviet society is socialist society, because the private ownership of the factories, works, the land, the banks, and the transport system has been abolished and public ownership put in its place. The social organization which we have created may be called a Soviet socialist organization, not entirely completed, but fundamentally, a socialist organization of society. The foundation of this society is public property: state, i.e., national, and also co-operative, collective farm, property. Neither Italian fascism nor German National “Socialism” has anything in common with such a society. Primarily, this is because the private ownership of the factories and works, of the land, the banks, transport, etc., has remained intact, and therefore, capitalism remains in full force in Germany and in Italy.
Yes, you’re right, we have not yet built communist society. It is not so easy to build such a society. You are probably aware of the difference between socialist society and communist society. In socialist society certain inequalities in property still exist. But in socialist society there is no longer unemployment, no exploitation, no oppression of nationalities. In socialist society everyone is obliged to work, although he does not in return for his labor receive according to his requirements, but according to the quantity and quality of the work he has performed. That is why wages, and, moreover, unequal, differentiated wages, still exist. Only when we have succeeded in creating a system under which in return for their labor people will receive from society, not according to the quantity and quality of the labor they perform, but according to their requirements, will it be possible to say that we have built communist society.
Stalin, J. The Stalin-Howard Interview. New York: International Publishers, 1936, p. 11

[Letter from Sydney Bloomfield to Dimitrov, Aug. 12, 1938, discussing changes in the policies of the U.S. Communist Party]
… Communism is the classless society in which the exploitation of man by man has been abolished; in which the state has withered away; in which the economic and other material conditions of life are on such a high level that the relations between men are on a high idealistic plane based upon the contribution of the individual to society according to his ability and from which the individual receives according to his needs; that Communism, which is the highest development of Socialism (which can be realized in one country) is universal. Now, since Americanism has not yet shown any sign of any society higher than capitalism, and sense even in its development (in one country) the most it possibly could develop to, would be Socialism, therefore to call it “Communism” (regardless of which century) would be incorrect from a Marxian standpoint.
Koenker and Bachman, Eds. Revelations from the Russian Archives. Washington: Library of Congress, 1997, p. 612

The principle of socialism is that in a socialist society each works according to his ability and receives articles of consumption, not according to his needs, but according to the work he performs for society. This means that the cultural and technical level of the working-class is still not a high one, that the distinction between mental and manual labor persists, that the productivity of labor is still not high enough to insure an abundance of articles of consumption, and, as a result, society is obliged to distribute articles of consumption, not in accordance with the needs of the members of society, but in accordance with the work they performed for society.
Communism represents a higher stage of development. The principal of communism is that in a communist society each works according to his abilities and receives articles of consumption, not according to the work he performs, but according to his needs as a culturally developed individual. This means that the cultural and technical level of the working-class has become high enough to undermine the basis of the distinction between mental labor and manual labor; that the distinction between mental labor and manual labor has already disappeared, while productivity of labor has reached such a high-level that it is able to insure an absolute abundance of articles of consumption, and as a result society is able to distribute these articles according to the needs of its members.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 106

There is no reason to doubt that only such a rise in the cultural and technical level of the working-class can undermine the basis of the distinction between mental labor and manual labor, that it alone can ensure the high level of productivity of labor and the abundance of articles of consumption which are necessary in order to begin the transition from socialism to communism.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 107

… we say openly and honestly that the victory of socialism in our country is not yet final.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin's Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 162

STALIN'S DEAD WIFE TREATED HIM WELL AND STALIN WAS KIND TO HER FAMILY

It's not true that after my mother died her family repudiated my father. On the contrary, they all did their best to make him happy. They treated him with consideration, and he was cordial and kind to them all.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 19

STALIN LOVED HIS DEAD WIFE TREMENDOUSLY

My grandparents took her [my mother] death terribly hard. They understood only too well how much my father must be suffering. And so, it seemed to me then and still seems to me now, looking back, nothing in their attitude changed. No one spoke openly of the pain all three of them shared, but it was always imperceptibly present.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 48

The next day he [my father] suddenly started talking to me for the first time about my mother and the way she died. We were by ourselves. The anniversary of her death, November 8, fell

during the November 7 holiday every year. It ruined the holiday for him for all time, and in his last years he tried to spend November in the south.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 193

In the first years of their life together Stalin loved his young wife very much, and she responded in kind. They soon had a son, Vasily (in the past that had been one of Stalin's party names). A few years later their daughter, Svetlana, was born….
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 55

As his bodyguards indicated in conversations with me many years afterward, Stalin… following the Great Patriotic War of 1941-45… would frequently order a detour from routes of his daily travel between the Kremlin where he worked and his dacha outside Moscow, so that the caravan of cars could stop at the Novodevichi Cemetery [where his wife was buried].
Deriabin, Peter. Inside Stalin's Kremlin. Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, c1998, p. 186

I have stated these facts in view of the many legends that now exist about Alliluyeva and her relations with Stalin. Ten years ago, visiting an acquaintance, I was shown a book in Russian entitled Stalin, on the Life of the Soviet Dictator. It had been published in Estonia in 1930 when that country was still independent and the home of several emigre publishing houses. After reading only the first part of this book it was clear that the author, who had a Caucasian surname, had used some of the Soviet materials on Stalin that appeared at the time of his 50th birthday, but had simply invented the rest. For example, he asserted that Stalin, in the manner of an eastern despot, kept his wife in seclusion in a large Kremlin apartment and that none of Stalin's Circle living in the Kremlin ever saw her face.
In reality Nadezhda Alliluyeva was an extremely sociable person and a familiar figure in Party circles.
Medvedev, Roy. On Stalin and Stalinism. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 81

…Stalin treasures every memory of his wife with a tenderness little in accord with his nature.
Nicolaevsky, Boris. Power and the Soviet Elite; "The letter of an Old Bolshevik." New York: Praeger, 1965, p. 57

Despite what many subsequently suggested, he [Stalin] attended the ceremony [Nadya's funeral].
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 293

STALIN'S WIFE'S PHILOSOPHY AND MENTAL STATE

In one of her letters as a schoolgirl my mother had stated the rule that "The more time you have, the lazier you are," and it was a rule she always observed when it came to her children.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 98

My nurse told me that before she died my mother was unusually irritable and sad. One day an old friend from her school in Leningrad came to see her. They sat and talked awhile in my nursery, which also served us as the room where my mother saw visitors. My nurse heard

my mother say again and again that “everything bored her,” that she was “sick of everything” and “nothing made her happy.” The friend asked, “What about the children?” “Everything, even the children,” was my mother’s reply. My nurse saw that it was so, that my mother really was tired of being alive. But it never occurred to her or to anybody else that she was capable of taking her own life within a matter of days.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 105

Her [my mother] self-control, her tremendous inner tension and discipline, her pent-up irritation and discontent built up more and more pressure within until finally she was like a tightly coiled spring. And when the spring uncoiled at last, it did so with ferocious force. What caused the spring to give, the immediate occasion, was trivial in itself, so trivial one would have said it happened for no reason at all. It was a minor falling out at a banquet in honor of the 15th anniversary of the October Revolution. My father merely said to her, “Hey, you. Have a drink!” My mother screamed, “Don’t you dare ‘hey’ me!” And in front of everyone she got up and ran from the table.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 107

Nadezhda herself was not endlessly patient with Stalin’s way of life…. But the life continued to weigh on her, and in the late 1920s she went to Berlin, where her brother Pavel was then stationed, to consult a neurologist. There seems to have been some family predisposition to depression; both her sister Anna and her brother Fedor were at various times hospitalized for psychological problems.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 128

Nadya was becoming ever more hysterical, or as Molotov put it, “unbalanced.” Sergo’s daughter Eteri, who had every reason to hate Stalin, explains, “Stalin didn’t treat her well but she, like all the Alliluyeva, was very unstable.” She seemed to become estranged from the children and everything else. Stalin confided in Khrushchev that he sometimes locked himself in the bathroom, while she beat on the door, shouting: “You’re an impossible man. It’s impossible to live with you!”
…This image of Stalin as the powerless henpecked husband besieged, cowering in his own bathroom by the wild-eyed Nadya, must rank as the most incongruous vision of the Man of Steel in his entire career. Himself frantic, with his mission in jeopardy, Stalin was baffled by Nadya’s mania. She told her friend that “everything bored her–she was sick of everything.” “What about the children?” asked the friend.
“Everything, even the children.” This gives some idea of the difficulties Stalin faced. Nadya’s state of mind sounds more like a psychological illness than despair caused by political protest or even her oafish husband. “She had attacks of melancholy,” Zhenya told Stalin; she was “sick.” The doctors prescribed “caffeine” to pep her up. Stalin later blamed the caffeine and he was right: caffeine would have disastrously exacerbated her despair.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 88

[Footnote]: It was Zinaida [Zhdanov’s wife] who was tactless enough to tell Svetlana her mother was mentally “sick.”
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 138

STALIN WAS A GEORGIAN WHO LOVED RUSSIA

In spite of her mixed blood my mother, of course, was Russian, a real Russian by temperament and upbringing. My father loved Russia deeply all his life. I know of no other Georgian who had so completely's sloughed off his qualities as a Georgian and loved everything Russian the way he did. Even in Siberia my father had a real love of Russia–the nature, the people, the language. He always looked back on his years of exile as if they were nothing but hunting, fishing, and walks through the taiga. This love remained with him always.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 119

STALIN WAS A KIND FATHER RAISING HIS DAUGHTER

For 10 years after my mother died, my father was a good father to me. It wasn't easy with the kind of life he led, but he did his best. Although our home life was shattered, from the time I was six until I was 16 my father was the final, unquestioned authority for me in everything.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 121

But in those years I loved him [Stalin] tenderly, as he loved me. He used to say I was like his mother. That touched him, I think.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 143

Sometimes before he [my father] left he'd come to my room in his overcoat to kiss me good night as I lay sleeping. He liked kissing me while I was little, and I'll never forget how tender he was to me. It was the warm Georgian tenderness to children.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 144

Events that occurred about that time, in 1942 and 1943, came between me and my father permanently. We began to become alienated from one another. But I shall never forget his affection, his love, and tenderness to me as a child. He was rarely as tender to anyone as he was to me. At one time he must have loved my mother very much. And he also loved and respected his own mother.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 153

…In fact, though Stalin had little time for his young son and daughter, he seems to have had a more affectionate manner towards them than their mother's.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 128

This [Stalin tearing up the letters and photographs of his daughter's boyfriend] is often presented as the height of Stalin's brutality yet, even today, no parents would be delighted by the seduction (as he thought) of their schoolgirl daughters, especially by a married middle-aged playboy.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 450

"My father talked about his mother a lot, and always with great love. People today portray him as a caricature; that he neglected and hated his mother. He was a very complicated man. He was made out to be completely black, but there was a great deal else in him.

Because of his love for his mother, there was tenderness, there was love, love towards me. He used to say to me, “You look like my mother, it’s ridiculous how much! It’s unbelievable.” I remember my father now as being loving and tremendously tender towards me; had he had no love in him at all I would not have received that. I got all the warmth and hugs and kisses.”
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin’s Shadow. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994, p. 199

STALIN’S SONS ARGUED A LOT

Yakov didn’t get along with Vasily. Although they were brothers, they were so different they could never agree on anything.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 148

I saw him [Yakov] angry only twice. Otherwise I never would have known he was capable of anger. Both times his loss of temper was occasioned by Vasily’s penchant for profanity in front of me and other women, and in general for swearing whenever he felt like it, no matter who happened to be present. Yakov couldn’t stand it. He turned on Vasily like a lion and they had a fist fight.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 158

STALIN DEVOTED HIMSELF TO THE CAUSE MORE THAN TO HIS FAMILY

But he [my father] was a bad and neglectful son, as he was a father and husband. He devoted his whole being to something else, to politics and struggle. And so people who weren’t personally close were always more important to him than those who were.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 154

He lived very much as a bachelor. His consumptive first wife, in the Caucasus, he never saw again. He had no home life. The comrades looked after his children as best they could. The father’s whole life interest and energy was given to the cause of revolution. A man of so many aliases, changes of abode, imprisonments, and banishments could not very well fulfil his part either as husband or father.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 29

For the past 35 years there has been in his mind only one single thought, and to this he has sacrificed youth, security, health, and all the other blessings of life, not that he himself might govern but that there might be a government according to the principles to which he has sworn fealty. “My life’s task,” he said to me, “is to lift up the working classes to another level, not the consolidation of a national State but of a Socialist one which will guard the interests of all the workers of the world. If each step in my career did not lead towards the consolidation of this State I should look upon my life as having been lived in vain.” He spoke softly and in his customary muffled tone, almost as if talking to himself….
In Russia, however, at the beginning of the present century whoever was known to be a Socialist had to give up everything that freedom means. He had to exchange peace and security for a wandering and uncertain existence. He had to give up home and family and possessions precisely because he was engaged in undermining the foundations of the social

order to which they belonged. Therefore he could not claim them for himself. In the adventurous spirit of youth a person may enter on such a course of life, but only staunch faith in his principles will enable him to hold out and endure.
Stalin did not become a Socialist because his parents were downtrodden. His father was a shoe-maker and at the same time a peasant farmer. Stalin has something of both these classes in his nature. He has no grudge against either class. On the contrary he became revolutionary because of the experience he went through as a student in the clerical seminary to which his father sent him, in the hope that he would be educated for the priesthood. Had this experience not occurred in his life he would probably have remained in much the same position as his parents were. Today he might be either a peasant farmer or a small tradesman in some town are other.
“My parents were uneducated people,” he said to me in answer to a question I had put. “But they did a great deal for me…. Not until I was in the clerical seminary did I become a Socialist, and then out of opposition to the regime in vogue there. It was nothing but constant espionage and chicanery. At nine o’clock in the morning we were summoned to our tea, and when we came back to our dormitories we found that all the drawers had been ransacked. And just as they ransacked our papers they ransacked every corner of our souls. It was unbearable. I would have gone to any length and championed any cause that was possible to champion if only I could use it as a protest against that regime. Just at that time the first illegal group of Russian Socialists came to the Transcaucasian Mountains. They made a great impression on me and I soon acquired a taste for their forbidden literature.”
When this was discovered he was expelled from the seminary, to the horror of his parents. At the age of 16 he enrolled as a member of the Socialist party.
Ludwig, Emil. Leaders of Europe. London: I. Nicholson and Watson Ltd., 1934, p. 353

MANY LIES HAVE BEEN WRITTEN ABOUT STALIN AND HIS FAMILY

Recently in a French magazine I came across an article by a Scots officer who purported to be another eyewitness of Yakov’s death. You have to be skeptical about articles like that because so many false things have appeared in the West about the “private life” of my father and the various members of his family.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 162

STALIN LIKED CHURCHILL

You could see he [my father] liked Churchill.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 171

STALIN STUDIED HISTORY A LOT

“It’s one of those literary types you want to be!” muttered my father in a tone of displeasure…. Study history. Then you can do what you want.”
…I once again trusted to my father’s authority and went into history.
I’ve never regretted it. History has indeed proved useful.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 184-185

Of one thing I was certain: My Uncle Joe knew his history. If troubled times and decisive days approached, they would not catch him napping. If he were ever to go down in defeat, it would not be by default, it would not be without a fight.
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 96

Stalin won three games in a row [of croquet] and arrived chuckling on the veranda, where the table was already set for supper. Sitting down to attack is food, he announced smilingly, "Tonight, after the supper, in accord with my functions as Secretary-General of the Party, I'm going to put everyone through a proverka."
Everyone pulled a long face. The proverka was hardly popular in the Soviet Union. It is the periodic examination to which all members of the Communist Party must submit to attest the degree of their knowledge of politics, economics, history, etc., according to the Communist conception of these matters. The proverka has an unfortunate result for those who take it, since a lack of success is apt to mean relegation to an inferior post because of "political ignorance."
Stalin burst into roars of laughter.
"Don't be afraid," he chuckled. "I won't send the results to the special section of the Central Committee of the Party."
After the meal, the examination began. The first victim was the head of the Orgraspred, Comrade Malenkov.
"Tell us, Comrade Malenkov," my uncle began, "who originated dialectic materialism?"
"Feuerbach."
"In what year did Karl Marx die?"
"1883."
"When was the First International founded?"
"In 1867."
"And when was it dissolved?"
Malenkov didn't know. He hazarded several dates, all which by my uncle contradicted, with an amused smile.
"No, Comrade Malenkov… No… No, wrong again."
He abandoned the effort to get the right answer on this point from his aide, and said, "Let's switch to general history. When did the Russo-Japanese war begin?"
"On Feb. 8, 1904."
"Not exact enough! At dawn on Feb. 9, 1904, by a treacherous attack of the Japanese against our fleet in the harbor of Port Arthur. How did the Crimean War end?"
"As a result of the Congress of Paris and the Treaty of Paris, signed in 1856."
"Not exact enough! The Crimean War was ended by a preliminary peace conference held in Vienna in 1855. The Congress of Paris in 1856 followed the Vienna conference. What was the name of the English minister who proposed that Russia should occupy the Straits in exchange for an agreement concerning Persia and Afghanistan?"
"Lord Ellenborough. That was in 1907. The agreement was actually signed in 1907, but the English cheated us. The question of the Straits remained open."
"Bravo, Comrade Malenkov! And who else cheated Russia on that same subject?"
"Baron Aerenthal, in his conversation with Izvolsky about Russian consent to the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary. Aerenthal claimed later that Izvolsky had misunderstood."
"Bravo! You'll make a first-rate diplomat, Comrade Malenkov!"

Everyone broke into gales of laughter, for it was difficult to imagine Malenkov, with his bashkir face, in the role of a diplomat. The bashkirs were a people of the Urals of Turkish-Altaien origin, a group to which Malenkov's father belonged.
My uncle passed on to the others. He was having a wonderful time. He delighted in tripping up his victims on the details of the questions, sometimes tricky, which he put to them, and at the same time demonstrating his own minute knowledge of history.
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 132-134

My uncle left Malenkov in peace. But he was incorrigible and opened fire again a moment later against Zhdanov.
"Andrei," he said, "is our great specialist in philosophy. He's even a professor of philosophy at the Academy or Red Professors. He draws big crowds to his lectures. I went to one of them myself. Comrade Zhdanov was talking about the Stoic philosophers, and he had stoically included among them–would you believe it?–Epicurus! He had confused Epicurus with Epictetus, who wrote a manual of Stoicism. So poor Epictetus became for him Epicuri de grege porcus" [A pig of the Epicurean herd].
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 212

"I don't understand Latin," Zhdanov said. "I didn't have a chance to study at a theological school."
"That's a pity! Latin is a 'must' for a professor of philosophy."
Svetlana entered the conversation again.
"Papa, is it true that Epicurus was dissipated?"
"Not at all, not at all!" Stalin said. "He was the greatest philosopher of all time. He was the one who recommended practicing virtue to derive the greatest joy from life."
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 213

STALIN SAYS SVETLANA'S HUSBAND IS TOO CALCULATING

"He's [my first husband] too calculating, that young man of yours," he [my father] told me.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 187

My father never asked me to divorce him. He never expressed a desire for me to do any such thing. We broke up after three years, in the spring of 1947, for reasons of a personal nature. I was therefore very much surprised later on to hear it rumored that my father had insisted on a divorce.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 189

My father was pleased, of course, when I was divorced from my first husband, whom he never approved of. His attitude toward me softened after that, but not for long. I was a source of irritation to him and hadn't turned out the way he hoped at all. But he was affectionate with my son.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 190

All of them were lumped together in a single alleged "Zionist center."
"That first husband of yours was thrown your way by the Zionists," my father told me a little later on. "Papa," I tried to object, "the younger ones couldn't care less about Zionism." "No!

You don't understand," was the sharp answer. "The entire older generation is contaminated with Zionism, and now they're teaching the young people too."
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 196

STALIN WAS KEPT ISOLATED BY HIS SECURITY PEOPLE

But he [my father] wasn't afraid of people, ever, and the hypocritical remarks you hear today to the effect that "He didn't like the people" sound absurd to me.
As we pulled in at the various railroad stations, we'd go for a stroll along the platform. My father would walk as far as the engine, giving greetings to the railway workers as he went. You couldn't see a single passenger. It was a special train, and no one was allowed on the platform. It was a sinister, sad, depressing sight. Who ever thought up such a thing? Who had contrived all these stratagems? Not he. It was the system of which he himself was a prisoner and in which he was stifling from loneliness, emptiness, and lack of human companionship.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 195

STALIN WAS ALIENATED FROM HIS DAUGHTER

It was hard being with him. It cost me an enormous amount of nervous energy. We were very far apart, and both of us knew it. Each of us yearned to be back in his own home alone, to get a rest from the other. Each was ruffled and upset by the other. Each of us suffered and was sad. Why must life be so absurd? And each of us thought the other was to blame.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 196

…the more I learned about my mother, the more she grew in my eyes, while my father lost his aureole.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 149

STALIN CRITICIZES HIS DAUGHTER FOR BEING ANTI-SOVIET

"You yourself make anti-Soviet statements, "he [my father] told me one day angrily and in complete earnest. I didn't try to object or ask him where he got that from.
My father hadn't been far wrong. It was by no means as easy and pleasant at the Zhdanov's as I'd thought. Our house was dreary, empty, quiet, and uncomfortable. It wasn't easy living there, but one thing we never had, and that was cheapness of spirit.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 197

STALIN LOVED HIS DAUGHTER

Dear Svetochka! …Where did you ever get the idea that I had abandoned you?! It's the sort of thing people dream up. I advise you not to believe your dreams. Take care of yourself. Take care of your daughter, too. Signed Your Little Papa.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 199

"I appreciated him more as a father and a parent when I grew up. I do appreciate now that he was a very loving father. I couldn't grasp it at the time. He always had this tobacco smell,

puffing clouds of smoke with his pipe. He was always kissing me and smooching and I didn't like his mustache on my face. He would squeeze me and hold me in his hands."
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 132

He said to me several times, "What will you do when I am gone? You will perish!" He had the feeling that I would be completely wiped out without him. His gentle word to me was always, "You little fool".
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 210

Svetlana says, "But I have been made very angry by all the people who have written about me saying "oh she suffered so much, such a cross to bear, such a difficult life to cope with–she must have suffered as a child." Nobody abused me. My life was very good and happy until I was 15, and that is a long chunk of time.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 269

STALIN RECEIVED SO MANY GIFTS HE SET UP A MUSEUM FOR THEM

As for the presents which were sent to him from all corners of the earth, he had them collected in one spot and donated them to a museum. It wasn't hypocrisy or a pose on his part, as a lot of people say, but simply the fact that he had no idea what to do with this avalanche of objects that were valuable, sometimes priceless: paintings, china, furniture, weapons, clothing, utensils, and products of local craftsmanship from everywhere in the world.
Once in a while he gave one of them, a Rumanian or Bulgarian folk costume or something like that, to me. On the whole, however, he considered it wrong that any personal use should be made even of the things that were sent to me. Maybe he realized that the feelings that went into them were symbolic, and he thought the things themselves deserved to be treated as symbols.
In 1950 a Museum of Gifts was opened in Moscow.
I was worried at how badly he looked. He must have felt his illness coming on. Maybe he was aware of some hypertension, for he'd suddenly given up smoking and was very pleased with himself. It must have taken a lot of will power, because he'd smoked for 50 or 60 years. He was probably aware of an increase in his blood pressure, but he hadn't any doctor to take care of him. Vinogradov, the only one he trusted, had been arrested and he wouldn't let any other doctor near him.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 206

There were so many gifts given to Stalin by people, by different Soviet Republics, all meant for Stalin's personal use like a handwoven carpet. This huge carpet from Azerbaijan was worked on for three years by about 30 of the best masters. Stalin, in his usual manner, gave this to the Art Crafts Museum instead of using it in his Kremlin office or at the Dacha. There was also an Arab stallion that was given to Stalin as a gift. Only once did Stalin allow this stallion to pull the sled in winter, then he gave this personal beautiful stallion to a stud farm. Of all the gifts that thousands of people, enterprises, and foreign countries gave Stalin on his 70th birthday, he only kept for himself a pair of gloves and felt boots.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 104

Stalin received a mountain of presents [on his 70th birthday], some of which were priceless. The Chinese, for example, had sent magnificent objects made of old jade. Stalin took none of them and did not even want to look at them, despite Malenkov's insistence. He did not feel the need to surround himself with beautiful things. Later, a museum was created for these presents, which was stupid, because splendid antiques appeared there side-by-side with drawings and paintings that showed Stalin as seen by Mexicans or Chinese.
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 218

STALIN WAS MUCH MORE REASONABLE AND LESS DOGMATIC THAN HIS CRITICS

The history of the Soviet Union has been a steady swing away from the early ideas of extreme or "militant" communism to more practical and reasonable methods, and inevitable compromise. Stalin was bitterly attacked by Trotsky and the "Old Bolsheviks" as a backslider from initial ideals. But he won and they lost because he was practical and dared to reconcile the present possible goal with the ultimate hoped-for goal.
To put it simply, the Bolsheviks swung way, way off to the "Left," and believed with fanatic enthusiasm that they could make a new "Left" Heaven upon Earth. Some of them, the Old Bolsheviks and Trotsky, continued to believe it, but Stalin realized that a compromise was necessary. He declined to allow the growing Russian tree to be bound anew by the iron band of Marxist dogma. He allowed a free development on Russian rather than dogmatic Marxist lines.
Duranty, Walter. Story of Soviet Russia. Philadelphia, N. Y.: JB Lippincott Co. 1944, p. 277

Nor did Stalin at that time impress people as being more intolerant than befitted a Bolshevik leader. He was, as we have seen, lesS vicious in his attacks on the opposition than the other triumvirs. In his speeches there was usually the tone of a good-natured and soothing, if facile, optimism, which harmonized well with the party's growing complacency. In the Politburo, when matters of high policy were under debate, he never seemed to impose his views on his colleagues…. To party audiences he appeared as a man without personal grudge and rancor, as a detached Leninist, a guardian of the doctrine who criticized others only for the sake of the cause. He gave this impression even when he spoke behind the closed doors of the Politburo. In the middle of the struggle Trotsky still described Stalin to a trusted foreign visitor as 'a brave and sincere revolutionary'.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 274

STALIN IS GENEROUS TO HIS FRIENDS

When I mentioned a loan of $200,000, he called this a trifle, saying that we could not do much with this amount, but that the sum would be allocated to us immediately. At my remark that we would repay this as well as all shipments of arms and other equipment after the liberation, he became sincerely angry: "You insult me. You are shedding your blood, and you expect me to charge you for the weapons! I am not a merchant, we are not merchants. You are fighting for the same cause as we. We are duty bound to share with you whatever we have."
Djilas, Milovan. Conversations with Stalin. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1962, p. 63

During the war, he [Stalin] suddenly noticed that his assistant, Poskrebyshev, was keeping large sums of money in his safe. With a mixture of puzzlement and suspicion, and looking not at the money but at Poskrebyshev, he asked where it had come from. 'It's your pay as a deputy. It's been piling up for years now,' Poskrebyshev explained. 'I only use what I need to pay your party dues.' Stalin said nothing, but a few days later he gave orders that substantial sums be sent to Peter Kopanidze, Grigory Glurdzhidze, and Mikhail Dzeradze. Stalin himself wrote on the order:
1) To my friend Pete–40,000.
2) 30,000 rubles to Grisha
3) 30,000 rubles to Dzeradze
May 9, 1944. Soso
On the same day, the wrote a brief note in Georgian:
Grisha! Accept this small gift from me. May 9, 1944. Yours, Soso.
There is, however, evidence of another benevolent gesture that he made after the war. He sent the following letter to the settlement of Pchelok in the Parbig district of Tomsk:
Comrade Solomon. I received your letter of January 16, 1947, sent via Academician Tsipin. I have not forgotten you and the other comrades from Turukhansk, nor will I, I'm sure. I enclose 6000 rubles out of my pay as a deputy. It is not a large amount, but will nevertheless be useful to you. I wish you good health. Stalin.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 7-8

Stalin was articulate, happy, and very generous. Not too many members of the Central Committee of the CPSU had the loyalty and the camaraderie with their bodyguards or helpers as Stalin had. When working in the woods, he always either cooked or washed dishes, he never commanded anyone to do what he could not do himself….
When we were at Borzhomi in the Crimea, friends of Stalin, who were in the underground with him in the early days, came around and Stalin found out that due to many circumstances, his friends were hard pressed for some finances. Since Stalin never carried any money with him, he passed a hat around and we collected 300 rubles, which Stalin gave to his friends in an envelope.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 53

She [Stalin's first wife] bore him a son, Yakov. With a babe in arms to look after, she had difficulty making ends meet. As always, they had no money. The enormous sums which he obtained went immediately to Lenin. And in any case this near pauper despised money. To him, it was part of the system which he had set out to destroy. When money came his way he unhesitatingly distributed it among his friends. Sergei Alliluyev writes that "I was supposed to go to Petersburg at the end of July 1907, and had no money, so on the advice of comrades I went to see Koba." Koba immediately offered him money, but Alliluyev could see how poor he was and of course refused to take it. Koba was adamant. He kept trying to force the money on Alliluyev, saying "Take it, take it, you may need it," until Alliluyev finally gave in and took it. The Alliluyevs owed him a lot. It was Koba who had saved Sergei's little girl from drowning.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 64

Stalin always had cash, piled up and packets in his desk drawers and cupboards. He never had any need for cash nor did he think it necessary to put it in a safe. Stalin received a salary for each of his 10 official positions (Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Secretary of the Central Committee, member of the Politburo, deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and of the Russian Republic, deputy of the Moscow Soviet, member of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, Supreme Commander in Chief, member of the Central Committee, and, until 1947, Minister of Defense). In the Soviet Union at that time, it was normal practice for salaries to be paid in cash twice a month. As the envelopes with bank notes regularly arrived, he would put them away in his desk or cupboard without even bothering to open them. Occasionally he gave large sums to his daughter Svetlana or to other relatives who sometimes visited the dacha, and he also sent money to the widow of his eldest son Yakov, who had died as a prisoner of war; she lived with her daughter, Stalin's first grandchild, who had been born in 1938. There were also stories of gifts being sent to childhood friends in Georgia.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 91

Sergei Yakovlevich ends his memoirs with this story of a meeting he had with Soso, known now as Koba, in Baku in 1907.
"… 'Well,' he [Stalin] said as we parted, 'it seems you ought to leave. I wish you a safe journey.' Then he added, 'By the way, take this money, you'll need it.'
I tried to refuse, explaining that I was amply provided with funds, but Koba repeated firmly and calmly: 'Take the money: you have a large family, children. You must look after them.'
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 38

STALIN WAS PRECISE AND WANTED CLARITY AND PRECISION

It was impossible to go to Stalin without being perfectly familiar with the situation plotted on the map and to report tentative or (which was worse) exaggerated information. Stalin would not tolerate hit-or-miss answers, he demanded utmost accuracy and clarity.
Stalin seemed to have a knack of detecting weak spots in reports and documents. He immediately laid them open and severely reprimanded those responsible for inaccuracies. He had a tenacious memory, perfectly remembered whatever was said and would not miss a chance to give a severe dressing-down. That is why we drafted staff documents as best we possibly could under the circumstances.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987,
APPENDIX 1
Portrait of Stalin by Zhukov, p. 140

Brevity, clearness, and accuracy were his main characteristics.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 8

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Stalin based his judgments of crucial issues on the reports furnished by General Headquarters representatives, whom he would send to the Fronts for on-the-spot assessment of the situation and consultations with respective commanders, on conclusions made at the General Headquarters and suggestions by Front commanders and on special reports.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 282

Stalin wanted daily reports on the situation at the fronts. And one had to have the facts at one's finger tips to report to the Supreme Commander. One could not go to him with maps that had "white spots" on them, or report approximate, much less exaggerated, information. He did not tolerate hit-or-miss replies. He wanted them to be exhaustive and clear….
The Supreme Commander had a knack of detecting week spots in reports and documents. He saw them instantly and reprimanded the culprit most severely. He had a tenacious memory and remembered everything that was said to him, and never missed an opportunity to take people to task for anything they forgot. That is why documents of the General Staff were always most carefully prepared.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 364-365

Skvirsky was often on the telephone to Stalin during the war. 'Stalin didn't like beating around the bush. He had no patience with too much talk. In my experience, I saw that he wanted frankness and no varnishing of the facts. Also, he favored commanders who applied themselves and carried out their assignments well.'
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 117

According to Marshal Vasilevsky, Stalin worked very hard himself. But he also made sure that others worked to capacity. The highest standard was insisted on in all matters involving the armed forces, extending to the drawing up of documents. The Marshal says that Stalin even paid attention to improving the literary quality of documents: 'Stalin never forgave carelessness in work, our failure to finish a job properly, even if this happened with a highly indispensable worker without a previous blemish on his record.' His demands were in most cases, just, the Marshal goes on: 'His directives and commands showed Front commanders their mistakes and shortcomings [and] taught them how to deal with all manner of military operations skillfully.'
Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 139

The new uncut edition of Zhukov's memoirs, though containing additional criticisms of Stalin, retains Zhukov's homage to his Commander-in-Chief: 'With strictness and exactitude Stalin achieved the near-impossible.' Also: 'He had a tremendous capacity for work, a tenacious memory, he was a very gifted man.' And: 'Stalin's merit lies in the fact that he correctly appraised the advice offered by the military experts and then in summarized form– in instructions, directives and regulations–immediately circulated them among the troops for practical guidance.'

Axell, Albert. Stalin's War: Through the Eyes of His Commanders. London, Arms and Armour Press. 1997, p. 163

OVERALL DESCRIPTION OF STALIN'S PERSONALITY

After 1940, when I served as Chief of Staff of the Red Army and later, during the war, as Deputy Supreme Commander-in-Chief, I had occasion to get to know Stalin closely.
Stalin's outer appearance has been described on more than one occasion. Though slight in stature and undistinguished in outward appearance, Stalin was nevertheless an imposing figure. Free of affectation and mannerisms, he won the hearts of everyone he talked with. His visitors were invariably struck by his candor and his uninhibited manner of speaking, and impressed by his ability to express his thoughts clearly, his inborn analytical turn of mind, his erudition and retentive memory, all of which made even old hands and big shots brace themselves and be "on the alert."
Stalin did not like to remain seated during a conversation. He used to pace the room slowly, stopping now and then, coming up close to the person he was talking with and looking him straight in the face. His gaze was clear, tenacious, and seemed to envelope and pierce through the visitor.
Stalin spoke softly, clearly shaping his phrases, almost without gesticulation. He used to hold his pipe, though not lighted at times, and stroke is mustache with the mouthpiece.
He spoke Russian with a Georgian accent, but flawlessly. In his speech he often used figures of speech, similies, metaphors.
One seldom saw him laughing; and when he laughed he did so quietly, as though to himself. But he had a sense of humor, and appreciated sharp wit and a good joke.
Stalin had excellent eyesight. He never used glasses in reading. As a rule, he wrote by hand. He read widely and was extensively knowledgeable in many different fields.
His tremendous capacity for work, his ability quickly to grasp the meaning of a book, his tenacious memory–all these enabled him to master, during one day, a tremendous amount of factual data, which could be coped with only by a very gifted man.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987,
APPENDIX 1
Portrait of Stalin by Zhukov, p. 141

We finish with the third "truth" about Stalin's personality: the brutal and cold man, of mediocre intelligence, with no consideration for his fellow humans and who had nothing but contempt for his aids.
In fact, the men who had to "endure" this monster day after day for those four terrible war years offer a radically different picture of Stalin.
Here is how Zhukov described his "master":
"After 1940, when I served as Chief of Staff of the Red Army and later, during the war, as Deputy Supreme Commander-in-Chief, I had occasion to get to know Stalin closely. Though slight in stature and undistinguished in outward appearance, Stalin was nevertheless an imposing figure. Free of affectation and mannerisms, he won the heart of everyone he talked with. His visitors were invariable struck by his candour and his uninhibited manner of speaking, and impressed by his ability to express his thoughts clearly, his inborn analytical turn of mind, his erudition and retentive memory, all of which made even old hands and big shots brace themselves and be "on the alert'."

Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 283
Martens, Ludo. Another View of Stalin. Antwerp, Belgium: EPO, Lange Pastoorstraat 25-27 2600, p. 261 [p. 235 on the NET]

Lenin and Stalin were faced with a host of inconsistent adversaries whose want of confidence, of energy, of courage and–as one of them who was afterwards converted remarked–whose incredulity resulted in their losing the northern provinces and upset them so much that they gave utterance to the most puerile and paralyzing inconsistencies.
Here Stalin and Trotsky really appeared as the exact opposite to one another. They are two types of men situated at opposite poles of contemporary humanity. Stalin relies with all his weight upon reason and practical common sense. He is impeccably and inexorably methodical. He knows. He thoroughly understands Leninism, and the part played in government by the working classes and by the Party. He does not try to show off and is not worried by a desire to be original. He merely tries to do everything that he can do. He does not believe in eloquence or in sensationalism. When he speaks, he merely tries to combine simplicity with clearness. Like Lenin, he is always driving the same points home. He asks a large number of questions (because they show him the temper of his audience) and he relies largely on the same words, like some great preacher of old. And he has an unerring way of putting all the strong and all the weak points before you. He has no equal in ferreting out reformist complacency and opportunist laziness in a man. “With whatever veil,” says Radek, “opportunism covers his miserable body, Stalin tears it aside.”
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 175

The qualities that set him over other men and made him the arbiter of their destinies were his great and highly disciplined intelligence, is single-mindedness, his implacable will, his courage, and his ruthlessness. Although his formal education had been limited, he read widely. He studied the history of Russia and other countries and was mindful of the past in the formulation of policy, in day-by-day government, and in the conduct of the war. He acquired a considerable expertise in many fields and could pass from one subject to another with mastery, and he forgot nothing.
… As a man Stalin was remarkable and at times bewildering. Notwithstanding his popular reputation, he was human. He was sensitive to the feelings of others and capable of great warmth. He possessed a lively sense of humor.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. xiv

After 1940, when I served as Chief of Staff of the Red Army and later, during the war, as Deputy Supreme Commander-in-Chief, I had occasion to get to know Stalin closely.
Stalin’s outer appearance has been described on more than one occasion. Though slight in stature and undistinguished in outward appearance, Stalin was nevertheless an imposing figure. Free of affectation and mannerisms, he won the heart of everyone he talked with. His visitors were invariably struck by his candor and his uninhibited manner of speaking, and impressed by his ability to express his thoughts clearly, his inborn analytical turn of mind, his erudition and retentive memory, all of which made even old hands and big shots brace themselves and be “on the alert.”
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One seldom saw him laughing; and when he laughed he did so quietly, as though to himself. But he had a sense of humor, and appreciated sharp wit and a good joke.
Stalin had excellent eyesight. He never used glasses in reading. As a rule, he wrote by hand. He read widely and was extensively knowledgeable in many different fields.
His tremendous capacity for work, his ability quickly to grasp the meaning of a book, his tenacious memory–all these enabled him to master, during one day, a tremendous amount of factual data, which could be coped with only by a very gifted man.
It is hard to say which of his character traits was predominant.
Many-sided and gifted as Stalin was, his disposition could not be called even. He was a man of strong will, reserved, fervent, and impetuous.
Ordinarily calm and sober-minded he sometimes lost his temper, and objectivity failed him. He virtually changed before one's eyes–he grew pale, a bitter expression came to his eyes and his gaze became heavy and spiteful. I knew of few daredevils who could hold out against Stalin's anger and parry the blow.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 283

Stalin did not like to remain seated during a conversation. Usually, he walked about the room slowly, stopping from time to time, coming close to the person he was talking with, and looking him straight in the eyes. He had a sharp, penetrating gaze. He spoke softly and clearly, separating one phrase from the next, and almost never gesticulated. Mostly, he held his pipe, even if unlit , and stroked his mustache with its mouthpiece. He spoke with a distinct Georgian accent, but his Russian was fluent, and he often used figures of speech, similes, and metaphors….
Seldom did anyone see Stalin laugh. When he did, it was more like a chuckle, as though to himself. But he had a sense of humor, and liked a good joke. He had keen eyesight, and never used glasses to read, even after dark. Usually, he wrote what he needed himself, by hand. He read widely, and was well-informed in a variety of fields. His extraordinary capacity for work, his ability to grasp the crux of the matter quickly, enabled him to look through and assimilate a huge amount of information–and only an extraordinary person could match this feat….
It is hard to say what feature of his character predominated. A gifted man and many-sided, Stalin could never be called a man of even disposition. He had a strong will, he was impetuous, he was secretive. Though usually calm and reasonable, he would at times become highly irritable. And when he was angry he stopped being objective, changed abruptly before one's eyes, grew paler still, and his gaze became heavy and hard. Not many were the brave men who stood up to Stalin's anger and parried his attacks….
Stalin's routine was rather singular. He worked chiefly in the evening hours and at night, hardly ever rising before noon.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 365-366

STALIN KNEW A LOT ABOUT ARMAMENTS, WEAPONRY, AND MILITARY MATERIAL

I can only repeat that Stalin devoted a good deal of attention to problems of armament and materiel. He frequently met with chief aircraft, artillery, and tank designers whom he would question in great detail about the progress achieved in designing the various types of equipment in our country and abroad. To give him his due, it must be said that he was fairly well versed in the characteristics of the basic types of armament.
Cameron, Kenneth Neill. Stalin, Man of Contradiction. Toronto: NC Press, c1987,
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The Commissar for Armament, Vannikov, related that early in 1941 Stalin favored the 107-mm gun as the main armament for tanks, and he surprised Vannikov when he added that it was a good weapon, “for he knew it from the Civil War.” Vannikov had advocated the 85-mm antiaircraft gun for the purpose, but Stalin’s preference for the 107-mm proved justified: with some modification it was found to be excellent as an antitank weapon and remained in service.
Stalin demanded precise replies to his questions, and he was quick to show displeasure with vague and inadequate information.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 278

Stalin took a direct interest in the development of weapons, and indeed his approval was needed before any prototype or major change went into production. The improved T-34 medium tank and the IS heavy tank were, the Russians claimed, the most effective tanks in the war, and most German officers admitted their superiority.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 365

On the next evening the discussion was on the war in the Pacific….
At this point Brooke asked whether the Trans-Siberian railways could maintain the necessary supplies for the 60 Red Army divisions. Antonov looked to Stalin for the answer, although Brooke felt sure that he knew it. Stalin did not respond, and Antonov explained that the railway could meet the supply needs of the Red forces. Then Stalin intervened and gave what Brooke called “an astonishing presentation of technical railway detail” with the conclusion that the Trans-Siberian Railway would not be able to maintain adequate supplies. Brooke observed that more than ever before he was impressed by Stalin’s military ability.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 408

The avid interest with which he studied the technical aspects of modern warfare, down to the minute details, shows him to have been anything but a dilettante. He viewed the war primarily from the angle of logistics, to use the modern expression. To secure reserves of manpower and supplies of weapons, in the right quantities and proportions, to allocate them and to transport them to the right points at the right time, to amass a decisive strategic reserve and to have it ready for intervention at decisive moments–these operations made up nine-tenths of his task.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 469

During the spring of 1942, our designers-constructors came out with a new tank. Because of the lack of enough tanks, we suffered losses. The new tank was brought to the Kremlin where experts, including Stalin, tried to find weaknesses, potential problems and what our

tanks were in opposition to and how they measured up. The design was good but it had a weakness. The designer said that the tank must stop for a salvo of 3-4 cannon shots then proceed. Stalin did not altogether agree with this and asked the artillery General how this would affect the possibility of Germans aiming at that time in scoring a hit on the stationary object. The designer was upset, but Stalin asked him:
How long will it take to get the weak points corrected?
One month, comrade Stalin.
We'll give you three months. Do not undermine us. The front is desperately in need of a tank that can have its cannon operating as it is rolling over the terrain.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 43

These facts are meant to show that Stalin was interested in every aspect of warfare…. It was impossible for us to know when he rested. The lights were burning continually, he was always at the maps, always on the telephone with front commanders, getting their positions, advice. He slept in his overcoat, with his boots on.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 44

Stalin was no pampered potentate. He worked exceptional hours on affairs of state, major and minor. He achieved some understanding of modern technology; he knew that modern warfare, to which he was completely converted, needed new weapons, supplies and transport, and he placed these areas of the war effort on the same level as the military campaigning. Stalin's contribution to the modernization of the Soviet war effort and to its ultimate triumph cannot be ignored. He worked for a more modern state before 1941, and its achievement made possible Soviet victory.
Overy, R. J. Russia's War: Blood Upon the Snow. New York: TV Books, c1997, p. 348

I can only say once again that even before the war Stalin devoted a good deal of attention to armaments and materiel. He frequently summoned aviation, artillery and tank designers, whom he questioned in detail about progress in their field at home and abroad. To be fair, I must say that he was quite well versed in the characteristics of the basic types of armaments.
Stalin urged chief designers and directors of munitions factories, many of whom he knew personally, to produce new models of aircraft, tanks, guns, and other major weapons within established time limits, and to make sure that their quality should be superior to foreign models.
Not a single weapon was adopted or discarded without Stalin's approval….
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 1. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 367

Stalin had an amazingly good memory. I have never met anyone who remembered so much as him. Stalin knew not only all the commanders of the fronts and armies, and there were over a hundred of them, but also several commanders of corps and divisions, as well as the top officials of the People's Defense Commissariat, not to speak of the top personnel of the central and regional Party and state apparatus. Throughout the war Stalin constantly remembered the composition of the strategic reserve and could at any time name any particular formation. He did not need constant reminders; he knew very well the situation at

the fronts, the good and bad sides of the generals, the potential of industry in satisfying the needs of the Front, the GHQ's capacity in supplies of arms, artillery, tanks, planes, ammunition, and fuel that the troops needed, and he himself distributed them about the fronts.
Vasilevskii, Aleksandr M. A Lifelong Cause. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1981, p. 451

Stalin's remarkable memory, which Vasilevsky considers the best he ever encountered, enabled him to deal personally with the assignment of his high command.
"Stalin knew not only all the commanders of the fronts and armies, and there were over a hundred of them, but also several commanders of corps and divisions, as well as the top officials of the People's Commissariat of Defense, not to speak of the top personnel of the central and regional party and state apparatus. Throughout the war Stalin constantly remembered the composition of the strategic reserve and could at any time name any particular formation"
recalled Vasilevsky. With this knowledge of individual personalities Stalin engaged in frequent reshuffling of commands, probably more than was useful. He usually preceded a new senior posting with an interview and often discharged unsuccessful officers the same way, or by personal telephone call.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 243

STALIN DID NOT ABUSE OPPONENTS OR TALK IN VIOLENT LANGUAGE

"He never abused an opponent," adds the same eyewitness [Orakhelashvili]. "We suffered so much from the Mensheviks that when we found ourselves addressing one of them in a speech we could not prevent ourselves from going for him hammer and tongs and lashing him with our tongues. Stalin never liked this form of attack. Violent language was for him a prohibited weapon.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 11

WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A REVOLUTIONARY AND STALIN HAD ALL OF IT

The vocation of secret agitator and professional Revolutionary, which attracted him in the wake of so many others, is a terrible vocation. One becomes an outlaw, spied upon by the machinery of the State, hounded by the police; the quarry of the Tsar and of his countless and well-nourished underlings, all armed to the teeth and huge of fist. One is like an exile whose temporary liberty hangs by a mere thread and who hides himself and watches. One is the tiny Revolutionary, almost alone in the crowd, swamped by the immense forces of Capitalism which have the nations in their grip from pole to pole–not only the 180 million subjects of the Tsar but everyone else in the world–and one is the man who, with a few friends, wants to alter all that. One appears now here, now there, to arouse resentment and to excite people to action, and one's only weapons are one's own convictions and the power of one's words. To follow that calling in which, clearly silhouetted on the horizon, no matter what path one takes, stand prison, Siberia, and the gallows, it is not sufficient merely to have a vocation.
One must have iron health at the service of indomitable energy, and an almost limitless capacity for work. One must be in the championship class for doing without sleep and one

must be able to throw oneself from one task into another at a moment's notice, to fast and to freeze, to avoid capture and to know how to escape if one is captured. One must prefer to have one's skin seared with a red-hot iron or one's teeth smashed sooner than blurt out a name or an address. One's whole heart must be devoted to the cause; it is impossible for it to harbour any other object, for one is a wanderer on the face of the earth and one never has either leisure or money.
And that is not all. One must have hope so firmly implanted in one that in the darkest moments and when faced by the bitterest defeats one must never cease to believe in victory. And even that is not enough. Above everything else one must have clarity of vision and a perfect knowledge of what one wants. It is in this that Marxism specially arms Revolutionaries and gives these new men such a grasp of circumstances (and allows, and has allowed them such extraordinary foresight!).
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 12

Whoever imagines, when looking at Stalin's amazingly circuitous path and life, that he has renounced revolution, has a surprise in store for him one day.
Ludwig, Emil. Three portraits: Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin. New York Toronto: Longmans, Green and Company, c1940, p. 94

STALIN MAINTAINED MARXIST THEORY AGAINST REVISIONISTS

All realistic theory is supple, since it adjusts itself to life. But it is supple at its extremity, not at its foundation; on the side of circumstances, not on that of principles (which are, indeed, originally an imaginary synthesis of realities). The rigorous upholding of these principles, and their defense against the slightest attempted modification, was one of Stalin's most exacting and unremitting tasks.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York : The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 30

STALIN MADE THE RIGHT DECISIONS AT THE RIGHT TIME

All those who have seen Stalin at work recognize that his most important quality is a capacity for "grasping a situation in all its complexity and detail, for putting all that is most essential to the fore, and for fixing his whole attention on what is most important for the time being." It may be observed that when those who really know–such as Kuibyshev, who directs the State Plan–speak of Stalin's accomplishments, they do not only say: "he did so and so," they say: "he did so and so at the right time."
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 130

STALIN IS NOT THE MAN HE IS DEPICTED AS BEING

Stalin is not at all the sort of man he is supposed to be on the "other side" of the human race,… but then this other half of the world is composed of a multitude of men born blind, guided by others who have willfully blinded themselves.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 152

STALIN WAS A CONFIDENT MAN OF ACTION AND PROGRESS

I will delve, rather at a venture, into far-distant times, into the days before the Revolution, right back into the last century: Vano Sturua tells of an illicit visit paid by Stalin to the big workshops at Tiflis in 1898–not yesterday, it will be noticed: “Sosso was remarkable for his decision and firmness”; and he found violent fault with the “slackness,” the “hesitation,” “the irritating spirit of compromise,” which he observed among many of the comrades, and the same Sosso (aged 19 at the time) already foresaw the defection of a number of intellectuals “of whom a good half actually passed over into the Menshevik camp after the Second Congress.”
That is how Stalin appeared then, and that is how he appeared, some 30 years later, when confronted with the Opposition crew. He was the same man; the man of action, confidence, and progress, as opposed to those of theory, pessimism, and marking time.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 189

Stalin became Vozhd, or leader, not only by force of personality, ability, and ruthless determination but also because he gave positive, challenging leadership. He inspired in people the faith that their hardships and sacrifices were to be endured, because they could bring victory, security, and other rewards. Indeed it was his own faith that anything was justified that would lead to the justice and prosperity of socialism.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 243

…Stalin was capable of charming his interlocutors. He was unquestionably a great actor and could play the role of an affable, modest, even a common man. In the first weeks of the war, when it seemed that the Soviet Union was about to collapse, all visiting foreign dignitaries, starting with Harry Hopkins, were pessimistic. However, they left Moscow fully confident that the Soviet people would fight on and ultimately win. But the situation was indeed desperate. The enemy was relentlessly pushing eastward. Almost every night people had to go down into bomb shelters. So what was it that made Hopkins, Harriman, Beaverbrook, and other experienced and skeptical politicians change their minds? Nothing else but their conversations with Stalin. Despite the seemingly hopeless situation, he was able to create an easy and calm atmosphere.
…The boss was radiating benevolence as he unhurriedly conversed. Nothing dramatic seemed to be occurring outside the walls of that room, nothing seemed to worry him. And that was reassuring.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin’s Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 205

STALIN IS HUMBLE AND NOT DOMINATED BY PRIDE OR PERSONAL VANITY

Nowadays when I read or hear somewhere that my father used to consider himself practically a god, it amazes me that people who knew him well can say such a thing.
It’s true my father wasn’t especially democratic, but he never thought of himself as a god.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 205

One of his main objects seems to be never to try to shine, and never to make himself conspicuous.
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 280

…It is quite obvious that it is something else than personal vanity and the pride that he has in his name that thrusts this man to the fore and keeps him in the breach. It is faith… It is faith in the inherent justice of logic. It is faith in knowledge, which Lenin expressed so deeply, when he replied to someone who spoke to him about the cowardly attack of which he had been the victim, and which shortened his days: “What can you expect? Everyone acts according to his knowledge.” It is faith in the socialist order and in the masses in which it is incarnate, faith in work, in what Stetsky calls the stormy growth of productive forces: “Work,” says Stalin, “is a question of dignity, heroism, and glory.” It is faith in the Workers’ Code, the Communist Law, and it’s terrific integrity….
Barbusse, Henri. Stalin. New York: The Macmillan company, 1935, p. 280

Be that as it may, I attended many affairs at the Kremlin, even rowdy ones, but I never noticed any signs of vainglory in Stalin, not even when he was under the influence of alcohol; he merely became more garrulous than usual, his voice grew slightly louder though, and he laughed more readily.
Tuominen, Arvo, The Bells of the Kremlin: Hanover: University Press of New England, 1983, p. 163

STALIN DISCOUNTS THE POPE AS AN ALLY AND CONSIDERS HIM REACTIONARY

“The Vatican is a center of reaction,” Comrade Stalin told me among other things, “it is a tool in the service of capital and world reaction, which supports this international organization of subversion and espionage. It is a fact that many Catholic priests and missionaries of the Vatican are old hands at espionage on a world scale….” Then he told me of what happened once in Yalta with Roosevelt, the representative of the American Catholic church….

During the talk with Roosevelt, Churchill and others on problems of the anti-Hitlerite war, they had said: “We must no longer fight the pope in Rome. What had you against him that you attack him?!”

“I have nothing against him,” Stalin had replied.

“Then, let us make the Pope our ally,” they had said, “let us admit him to the coalition of the great allies.”

“All right,” Stalin had said, “but the anti-fascist alliance is an alliance to wipe out fascism and Nazism. As you know, gentlemen, this war is waged with soldiers, artillery, machine guns, tanks, aircraft. If the Pope or you can tell us what armies, artillery, machine guns, tanks and other weapons of war he possesses, let him become our ally. We don’t need an ally for talk and incense.”

After that, they had made no further mention of the question of the Pope, and the Vatican.
Hoxha, Enver. The Artful Albanian. London: Chatto & Windus, 1986, p. 132

Churchill said, “The British people have a sense of moral responsibility with regard to the Polish people and their spiritual values. It is also important that Poland is a Catholic country. We cannot allow internal developments there to complicate our relations with the Vatican.”

“And how many divisions does the pope have?” Stalin suddenly asked, interrupting Churchill’s train of oratory.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin’s Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 309

MEETINGS WITH STALIN WERE MUCH FRIENDLIER THAN WITH KHRUSHCHEV & HIS ALLIES

Once in Moscow the meetings with the Soviet leaders would begin, but these meetings were no longer pleasant like those with Stalin. Now they were held sometimes with smothered anger, sometimes with open flare-ups.
Hoxha, Enver. The Artful Albanian. London: Chatto & Windus, 1986, p. 156

STALIN WAS QUIET, RESERVED, CALM THOUGHTFUL, PATIENT, RETICENT AND MODEST

Stalin did not appear to be a contender. Unobtrusive, quiet, modest, he was plainly the party worker who attended to the essential tasks of administration and organization. But he was always accessible to members and officials, listening patiently to their problems and complaints. Boris Bazhanov, a former official on the staff of the Central Committee who claimed to have been Stalin’s personal secretary, described him standing in a corner, puffing his pipe, listening for an hour or more while an agitated provincial secretary or ordinary party member poured out his troubles. His patience was unlimited and, although he rarely committed himself, he earned the gratitude of many members in this way. He was always reticent, a man of few words who kept his own counsel.
Grey, Ian. Stalin, Man of History. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1979, p. 193

As for myself, I am merely a pupil of Lenin, and my aim is to be a worthy pupil of his.
Stalin, Joseph. Stalin’s Kampf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Company, c1940, p. 7

When executions were taking place, and all the others were much shaken, he ‘slept soundly, or quietly studied Esperanto….
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 45

…at the meeting of October 17, 1917,…amid the frayed tempers Stalin once again emerged as conciliator and voice of moderation.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 154

In his domestic life, Stalin is exceptionally modest and virtuous. He is 51, his wife is 28. He loves her deeply. Stalin has a son of 22 by his first wife. He has two children, a boy of 10 and a girl of five, by his present one, Nadya Alliluieva. His children go to the Kremlin school where most of the commissars’ boys and girls get their education. The oldest son, Yasha, was sent by his father to an Institute of technology to study railroading.

Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 323

Baibakov also recalled that Stalin never held discussions until he had studied the available material. He was well informed about many matters. He seldom raised his voice and scarcely ever bawled at anyone or even expressed irritation.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 453

STALIN MADE MISTAKES AND ADMITTED AS MUCH

KAGANOVICH: We know very well that even every great person has faults, Comrade Stalin had them, too. And we, his pupils, do not intend to deify him, describe him with no faults.
Stickle, D. M., Ed. The Beria Affair. New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992, p. 74

SPECULATIONS ON STALIN'S MENTAL STATE AND PRIVATE ATTITUDES ARE BASELESS

Unlike some approaches to the politics of the '30s, however, this analysis does not concentrate on Stalin's personality. Although he was certainly the most authoritative political actor of the period, speculations on his mental state, private attitudes, and prejudices are baseless, given the lack of primary evidence on these matters.
Getty, A. Origins of the Great Purges. Cambridge, N. Y.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1985, p. 6

Rumors abounded, of course, but in actual fact there was not much to report about his [Stalin] private life.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 147

STALIN COMPLIMENTED PEOPLE EXECUTED FOR THEIR CRIMES

Stalin spoke respectfully of some of his victims even after he had destroyed them. According to Todorsky, at a Politburo meeting in 1938 Stalin unexpectedly began to praise Tukhachevsky, who had already been shot. Stalin noted Tukhachevsky's unquestioned military talent, his great sense of responsibility when given a job, and his striving to keep abreast of the fast-changing theory, technology, and practice of military affairs. And after Uborevitch had been shot, Stalin said to Meretskov: "Train our troops the same way you trained them under Uborevitch."
Medvedev, Roy. Let History Judge. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989, p. 586

THE PEOPLE PRAISE STALIN WHETHER HE WANTS IT OR NOT BECAUSE THEY ARE THANKFUL

There can be no question that in the great majority of cases this exaggerated veneration [of Stalin] is genuine. The people feel the need to express their gratitude, their infinite admiration. They do in truth believe that they owe to Stalin all they are and have, and however incongruous and at times distasteful this idolatry may seem to us of the West, nowhere have I found anything to indicate that it is in the least artificial or ready-made.

Rather it has grown up organically, side-by-side with the results achieved in the economic reconstruction. The people are grateful to Stalin for their bread and meat, their order, their education, and for the creation of the Red Army to safeguard their new well-being. They must be able to show gratitude to someone for the manifest improvement in conditions, and no mere abstraction will suffice; they are not grateful to an abstract" Communism," but to a tangible man, which is Stalin. The Russian is inclined to exuberance in his speech and his gestures, and he is glad to have the opportunity of pouring out his heart. This excessive homage is perhaps intended not so much for Stalin, the individual, as for the representative of this visibly successful economic construction. When the people say "Stalin," they have in the back of their minds increasing prosperity and increasing culture. When the people say: "We love Stalin," it is because this is the simplest and most natural form of expression they can give to their willing acceptance of their economic circumstances, of socialism, and of the regime.

Moreover, Stalin is flesh of the people's flesh. He is the son of a peasant cobbler and has preserved his kinship with the workers and peasants. Of him it can be said, more truly than of any other statesman I know, that he speaks the people's language. He is definitely not what one would call a great orator. He speaks hesitatingly, not at all brilliantly, and rather tonelessly, as if he found it difficult. His arguments come slowly: they appeal to the sound common sense of people who grasp a thing thoroughly, but not quickly. But above all, Stalin has a sense of humor, a circumstantial, sly, comfortable, often cruel peasants sense of humor. In his speeches he likes to quote humorous anecdotes from popular Russian writers; he thoroughly enjoys these anecdotes and points out the practical application. In parts, his speeches read like old-fashioned calendar inscriptions. When Stalin speaks with his knowing, comfortable smile, pointing with his forefinger, he does not, like other orators, make a breach between himself and his audience; he does not stand commandingly on the platform while they sit below him, but very soon an alliance, an intimacy is established between him and his listeners. They, being made of the same stuff, are susceptible to the arguments, and both laugh merrily at the same simple stories.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 69

He will not allow public celebration of his birthday, and if homage is paid to him in public, he emphasizes that such homage applies exclusively to his policy, not to him personally. When, for instance, the Congress had carried the acceptance of the constitution proposed and in the end edited by him, and gave him an uproarious ovation, he himself joined in the applause to show that he did not accept this homage as arising from appreciation of him personally, but solely of his policy.
Feuchtwanger, Lion. Moscow, 1937. New York: The Viking Press, 1937, p. 75

STALIN IS STILL POPULAR AMONG THE MASSES AND HAS A GOOD LEGACY

The Soviet regime was hardly democratic. Nonetheless, it appears to have been reasonably well grounded, at least in the cities and among young people, as it entered the extreme test of World War II. Most of the surrenders of 1941 occurred after encirclements had produced desperate conditions; even peasant recruits generally fought hard for their country. The

victory over Germany then conferred high legitimacy on Stalinism and seemed to justify the sacrifices of collectivization and industrialization.
Stalin's legacy is alive and important in the former USSR, for example, in the collective farms, where, ironically, there is now serious antipathy to change. Polls of Soviet, and now Russian, citizens have repeatedly asked their views of Stalin as a leader; the frequency of this question indicates anxiety among the elite about the possibility he is still popular.
Thurston, Robert. Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941. New Haven: Yale University Press, c1996, p. 230

Two years later, in October 1987, the Politburo was debating the draft of the speech Gorbachev was to make on the seventieth anniversary of the October Revolution. The discussion turned to the subject of Stalin,…
Gorbachev's speech mentioned Stalin three times, and each time the name was greeted by a storm of applause: 'In the attainment of victory a role was played by the enormous political will, the purposefulness and persistence, the ability to organize and discipline people, shown by Stalin during the war years.'
…The applause at the mention of Stalin's name showed how painful even the best-informed Soviet citizens were finding their self-emancipation. The published pamphlet of Gorbachev's speech states that Stalin's name was greeted by 'prolonged applause'. That understates the case. Even the editors of the minutes were ashamed to write that the applause had in fact been a stormy ovation, and they downgraded it to 'prolonged'.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Autopsy for an Empire. New York: Free Press, c1998, p. 453-454

REPORTS OF PEOPLE AROUND STALIN BEING CHECKED FOR WEAPONS ARE LIES

Some authors now write that all visitors, even Molotov, were searched before entering the leader's study, and that electronic devices were kept under the chairs to detect hidden weapons. There was nothing of the kind. Firstly, at that time there were no such electronic systems, and secondly, over the period of almost four years that I reported to Stalin's office, I wasn't searched once, and speaking more generally, I wasn't subjected to any special clearance procedures. At the time, in the last and most difficult months of 1941, amidst the fears that German agents had infiltrated the capital, each one of us received a gun. I, for instance, had a small Walther that I could easily hide in my pocket…. When we reported for work in the Kremlin, we were to put our guns away in a safe. But nobody ever checked whether I had done that or was still carrying a gun when I was going to see Stalin.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin's Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 203

STALIN WAS TACTFUL BUT DIRECT IN CORRECTING THE WRITINGS OF OTHERS

I would go back to Stalin's office. He would look through the text, make some amendments, and sign it. But on occasion he didn't like my version. That irritated him. He was never rude, though; he would just reproach me:
"You were sitting there interpreting, you heard all, and you didn't understand a thing. Is this important what you wrote here?"

However, he understood that I was doing my best, it was just that my best wasn't good enough for him. And there was no point in sending me back with a simple instruction to "do it over again." He would then say:
"Take out your notebook and write this down." And he would dictate the points that he considered important.
After that it wasn't difficult to draft a new telegram. But each time that happened a bad feeling stayed with me for a long time afterward.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin's Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 208

CHURCHILL ASKS STALIN TO FORGIVE HIM FOR LEADING THE INTERVENTION

Churchill often engaged in self-flagellation, asking Stalin not to bear Britain any grudge for its participation in the intervention against the young Soviet state.
"Let bygones be bygones," Stalin said in a conciliatory tone of voice.
"But can you forgive me personally for organizing the Entente intervention campaign?" Churchill insisted.
"I don't have to forgive you," the leader of nations responded magnanimously. "Let God forgive you."
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin's Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 312

STALIN LIKED AND TRUSTED ROOSEVELT MORE THAN CHURCHILL

Stalin found it easier to deal with Roosevelt than with the stubborn leader of the British Conservatives.
Berezhkov, Valentin. At Stalin's Side. Secaucus, New Jersey: Carol Pub. Group, c1994, p. 314

It was quite obvious that the Supreme Commander-in-Chief did not quite rely on Churchill's and Roosevelt's promises to open the second front. But he did not lose hope that they would somehow try and do something in other areas. He trusted Roosevelt more, and Churchill less.
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 364

He [Stalin] then walked over to his desk, leafed through some papers and finally came up with a letter.
"Here, read this."
The letter was from a foreign well-wisher. It contained information about some backstage negotiations of Hitler's agents with official Allied representatives, which made it clear that the Germans were making the Allies an offer to stop hostilities against them if they agreed to a separate peace.
The communication went on to say that the Allies had allegedly rejected these Nazi overtures. Yet the possibility of the Hitlerites letting the Allied forces through to Berlin could not be ruled out.

“Well, what do you say to that?” asked Stalin. And without waiting for a reply, he made this remark:
“I believe Roosevelt will not violate the Yalta Agreement, but as for Churchill, he can do anything.”
Zhukov, Georgii. Memoirs of Marshal Zhukov. London: Cape, 1971, p. 588

Stalin trusted Roosevelt more than he did Churchill.
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 71

Then he [Stalin] came to his desk, leafed through some papers and picked up a letter.
“Here, read this.”
The letter was from a foreign well-wisher. It told about clandestine talks between Nazi agents and official representatives of the Allies, from which it was clear that the Germans proposed to the Allies to stop fighting against them if they were to agree to a separate peace on any terms.
The letter also said that the Allies had allegedly rejected the German overtures. Nevertheless, it was not to be excluded that the Germans would open the way to Berlin for the Allied troops.
“What do you make of it?” asked Stalin. And without waiting for an answer, he remarked: “I think Roosevelt won’t violate the Yalta accords, but as to Churchill, he wouldn’t flinch at anything.”
Zhukov, Georgi. Reminiscences and Reflections Vol. 2. Moscow: Progress Pub., c1985, p. 347

STALIN SAYS PEOPLE ARE WHAT COUNT AND HE SHOWS CONCERN FOR THEM AND CADRES

On May 4, 1935, in the Kremlin, Stalin addressed a Red Army graduation class. The young officers and political workers, in their creaking new shoulder-belts, new collar tabs and shoulder bars, concentrated their gaze on the short, stocky figure. Few gestures accompanied the soft voice that echoed in the absolute silence of the Kremlin hall. Stalin spoke slowly, glancing only occasionally at the text which he held before him:
“I recall an occasion in Siberia, where I was once exiled. It was spring, when the water was high. Thirty or so men had gone off to collect driftwood that had been brought down by the great river. They returned to the village towards evening, but they were minus one man. When we asked what had happened to him, they just said, ‘He stayed there.” I said, ‘What do you mean, he stayed there?’ They replied casually, ‘He probably drowned. What of it?’ And one of them dashed off somewhere, muttering something about feeding the mare. When I remonstrated that they cared more for animals than people, one of them said, to the general approval of the rest, ‘Why should we be sorry for people: we can make more people any time. But you try making a mare….’
The audience stirred. Holding up a crooked index finger to mark the paradoxical nature of the reply, Stalin went on:
“The indifferent attitude towards people and cadres shown by some of our leaders, and their inability to appreciate people, is a hangover of that same attitude towards people that I have just mentioned.

And so, comrades, if we want to overcome the famine of people in the regions, and if we want our country to have enough cadres capable of moving technology forward and setting it in motion, we must first of all learn to appreciate people, appreciate the cadres, appreciate every worker who is capable of doing good to the cause. We must, finally, understand that the most valuable capital in the world, the most valuable and most decisive capital is people, cadres. We must understand that, given our present circumstances, 'the cadres determine everything'."
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 305

STALIN GAVE PEOPLE THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT AND WAS NOT QUICK TO CONDEMN

According to Rybin, who was working at that time in a section of the NKVD and later became one of Stalin's bodyguards, when Stalin was given an oral report on Koltsov's 'contacts' with 'foreign intelligence agencies', he paid little attention. He had recently had a conversation with the writer [Koltsov] and was left with a good impression of him. Yet only a month later, when he was shown a file containing denunciations by two of Koltsov's close acquaintances, he ordered that action be taken. He could not believe that anyone would deceive or try to mislead him in writing.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 317

[Yezhov stated], "The head of the NKVD [Yezhov] has the Secretary-General's personal order that there will be no sanctions or punishment without there first being irrefutable proof of guilt.
Alexandrov, Victor. The Tukhachevsky Affair. London: Macdonald, 1963, p. 152

BUKHARIN: What are you saying, Comrade's? You have no conscience.
STALIN: I am saying that this was only because it seemed to us that it wasn't enough to bring you to trial…. I said, don't touch Bukharin, wait a bit…. We didn't want to put you on trial, we showed mercy, I must confess, we showed mercy.
Rogovin, Vadim. 1937: Year of Terror. Oak Park, Michigan: Labor Publications, 1998, p. 104

Vasili Stalin wrote in a letter to Khrushchev: "When Beria spoke of arresting Redens, Comrade Stalin protested sharply…. But Beria was supported by Malenkov. And Comrade Stalin said, 'look into it very carefully…. I don't believe Redens is an enemy.'"
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 422

As we have seen in the case of Etinger's arrest, Stalin would delay action until he thought a case had sufficiently developed.
Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 124

At his discretion, Stalin would distribute MGB documents to the members of the Politburo himself. He ordered that nothing be altered in any way by Ignatiev in the documents because, as Stalin put it, "we ourselves will be able to determine what is true and what is not true, what is important and what is not important". Ignatiev was not to amend, annotate, or delete any part of any confession or statement; Stalin, not the investigators or the Politburo, would decide whether it was true or not.

Naumov and Brent. Stalin's Last Crime. New York: HarperCollins, c2003, p. 130

STALIN LOVED GEOGRAPHY

Stalin had always enjoyed geography and perusing atlases of the world.
Volkogonov, Dmitri. Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991, p. 463

STALIN ATTACKS KHRUSHCHEV

Even after the war Stalin was to rebuke Khrushchev, who had transmitted a peasant complaint, with, 'You [KHRUSHCHEV] have lost the proletarian class sense.'
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 114

STALIN HELD THE COUNTRY TOGETHER DURING A DIFFICULT PERIOD

But it was Stalin, when all was said and done, who had held the country together by the sheer application of will-power through this long and difficult period.
Conquest, Robert. Stalin: Breaker of Nations. New York, New York: Viking, 1991, p. 266

STALIN SAYS HE FOLLOWS JESUS MORE THAN THOSE WHO CLAIM THEY DO

Not all the stories I heard about my uncle were uncritical. My mother told me how he had been scolded by another member of the family, Grigori Kurdiani, who was a priest–or in our terminology, a pope.
"Sosso," Kurdiani said, "you will regret that you left the seminary to launch yourself into the dangerous path of revolt. Have you forgotten the words of our Lord Jesus Christ: "Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's?"
He developed that theme for more than an hour. Uncle Sosso listened patiently without interrupting even once. When Kurdiani finally stopped, my Uncle Joe asked, "Have you finished, Father Kurdiani?"
"Yes," said the other.
"Well, then, let me tell you that I struck out in this new direction because the popes, and especially their superiors, have abandoned the way of the Scriptures! They have forgotten their vows of poverty and their mission of serving the poor of this world by other means than prayers."
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 2

STALIN PATIENTLY LISTENS TO PEOPLE WITHOUT INTERRUPTING

The ability to listen without interrupting–and at the same time without letting his own opinions be swept away by what he was hearing–was characteristic of my uncle. My mother said to me once, when she was talking about Uncle Sosso, "He's very modest. You'd never think when you talk to him that he has studied so much and that he knows so much. He never says anything. He listens to others talk without ever interrupting. He has extraordinary patience!"

Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 2

STALIN IS VERY WELL READ IN LITERATURE AND IS AN INTELLECTUAL

Svetlana and Poskrebyshev joined us on the veranda. The talk turned to literature. Stalin lashed out at contemporary Soviet writers.
…And he launched into a lecture on the necessity for writing clearly and simply in order to be understood by the masses.
“Our readers don’t appreciate effects of style and attempts to be original. They want to read clear things, told in language they can speak. Take Balzac. You won’t find any tricks of style or any originality in his works, and yet he’s the greatest writer of them all.”
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 229

My cousin Svetlana [Stalin’s daughter] came in. She was no longer a child, but a grown-up young woman. She had a book in her hand, in English–Oscar Wilde’s Ballad of Reading Gaol.
“What are you reading?” my uncle asked.
When she told him he made a face.
“What do you read trash like that for? I read the Russian translation of it once. It’s completely banal. I can’t understand what you see in that sort of poetry.”
“Oh, papa, you certainly don’t remember it!”
“Don’t I?” Stalin answered. “Listen.”
Hands he recited, in Russian, the beginning of the ballad.
Svetlana was astonished.
“What a memory you have, papa! How do you memorize things?”
“I don’t,” Stalin said. “I don’t memorize anything. I just remember. You have a good memory too. You’ve learned English in a year.
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 147

Poskrebyshev tried to maintain that Balzac’s works had become dated and that his way of writing was out of date also.
“Never!” my uncle cried. “He will never be out of date. He’s the colossus of world literature!”
Svetlana spoke of some American writers she was reading in English.
“I don’t know them,” Stalin said, “and I don’t want to know them. I have other uses for my time. In my youth I read Upton Sinclair–his novel on the Chicago stockyards. It’s nothing but reporting.”
“You read it in translation, papa,” Svetlana reminded him.
“What of it? I read Balzac in translation too. Beside him, Sinclair and your other American writers are minute little scribblers!”
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 230

Stalin was becoming a fairly effective journalist and pamphleteer. He had a fine, clear, direct style which goes much to disprove his alleged intellectual dullness.
Graham, Stephen. Stalin. Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1970, p. 29

Stalin was extremely interested in and defended the theaters. Present-day enemies falsify and try to present Stalin as uncultured. Only enemies can talk in this way.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 23

Let no one think that Stalin is a thug. It would be idle to pretend that he could take a chair in fine arts at Harvard; nevertheless his learning is both broad and deep, especially in philosophy and history. One is instinctively tempted to consider this reticent Georgian as a roughneck, a man of instincts and muscle, not of brains. But his speeches quote Plato and Don Quixote; he knew about the monkey trial at Dayton and the composition of Lloyd George's shadow-cabinet and the unionization of workers in America; in his talk with Wells he showed as much knowledge of Cromwell and the Chartists as Wells himself.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 529

In 1933 he shocked and horrified a deputation of Bolshevik writers by telling them their work was rubbish, because it had no broad basis in general culture. "Read Shakespeare, Goethe, and other classics, as I do," he said.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 530

…one of the many singular things about Stalin is that he was much more deeply educated in a literary sense than any contemporary Western statesman. By his side, Lloyd George and Churchill were abnormally ill-read, and so was Roosevelt. Churchill in melancholy old age was reading Jane Austen and Trollope for the first time: Stalin, in this like almost all the Soviet leaders down to this day, had mastered the classical Russian literature while he was a student.
Snow, Charles Percy. Variety of Men. New York: Scribner, 1966, p. 229

His [Stalin] taste in the theater was even more solid….
It seems a little fantastic that, in addition to Stalin's other activities, he took on those of Supreme Literary Critic. But he actually read the typescripts of most well-known writers before they were published, partly for political reasons but apparently also for sheer interest. The marvel is, how did he find the time. But the evidence is overwhelming. He made neat corrections in green and red pencil.
Snow, Charles Percy. Variety of Men. New York: Scribner, 1966, p. 230

Another oddity to Western eyes is the close personal relation of political leaders with writers. Gorky was an intimate of Stalin's, and Sholokhov of Khrushchev's. I don't know, but I am prepared to bet that Churchill never met T. S. Eliot except perhaps on a formal occasion.
Snow, Charles Percy. Variety of Men. New York: Scribner, 1966, p. 231

Stalin, as I have said, was deeply read in Russian literature and in Russian literary history–and, of course, in Georgian, in which he published his first work, which was, somewhat surprisingly, a poem. He knew, more completely than any westerner, the role of the 19th-century writers as an unofficial opposition.
Snow, Charles Percy. Variety of Men. New York: Scribner, 1966, p. 233

He [Stalin] was a compulsive reader, then and later. His fellow pupils, future priests, used to hide books to squint at during the interminable orthodox services. Stalin was better at this art, more obsessively tied to his books, than any of the rest.
Snow, Charles Percy. Variety of Men. New York: Scribner, 1966, p. 240

… Stalin derived most pleasure from the theater and opera and took a close (often critical) interest in what was staged. He retained to the end of his life a certain respect for artists and writers as such,… The majority of Stalin's books were concerned with politics, with Marxism and with history. His familiarity with the classics of Russian literature, however, was evident from his conversation…. Among authors he is reported to have referred to were Chekhov Gogol, Gorki, and the satirist Saltykov-Shchedrin, Tolstoy, even Dostoevsky and Pushkin.
Bullock, Alan. Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives. New York: Knopf, 1992, p. 383

Far from being the nonintellectual some have pictured, Stalin was articulate, interested in ideas, and had a certain Marxist-Leninist and historical learning.
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 317

…Stalin was a thinking, calculating, hard-working man possessed of an iron will and a considerable intellect; undoubtedly he was a patriot, concerned to uphold historic Russian statehood.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. New York: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 8

As has been mentioned previously, Stalin throughout his life was an avid collector of books. As he read, he would underline passages or make notes in the margin, usually with colored pencils. His office kept a record of all his requests for books, amounting to hundreds of titles a year. With his unusually good memory Stalin enjoyed demonstrating his erudition.
Medvedev, Roy & Zhores Medvedev. The Unknown Stalin. NY, NY: Overlook Press, 2004, p. 188

He [Stalin] not only admired and appreciated great literature, he discerned the difference between hackery and genius. Ever since the seminary in the 1890s, he had read voraciously, claiming a rate of 500 pages daily in exile. When a fellow prisoner died, Stalin purloined his library and refused to share it with his outraged comrades. His hunger for literary knowledge was almost as driving as his Marxist faith and megalomania: one might say these were the ruling passions of his life. He did not possess literary talents himself but in terms of his reading alone, he was an intellectual, despite being the son of a cobbler and a washerwoman. Indeed, it would be no exaggeration to say that Stalin was the best-read ruler of Russia from Catherine the Great up to Vladimir Putin, even including Lenin who is no mean intellectual himself and had enjoyed the benefits of a nobleman's education.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 96

"He worked very hard to improve himself," said Molotov. His library consisted of 20,000 well-used volumes. "If you want to know the people around you," Stalin said, "find out what they read." Svetlana found books there from the Life of Jesus to the novels of Galsworthy, Wilde, Maupassant, and later Steinbeck and Hemingway. His granddaughter later noticed him reading Gogol, Chekhov, Hugo, Thackeray, and Balzac. In old age, he was still discovering Goethe. He "worshiped Zola."

…The Bolsheviks, who believed in the perfectibility of the New Man, were avid autodidacts, Stalin being the most accomplished and diligent of all. He read seriously, making notes, learning quotations, like an omnipotent student, leaving his revealing marginalia in books varying from Anatole France to Vipper's History of Ancient Greece. He had "a very good knowledge of antiquity and mythology," recalled Molotov. He could quote from the Bible, Chekhov and, Good Soldier Svejk, as well as Napoleon, Bismarck, and Talleyrand. His knowledge of Georgian literature was such that he debated arcane poetry with Shalva Nutsibidze, the philosopher, who said, long after Stalin was no longer a god, that his editorial comments were outstanding. He read literature aloud to his circle…. He adored The Last of the Mohicans, amazing a young translator whom he greeted in faux-Red Indian: "Big chief greets paleface!"
His deeply conservative tastes remained 19th-century even during the Modernist blossoming of the twenties: he was always much happier with Pushkin and Tchaikovsky than with Akhmatova and Shostakovich. He respected intellectuals, his tone changing completely when dealing with a famous professor.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 97

Moreover, Stalin is a boss with an education. Notwithstanding general impressions, Stalin is a widely-informed and well-read person. He lacks culture, but he absorbs knowledge. He is rough toward his enemies, but he learns from them.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 302

Stalin's education is broad and continuous. When he was imprisoned in Baku, he studied Esperanto. A couple of years ago, he took up the study of English, which he pursued for about a year. He reads fiction, both Russian and foreign. He has read Sinclair Lewis's "Babbitt" and applied the term Babbitt in his speeches. He is fond of Chekhov, Gogol, and Heine. The modern Soviet satirists, like Pilnyak and Ehrenburg, he follows, and has on various occasions employed their tales as illustrations for his points.
In the theater, Stalin is not a modernist. He likes, perhaps because of his southern origin, sentimental operas. He has been seen at performances of Verdi's "Aida." He has been reported shedding tears over a revolutionary melodrama.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 322

In fact Stalin was a fluent and thoughtful writer even though he was no stylist. His exegesis of Lenin's doctrines was concise and to the point and his lectures were organized in a logical sequence.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 221

Marxism, architecture, linguistics, genetics, and international relations were among Stalin's intellectual interests. Historical works especially attracted him. He kept up with writings on both the Russian past and the annals of Mesopotamia, ancient Rome and Byzantium. When the fancy took him, he held conversations with physicists, biologists and other scientists. He examined the novels winning his annual Stalin Prize and listened to gramophone records of folk and classical music before they appeared in the shops. In Moscow he attended ballets, operas, and concerts. He had his dachas equipped so that he could vet Soviet films before their public release. Volga! Volga! was his favorite film. He read, listened and watch mainly for personal delight and self-instruction.

Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 560

Stalin was a thoughtful man and throughout his life tried to make sense of the universe as he found it. He had studied a lot and forgotten little. His learning, though, had led to only a few basic changes in his ideas. Stalin's mind was an accumulator and regurgitator. He was not an original thinker nor even an outstanding writer. Yet he was an intellectual to the end of his days.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 569

He was a real leader. He was also motivated by the lust for power as well as by ideas. He was in his own way an intellectual, and his level of literary and editorial craft was impressive.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 603

Vereshchak was astonished by the "mechanical memory" of Koba, whose little head "with its undeveloped forehead" presumably contained all of Marx's "Capital." "Marxism was his element, in it he was unconquerable…. He knew how to substantiate anything with the appropriate formula from Marx. This man made a strong impression on young party people unenlightened in politics."
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 118

The Stalin at this period [following Lenin's death] was above all presented as a man of moderation, diligent, reliable, expert–the embodiment of Bolshevik virtue. The very dullness of his reports at official meetings helped to reassure. Here was no flamboyant intellectual, obsessed with theoretical and literary brilliance. But not without ideas. Comrade Stalin could impress many comrades, with his capacity to talk at length not only about Leninism, but also Chinese and European politics, Russian agriculture and Soviet-party administration, among many other topics. In truth, Stalin's reports of this period, the most voluminous of his life, represented a lot of homework and staffwork. His real capacity to assimilate a vast amount of information, much of it on subjects that he had barely encountered in his previous life, showed up early and no doubt impressed many. That his style was for the most part unadorned probably did him no harm, bespeaking a solid man of the people, not the kind of fancy intellectual, who for generations have been trying to put himself at the head of the dark masses. Trotsky had the style of such an intellectual, and Stalin enjoyed mocking his adversary's use of expressions such as 'the splendid historical music of growing socialism' and the 'muscular sensation in physical labor'.
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 107

STALIN WAS WORSHIPPED BY HIS INTERPRETER, PAVLOV

Pavlov was unable to accept the fact that Singh, a mere translator, was my husband, just as he could not stomach all that had happened in the USSR since the death of my father, whom he worshiped.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 43

HOW DID STALIN'S WIFE DIE

… my mother's suicide was most eloquent testimony to the hopelessness of the situation.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 141

Some say my mother was a saint, others that she was mentally unbalanced. Neither of these things is true, any more than the story that she was murdered.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 83

He [my father] kept coming back to the subject of my mother more and more in his later years and was always trying to find those "guilty" of her death.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 106

My nurse started telling me how it happened shortly before she died, when she already felt that she didn't have much longer to live. She didn't want to take it with her. She wanted to purge her soul of the memory as if it were her last confession….
Carolina Till got up early that day as usual. She got breakfast ready and went to wake-up my mother. She came running to the nursery shaking with fright and motioned to my nurse, unable to say a word. They went back together. My mother was lying beside her bed in a pool of blood. She had a little Walther pistol in her hand that Pavel had brought her from Berlin. The sound of the shot hadn't been loud enough to wake the rest of the household. The body was already cold….
That is the story my nurse told me. I trust her more than anybody because, first of all, she was totally without guile, and, secondly, because she told it to me as her confession and a simple Christian woman would never lie at such a time.
Because of her love for my mother, Polina Molotov had always been very good to me. My father, however, didn't like her or want me to see her and so I saw her very rarely.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Twenty Letters to a Friend. New York: Harper & Row, 1967, p. 108-109

How Nadezhda Alleluyeva [Stalin's wife] died I do not know, and without sufficient knowledge of the facts, I make no accusations.
Tokaev, Grigori. Betrayal of an Ideal. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1955, p. 162

I once had the courage to ask my cousin, Svetlana Stalin, how her mother had died. She told me that Nadia had become very nervous and suffered from insomnia, for which she took sleeping pills. One night she took an overdose, with fatal effect. Whether she had done so purposely or accidentally, Svetlana professed not to know. Thus the mystery of my aunt's death remained entire.
Svanidze, Budu. My Uncle, Joseph Stalin. New York: Putnam, c1953, p. 97

I was 16 when I learned that Mama's death had been a suicide. It was a cruel discovery. The war was on, I was in Kuibyshev that winter with my aunt and grandmother. I began questioning them at once and understood that Mama had been very unhappy, that she and my father had had different points of view on everything, from politics to the upbringing of children. I had always loved Mama, though she had never spoiled me. And now I felt that my

father had clearly been in the wrong and that he was to blame for her death. His irrefutable authority was violently shaken….
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 148

It was the same where my father was concerned. The story that he had killed my mother seemed more plausible to many than the truth about her suicide, and they continued not to believe the truth.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 364

There were several versions of the way she died, including some fantastic ones….
At the People's Commissariat everybody is talking about Alliluyeva's death and remarking the strange fact that the funeral did not take place in the Kremlin but at the Novodievich Monastery, where she was buried next to the grave of the suicides Yoffe and Lutovinov….
Some say that this is an admission on Koba's part that she committed suicide. Others say that, on the contrary, this was her last wish expressed in a letter to Koba. There are many rumors about the contents of that letter. Koba is said to have been seen in his office near the Illinsk gate, reading that letter again and again. He always keeps it in his pocket and is said to have shown it to several members of the Instantsia, including Voroshilov, Molotov, and Kirov….
I have now been told the details of Alliluyeva's death. I had already suspected that it had something to do with Mossina…. Alliluyeva's visit to my office made me think at the time that her friendship with Mossina would sooner or later end tragically.
Last May Alliluyeva traveled to the Urals to see Mossina, who had been banished there and was living with friends in Perm. It appears that when Alliluyeva told Koba about her proposed journey he made a terrible scene and asked her not to go. Nevertheless she went, but when she arrived in Perm, Mossina was no longer there: she had been deported to another place…. Alliluyeva attempted to find out in Perm where her girl-friend had been sent, but she failed to get any information…. She then went to the regional headquarters of the GPU in Sverdlovsk. The man in charge was Linde, who turned out to be an old friend of hers from Leningrad. He was Medved's deputy. Linde at first refused to disclose Mossina's whereabouts, but eventually he gave in to her revealing that on Yagoda's instructions she had been sent to Political Isolation Camp No. 7 in Kotlas. He refused to give her permission to visit Mossina, declaring that Camp No. 7 was under Yagoda's direct supervision. Important people from the Opposition were now being detained there. Linde added that Mossina would undoubtedly be tried by a Judicial Troika in October or November, on a charge of having taken part in the "Rosenfeld plot."
[Rosenfeld, Kamenev's nephew, was charged with attempting to persuade the commandant of the Kremlin to arrest the Politburo, including Stalin]
When Alliluyeva protested that, having been banished to the Urals, Mossina could not have possibly taken part in a plot in Moscow, Linde replied that "participation is possible even from a distance"…. He also gave her to understand that Mossina's life was in danger….
On returning to Moscow, Alliluyeva started pleading with Koba to intervene on Mossina's behalf. He refused categorically, declaring that he had never interfered in Yagoda's work and that anyway Mossina was a Trotskyite and a traitor. There was no reason, he said, to use kid gloves with such "characters." At this point a stormy scene broke out between them at their villa. Alliluyeva went into the woods and did not return home at night. She was eventually found lying on a rug in some bushes. As Koba had given strict orders that she should be brought back at any cost, several men from his bodyguard carried her to the villa. In the

night she had an attack of hysteria and Koba summoned Guetier and Pletnev to her bedside. She refused to be treated and said she was going to commit suicide. Koba threatened to put her in a clinic for nervous disorders…. Eventually he had to give in: he promised that the GPU would transfer Mossina from Isolation Camp No. 7 to Isolation Camp No. 2, where persons were treated more leniently and had the right to correspond with persons outside…. Alliluyeva she did not trust Yagoda, and insisted that Mossina should be allowed to write to her to say whether she had actually been transferred.

…In August she received a letter from Mossina from Political Isolation Camp No. 2; Mossina thanked her for her help, said she was pleased with everything, and asked her not to write as she did not want to cause her embarrassment and trouble….

In September Alliluyeva unexpectedly received a letter, sent through a member of the secret Komsomol Opposition organization who had arrived in Moscow from Perm. Mossina had sent the letter to him through the warden who was also a secret Trotskyite. She said that her first letter was written at Linde's request. He had told her this was the only way to avoid trouble for her family and also to ensure her own safety. Mossina then gave her news about several mutual friends she had met at the camp and asked Alliluyeva to do everything in her power to save the lives of some 40 Komsomols accused of a conspiracy in Sverdlovsk. Their case had been referred to the Judicial Troika in Moscow…. Mossina's correspondence with Alliluyeva became regular–two letters every month….

As a result, Alliluyeva began to press Koba still harder to "save the youth" from the Troika's criminal executions. Violent scenes between them followed…. Koba must have realized that somebody was secretly informing his wife of what was going on in the Urals…. An investigation was ordered to discover "those guilty of revealing important state secrets." The "criminals" who allowed the secrets to leak out, and their accomplices, were soon identified, including the isolation camp warden. The Komsomol youth who had acted as messenger was followed to Koba's villa and arrested there. It was established that he had been to the villa before and he was charged with "attempted terrorism"…. After several interrogations he is said to have confessed that he really intended to kill Koba if his comrades in the Urals were shot…. The case was referred to the Judicial Troika, which wasted no time in dealing with it. The Komsomol and all his comrades were shot as accomplices. Mossina was also executed as the "leader of the group"…. All this took place at the end of October 1932….

Alliluyeva heard about the executions several days later from a woman friend, a doctor at the Party's central committee…. She returned home to their flat in the Kremlin. Koba was at their villa, near Moscow…. She rang him up and they had a long conversation over the telephone…. Alliluyeva was crying, cursing, and saying that she had decided to die as she couldn't bear the shame of being responsible for all that was happening, of remaining near him, with him. She said Mossina's death had been a terrible blow to her, that he knew of it and shouldn't have allowed it to happen…. He tried at first to quiet her and begged her to come to their villa. Then he said he would come to Moscow at once to prove to her that there was no other way…. Alliluyeva said she could no longer trust him, that she thought him capable of anything, even of ordering her execution. Then she suddenly said, "That's enough, I'm picking up the revolver…. I know you are capable of ordering Leon to send his men here to seize me…." Within a few seconds a shot rang out. She had shot herself through the brain…. Koba telephoned at once to the Kremlin Commandant and five minutes later, on his instructions, they entered the room…. Doctors were summoned from the Kremlin clinic. They could only certify death…. An order was issued to maintain the highest degree of secrecy…. But one of the doctors talked….

Litvinov, Maksim Maksimovich. Notes for a Journal. New York: Morrow, 1955, p. 212-215

Reports were quick to spread that she [Nadejda Alliluyeva] tasted all food prepared for Stalin and had been poisoned. But the facts seem to be that she had been having acute intestinal pains for several days, and had neglected them. She did not wish to trouble her husband with what she thought was a minor ailment…. She sought to hide her pain, keep the tough spirit of the Bolsheviks. The ailment was appendicitis, and by the time she admitted she was ill it was too late, and she died of peritonitis.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 533

Noting the appearance of the two books by her daughter Svetlana, 20 Letters to a Friend and Only One Year, Souvarine writes: "… She believes that her mother, Nadejda, committed suicide, but she is simply repeating what was said in the Kremlin where everyone lies; although the story of the suicide was credible in it's time (and accepted in my book as well), by now it is unofficially rejected in Kremlin circles and has been discredited by authoritative witnesses."
But Souvarine produces no sources for the current opinion "in Kremlin circles," nor does he name the "authoritative witnesses." For the time being, therefore, the account of her suicide given above still seems to be the most plausible version of what took place. Conditions in the Kremlin in 1932 made it possible to conceal Alliluyeva's suicide from the Soviet public by an official announcement of her illness and death, but there would have been no way of keeping it quiet if Stalin really had murdered his wife. There were too many people around who secretly bore a grudge against him, not to mention his recent enemies among the former Oppositionists who had not yet been arrested, and they were all connected in various ways to men at the top of the Party. The parents of Alliluyeva were still alive at the time and would never have resigned themselves meekly to the murder of their daughter, nor would her brother and sister have kept silent.
Of course I can be accused of relying exclusively on oral testimony, and this is indeed the case. The difficulty about coming to grips with incidents of the past, and particularly of Stalin's time, is that events often occurred without leaving behind the slightest trace of reliable documentary evidence. On the whole the documents simply do not exist, not even in the most secret Soviet archives. The historian must, therefore, trust his intuition and rely on his capacity to judge the credibility of witnesses.
The absence of authentic source material inevitably leads to inaccuracy and makes it easier to get things wrong or to distort; it also opens the way to deliberate falsification.
…Unfortunately it is not only impostors who resort to invention– genuine authors do it as well.
Medvedev, Roy. On Stalin and Stalinism. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 84-87

Vasily, their son, was now 11, and Svetlana, seven. Svetlana the apple of Stalin's eye–so much like her mother. For three years, mother and children had been like school-mates. They too were proud of" Comrade Nadya's diploma." That was in June 1932. Now, had come November. Nadya seized with appendicitis, died during an operation.
Barrett, James. Stalin and God. New York: Booktab, Inc., 1943, p. 48

Svetlana learned only many years later that her mother had died by her own hand, and her memoirs are anyway not always reliable.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 293

Volodya [Nadya's youngest nephew] said, "Rumors that Stalin had killed her started up immediately after her death, but it was all nonsense. A story goes around that, Kameneva, the wife of Kamenev, who had an old score to settle with the Alliluyevs from pre-revolution days, said that Nadya had been shot in the left temple, and pointed out that she was right-handed. Naturally the conclusion to draw from this is that Stalin shot her, or gave instructions to kill her. But Nadya shot herself in the heart, not in the temple….
Volodya continues, "People are people. Within the family no one ever blamed Stalin. Neither my mother, Anna, nor Grandmother Olga approved of what she had done to herself. They were on Stalin's side in this conflict. They never accused him of causing Nadya's death. They thought she was the only one to blame. Mother and Grandmother had a better understanding of Stalin's position: the enormous work that he shouldered. He was unable to give attention to his family, it was simply impossible while he was the leader of such an enormous country. Nadya was much younger then he, and she didn't understand.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 126

After mentioning the latest plays she had seen, Yelena Eduardovna went on to behind-the-scenes political gossip. Still a topical subject at that time was the sudden, unexpected death of Stalin's wife, Allilueva.
"She committed suicide, that is quite definitely known," she assured me.
"But in our Verkhne-Uralsk isolators," I ventured to say doubtingly, "all Georgians were unanimous in asserting that Stalin had poisoned her."
"No, no," insisted Yelena Eduardovna, "she poisoned herself. It was like this. Stalin and Allilueva were on a visit to Ordzhonikidze; it was during the October celebrations–the seventh or eighth of November. When they were about to leave a quarrel started. Allilueva reproached Stalin for his affair with X (I confess that I have forgotten the name she mentioned). Stalin who had been drinking heavily, barked furiously; "Well, now I'm going straight to her." Allilueva went home alone and took poison."
Later, in Siberia, I heard a third version. Allilueva was said to have taken poison as a moral-political protest against Stalin's perfidy. Of Allilueva's modesty and decency I happen to have already heard during my stay in Moscow in 1928-29. At the beginning of the Five-Year Plan Allilueva enrolled as an ordinary student at the recently opened Industrial Academy. Anyway, her death, sudden, mysterious, and never quite cleared up, served as a basis for popular legend in the USSR.
Ciliga, Ante, The Russian Enigma. London: Ink Links, 1979, p. 342

STALIN'S DAUGHTER ADMITS NOT PLANNING AHEAD

My day starts with the morning. I never plan ahead.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 306

Another memorandum reported that Stalin's daughter Svetlana Alliluyeva had arrived in the country [USSR] with her 13 year old American daughter, Olga Peters. She wanted her soviet citizenship restored, to find work, and do translating. She was ready to speak to the press. She says, 'after everything I've done, I'm not likely to press my demands.' Chernenko turned the document over, thought for a while and then decided it should be discussed by the

Politburo. (It was quickly decided to accede to Svetlana's wishes as a great propaganda coup, but she was unhappy in the Soviet Union, and went abroad again in 1986.)
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Autopsy for an Empire. New York: Free Press, c1998, p. 421

STALIN'S DAUGHTER DENOUNCES HIPPIES

Hippies are nothing but froth, nothing but trash in the streets of large cities. They are not the face of the land.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 353

STALIN WAS A MATERIALIST WITH NO BELIEF IN THE SUPERNATURAL OR PRAYER

My father never had any feeling for religion. In a young man who had never for a moment believed in the Spirit, in God, endless prayers, and enforced religious training could have brought out only contrary results: extreme skepticism of everything "heavenly," of everything "sublime." The result was total materialism, the cynical realism of an "earthy," "sober," practical, and low view of life. Instead of a "spiritual outlook," he evolved something very different:…
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 361

STALIN'S DAUGHTER DOES NOT KNOW MUCH ABOUT RUSSIA

She [Col. Briggs with whom I was staying in the United States] said, "I seem to know more about Russia than you do!"
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. Only One Year. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 398

HOW STALIN GOT THE NAME KOBA

It was, incidentally, during his stay in that town [Batum], on the Turkish border, that Djugashvili began to use the pseudonym Koba, meaning 'The Indomitable' in the Turkish vernacular. Koba was also the name of a heroic outlaw, a people's avenger in a poem by the Georgian poet Kazbegi, one of Djugashvili's favorite writers in the years of boyhood. As Koba the revolutionary was to be best known among his comrades before he assumed the more famous pseudonym Stalin, and old Caucasian Bolsheviks were to call him Koba even much later.
Deutscher, Isaac. Stalin; A Political Biography. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 46

STALIN FORGAVE PEOPLE WHO CRITICIZED AND ATTACKED HIM

Stalin had once announced that you couldn't make omelettes without breaking eggs, and in Russian the same word means "egg" and "testicle." Later, at a student reunion, Radek said that he could see plenty of "eggs" broken by Stalin but not the socialist omelette that they had been promised. And at a workers' Congress in Leningrad Radek had made use of mouka, which means both "flour" and "suffering" for further jibes at Stalin.
"But I'm ready to forget your offenses," Stalin said….

“But,” Stalin continued, “I don’t use my power to settle personal grudges. In insulting me though, you insult the Party.”
Alexandrov, Victor. The Tukhachevsky Affair. London: Macdonald, 1963, p. 28

STALIN CONSULTED POLITBURO MEMBERS BEFORE MAKING DECISIONS

On the best way of achieving this object, he [Stalin] was, as always, ready to listen to the views of the Politburo before making final decisions though, as always, those decisions would be his alone.
Read, Anthony and David Fisher. The Deadly Embrace. New York: Norton, 1988, p. 185

At the Politburo meetings he was brief and to the point; he avoided argument and seldom tried to persuade others, preferring briefly to sum up the majority opinion. He was a strong-willed man who nevertheless remained extremely cautious and at times even indecisive….
Medvedev, Roy. On Stalin and Stalinism. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 33

STALIN SAYS IT IS WHO COUNTS THE VOTES THAT MATTERS NOT WHO HAS THEM

Forcing himself down to Stalin’s level, Kamenev said, “Of the question of capturing the majority of the Party.” “Do you know what I think about this?” Stalin replied, “I believe that who and how people in the Party vote, is unimportant. What is extremely important is who counts the votes and how they are recorded.”
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 57

DID STALIN HAVE PHYSICAL DEFECTS, ESPECIALLY IN HIS ARMS

Some authors have affirmed that one of his [Stalin] arms functioned poorly. His daughter Svetlana said that he moved his right arm with difficulty, whereas the old Bolshevik Shumiatsky wrote in the Soviet press that Stalin couldn’t bend his left arm. To tell the truth, I never noticed anything like that. I frequently saw him make large gestures with his right arm, bending and unbending it. In the final analysis, I never saw him do any physical work. It’s possible that his left arm was in bad shape, but I never had occasion to observe it. Always calm, he disciplined himself well.
Bazhanov, Boris. Bazhanov and the Damnation of Stalin. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, c1990, p. 104

STALIN DOES NOT TRUST FLYING IN AIRPLANES SINCE HIS FRIENDS WERE KILLED IN A PLANE

He could hardly admit to the U.S. President that he was terrified of flying. The only flight he ever made, to Tehran, had taken every ounce of his psychological strength. He had not forgotten an air crash of March 1925 in the Northern Caucasus, when three personal

acquaintances had been killed. He was convinced it was no accident, and that two of those who died, ‘the Chekists Mogilevsky and Atarbegov, were targeted out of revenge for executions they had carried out,’ and the third, Myasnikov, ‘because he’s an Armenian’. He had proposed that ‘the strictest prohibition on flying be placed on senior officials’. This was quite impracticable even then, and it became virtually impossible in due course.
Volkogonov, Dmitrii. Autopsy for an Empire. New York: Free Press, c1998, p. 148

STALIN WAS NOT AFRAID TO MIX WITH THE MASSES

It took 35 years after Stalin’s death and the glasnost era for more detailed accounts to emerge. They emanated from those who had been given some access to the archives; others collected oral evidence.
Of the sources, Major Rybin had perhaps been the one closest physically to Stalin. He had been a member of the NKVD detachment in charge of Stalin’s personal security. Provoked by Rybakov’s novel The Children of the Arbat, Rybin more or less systematically collected evidence from other members of Stalin’s household, mainly NKVD personnel. The general picture that emerged was certainly more flattering than the image of Stalin presented by Rybakov. It was not true that Stalin had been afraid to mix with people, as Rybakov had argued, or that he had a morbid fear of terrorists. His car slowly traversed the streets of Moscow (in particular, the Arbat) whenever he traveled from his dacha to the Kremlin. Sometimes he would pick up an old lady he had spotted who was walking slowly and with difficulty or a small group of people waiting in the rain for the bus. Sometimes he would upbraid General Vlasik, the commander of his personal guard, for what seemed to Stalin excessive precautions. He wanted not to be isolated from the rest of the world but to be in a railway carriage “together with all others.”
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 148

STALIN’S SERVANTS LOVED AND APPRECIATED HIM

Rybin’s account and the evidence collected from others who worked for Stalin shows that they were faithful servants who were totally devoted to their boss. In their eyes, Stalin was a strict taskmaster but a great and good man, and their accounts are, no doubt, subjectively honest: It is as they remember it.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 151

A highly placed legal official who worked for the Soviet army characterized the Rybin account as rose-colored; the picture of amoral Stalin as a “simple” and honest man originated with people who were captives of the Stalin myth. [If that is true–Ed.] how does one explain that the very same people who praise Stalin have the most negative recollections of his political associates, from Beria to Malenkov, from Voroshilov to Kaganovich?
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner’s, c1990, p. 152

How do you explain the loyalty and dedication of Stalin’s staff and bodyguards? Besides his humane attributes which I have already mentioned, Stalin was a man of high cultural integrity. He never yelled, never thundered, always spoke in a low voice but with authority that you did not question. He always loved to tell jokes and to be a merry host. He was very

unassuming, modest in need, and he was always concerned and interested in our personal lives or any problems that we might have. Finding out that Tukov with his wife and grown-up daughter lived in one room, sometimes not sleeping at all, helped him to get a two-room apartment. We always saw before us sincere, correct behavior at all times–a person who was quite different from many members of the Soviet government.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 66

Stalin exercised kindness and the principle of noblesse oblige with his personal staff–the drivers, cooks, servants, and groundskeepers. …they admired and adored him. Now his three chauffeurs were reassigned, as were most servants at the Kuntsevo dacha. Goryshev expressed apprehension over Stalin's safety. "Soon something very bad is going to happen," he predicted. "The Big Chief is being deprived of protection Petr Sergeyevich, and I'm afraid they will soon liquidate him." His words in Russian ("I ya boyus' chto ego skoro likividiruyut") can also be translated, "And I'm afraid that soon he will no longer be." Either way, both of us knew that not everyone loved Comrade Stalin.
Deriabin, Peter. Inside Stalin's Kremlin. Washington [D.C.]: Brassey's, c1998, p. 77

Then Stalin's closest companion…Valechka, who was now aged 38 and had worked with Stalin since she was 20, pushed through the crying maids, "dropped heavily to her knees" and threw herself onto the corpse with all the uninhibited grief of the ordinary people. This cheerful but utterly discreet woman, who had seen so much, was convinced to her dying day that "no better man ever walked the earth." Laying her head squarely on his chest, Valechka, with tears pouring down the cheeks of "her round face," "wailed at the top of her voice as the women in the villages do. She went on for a long time and nobody tried to stop her."
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 650

I knew many people who worked for Stalin for years, those who served him, and his personnel. I have never heard from them one word of anything bad about him. This is quite remarkable. Those who write about him now have never known him at all. Those "authors" are creating his image from hearsay, from talk, and gossip. But there's absolutely no resemblance to the real man. An idiot cannot create such a country, or win such a war. A fool can destroy a country, but not build it up.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 275

STALIN'S RELATIVES DEFENDED HIM

Stalin also had his admirers among his grandchildren, of whom there were eight…. The greatest Stalinist of them all was the eldest, Evgeni, Yakov's son. He said he admired Joseph Vissarionovich for all he had done for his country and took a very dim view of the de-Stalinization campaign. Stalin's policy was the only possible way to move ahead with both the industrialization of the country and the collectivization of agriculture. He bitterly criticized Volkogonov for stating that after Trotsky had been exiled from the country only a few Trotskyites had remained behind. This was a falsification of history; there had been many.
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 156

SOME BOURGEOIS WRITERS COMPLIMENT STALIN

Even during the height of the Cold War, however, there were wide differences of opinion among students of the Soviet Union. It may be sufficient to point to the work of two of the most influential authors of the period, Edward H. Carr and Isaac Deutscher. Although not uncritical of Stalin and his system, on the whole they took a positive line toward him and his system. Although he had caused much suffering, in their eyes the benefits that accrued to his country from his policies far outweighed the damage. Seen from a larger perspective, the suffering would be forgotten, whereas the achievements would remain. Who could say with any assurance that there had been any other approach but Stalin's to modernize a country as backward as the Soviet Union?
Laqueur, Walter. Stalin: The Glasnost Revelations. New York: Scribner's, c1990, p. 230

STALIN DID NOT DRINK AND WAS NO DRUNKARD

What kind of impression do we get after reading the book by Khrushchev? The impression is that Stalin was a drunkard. I would just like to quote one sentence in that book: "Stalin even in his youth was into heavy drinking. It looked as if that was his undoing." Isn't this a surprise? But we, who were with Stalin day and night for years, were blind to this malady? As I mentioned before, Stalin only drank very weak wine, together with mineral water, and cognac very, very seldom. He never touched vodka. His buddies drank it by the bottle! And this was billed to Stalin's personal account….
Regarding Stalin himself…. From 1930 to 1953, we, the bodyguards, saw Stalin feeling a bit high only twice… once on the birthday of Shtemenko and the other, at the funeral of Zhdanov. He was never drunk, or unable to talk or walk normally. He was always of a sober and rational mind and outlook.
Yet, numerous books are written, focusing on these two occasions, trying desperately to make Stalin out as a drunkard.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 86-87

… although the evidence is strong that Stalin, unlike a good many of his entourage, was not himself a heavy drinker.
Snow, Charles Percy. Variety of Men. New York: Scribner, 1966, p. 226

Stalin liked simple food, especially soups and fish. He was not an alcoholic. He was happy with a dry wine which he mixed with Georgian lemonade, and never drank vodka with meals. He did not employ servants, even when he had guests. He always had a buffet set out on a big table. The drinks were placed on small round tables. Everyone served himself.
Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 134

STALIN WAS NOT PARANOID BY ANY MEANS

Another falsehood that these modern "democrats" promote is that Stalin was paranoid, saw terrorists behind every couch, chair, and the draperies that covered the windows. These lies are so absolutely false that I cannot in all good conscience even reply to them. Stalin always

had the drapes parted, there were heaters near the window because in the wintertime, it was cold–there was no furnace or central heating. Stalin himself told Orlov:
“Are the electrical heaters heating the drapes that the windows are covered with at night, or should they not be heating the room”?
Thus the drapes were always opened, the room was airy and no amount of lies by Khrushchev and his modern accomplices will subvert this fact.
Rybin, Aleksei. Next to Stalin: Notes of a Bodyguard. Toronto: Northstar Compass Journal, 1996, p. 104

STALIN WAS COURTEOUS WITH GOOD MANNERS

Nor are his manners bad. He sees visitors only very rarely, but one and all they report his soberness, his respectful attention to their questions, his attempt to put them at their ease. His speeches are full of a curious sort of sardonic courtliness; for instance he refers to capitalists usually as “Messieurs the Bourgeoisie.”…
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 530

Anthony Eden was impressed by Stalin’s personality, which ‘made itself felt without effort or exaggeration’ and by his ‘natural good manners’. Even the Finnish envoy, Paasiviki, who met Stalin in circumstances that were grim for Finland, noted Stalin’s recourse to humor….
McNeal, Robert, Stalin: Man and Ruler. New York: New York University Press, 1988, p. 216

STALIN HAS VERY LITTLE PROTECTION BY BODYGUARDS

Yet Stalin is not, on the whole, so drastically guarded as Hitler or Mussolini. He exposes himself a good deal more than they do. He has several times been seen returning to the Kremlin from the Opera on foot, walking with friends through the crowded square. And at least twice a year, on May 1 and November 7, the two great Soviet holidays, Stalin stands on the tomb of Lenin and literally several million people pass him at a range of about 30 yards.
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 532

After a long visit to the Museum, in which I studied the archives of the French Revolution, I went to the Kremlin, where, with Herriot and Ambassador Alphand, I was to meet President Kalinin. Word went around: “Stalin is coming!” I stood with several officials in front of the palace in the Kremlin occupied by Stalin. After about five minutes, five great cars, all absolutely alike, dashed past us.
“But where is Stalin?” I asked one of the officials, who was cheering.
“Oh, he went by,” he said.
“He did?” I asked. “When?”
“Just now,” he answered. “He was in one of those five cars. They are all alike, as you probably noticed. It is considered safer that way.”
And yet, sometime later, I saw Stalin, absolutely unguarded, mingling boldly with the crowds, who seemed to idolize him. This was the occasion when we watched him review the parade in Red Square.
Tabouis, Geneviève R. They Called Me Cassandra. New York: C. Scribner’s sons, 1942, p. 172

Every morning at nine o'clock a Rolls-Royce brings Stalin to his quarters at the huge building of the Central Committee. The car is well-protected. It is followed by an open automobile with armed agents of the GPU. Stalin remains at work for 16 to 18 hours, and returns home late at night.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 325

STALIN CARES LITTLE FOR POMP AND CEREMONY AND DRESSES PLAINLY

He cares nothing for pomp or ceremony. He does not wear a uniform, but a dark olive-green jacket buttoned at the neck, riding-breeches, and boots. When he goes out, he wears a cap with a visor. Not an official uniform, this costume has nevertheless been widely imitated throughout most of Russia;…
Gunther, John. Inside Europe. New York, London: Harper & Brothers, c1940, p. 532

STALIN DID THE INTELLIGENCE ANALYSIS HIMSELF AFTER KNOWING THE FACTS & SOURCE

Stalin, indeed, actively discouraged intelligence analysis by others, which he condemned as "dangerous guesswork." "Don't tell me what you think," he is reported to have said. "Give me the facts and the source!"
Andrew and Mitrokhin. The Sword and the Shield (Pt 1). New York: Basic Books, c1999, p. 54

Stalin worked assiduously even after the Second World War at keeping himself well-informed.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 263

STALIN DEFEATED MAJOR CHALLENGES

Three great decisions faced Stalin in power and he met them magnificently; first, the problem of the peasants, then the West European attack, and last the Second World War. The poor Russian peasant was the lowest victim of tsarism, capitalism and the Orthodox Church. He surrendered the Little White Father easily; he turned less readily but perceptibly from his icons; but his kulaks clung tenaciously to capitalism and were near wrecking the revolution when Stalin risked a second revolution and drove out the rural bloodsuckers.
Statement by W.E.B DuBois regarding COMRADE STALIN on March 16, 1953

THE MASSES LOVED STALIN

Such was the man who lies dead, still the butt of noisy jackals and the illbred men of some parts of the distempered West. In life he suffered under continuous and studied insult; he was forced to make bitter decisions on his own lone responsibility. His reward comes as the common man stands in solemn acclaim.
Statement by W.E.B DuBois regarding COMRADE STALIN on March 16, 1953

… As I [Volodya] remember, Grandpa and Grandma and everyone else respected Stalin greatly until the last day."
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin's Shadow. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 274

STALIN DOES NOT BELIEVE IN DESTINY

I preferred to revert to the problem of stories and legend-mongering and, since he had just asked whether the cigarette he had given me did not please me–or I had stopped smoking–I said:
"You are supposed to be against the creation of legends. And yet surely nothing has made you so popular as the legend that you always smoke a pipe."
He laughed. "You see how little need I have of it. This morning I left it at home."
"It is late. Will you kindly autograph this pamphlet you have given me?"
He nodded. But he seemed bewildered because he was not used to this European custom.
"Yes, of course, but what shall I write?"
"Your own name, and that of Herr Ludwig," said the translator. His shyness at that moment attracted me to him very much. He raised the red pencil with which he had been drawing and wrote on the pamphlet….
"Would you be surprised at a question?"
"Nothing that happens in Russia could surprise me," Stalin said.
"That frame of mind is international. In Germany also, nothing that might happen could surprise us. Do you believe in Destiny?"
He became very serious. He turned to me and looked me straight in the face. Then, after a tense pause he said: "No, I don't believe in Destiny. That is simply a prejudice. It is a nonsensical idea." He laughed in his dark muffled way and said in German, "Schicksal, Schicksal." Then he reverted to his native language and said: "Just as with the Greeks. They had their gods and goddesses who directed everything from above."
"You have been through 100 dangers," I said, "when you were banned and exiled, in revolutions and in wars. Is it merely an accident that you were not killed and that someone else is not in your place today?"
He was somewhat annoyed, but only for a moment. Then he said, in a clear, ringing voice: "No accident, Herr Ludwig, no accident. Probably there were inner and outer causes that prevented my death. But it could have happened by accident that someone else might be sitting here and not I."
…"Destiny is contrary to law. It is something mystic. In this mystical thing I do not believe. Of course there were causes why I came through all these dangers. It could not have happened merely by accident."
Ludwig, Emil. Leaders of Europe. London: I. Nicholson and Watson Ltd., 1934, p. 382-384

STALIN KNEW THE WRITINGS OF MARX AND LENIN BETTER THAN THE OTHERS

Another old party member, I. A. Sats, writes in his memoirs:
"To some extent Stalin's effectiveness as a publicist and orator, his advantage over others…can be explained in the following way. Stalin was much more familiar with the texts of Lenin's works than Kamenev, Zinoviev, Bukharin, or even Trotsky. These men had been

closer to Lenin, they had spent much more time with him when he was alive; they listened to his speeches, argued with him, read through whatever he had just written, but they seldom ever reread any of his work. There was not enough distance between him and themselves for that. Stalin, however, studied Lenin's published works in detail and new them all verbatim–he could easily select an appropriate quotation whenever the need arose."
Medvedev, Roy. On Stalin and Stalinism. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 46

STALIN DID GO OUT AMONG THE MASSES

Although Stalin was a reclusive man, not one to mingle with the masses, he appeared before and among the people extraordinarily often just at this time [Dec. 1935].
Tucker, Robert. Stalin in Power: 1929-1941. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 330

STALIN & HIS WIFE WRITE LOVING LETTERS TO HIS MOTHER INVITING HER BUT SHE REFUSES

The sort of letters a loving son usually writes. He sends her photographs of his wife, money, medicines, begs her not to be downhearted in spite of her many ailments. And sees to it that his wife accompanies his short letters with long ones of her own.

From one of his wife's letters to his mother: "Everything is fine with us. We… were expecting you here, but it seems you couldn't manage it." Yes, it was the other way around: they invited his mother, they asked her to come and see them. But she will not come. Yet his mother never overlooks the slightest sign of neglect on the part of her busy son. He has to make excuses:
"Greetings, Mama dear It's a long time since I got a letter from you. I must have offended you, but what can I do. God knows how busy I am."
"Greetings, Mama dear. Of course I owe you an apology for not writing recently. But what can I do–I'm snowed under with work and couldn't take time out to write."

They continually invited his mother to Moscow. And she continually refused to come. In one of her last letters, his wife writes disparagingly: "Still, summer is not that far off, maybe we shall see each other. But why don't you come to us sometime? It's very embarrassing the way you spoil us with presents." So then–she spoiled them by sending presents but would not go to see them, however much they begged her. They had installed her in a palace, but she persisted in living in one room.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 23

STALIN WAS NOT PARANOID

Stalin, it is said, was a schizophrenic. The story usually told by way of proof is that when in 1927 the great Russian medical scientist Vladimir Mikhailovich Bekhterev was called in to examine Stalin, whose withered arm was troubling him, he diagnosed advanced paranoia and recommended immediate retirement….
In August 1989 , and the days of perestroika, a number of psychiatrists took part in an amusing roundtable discussion in the offices of the Literary Gazette. They were looking for an answer to the question: was Stalin mentally ill or not? One of those invited was

academician N. Bekhterev, daughter of the great Bekhterev. She said, among other things, “I myself do not know whether Vladimir Bekhterev decided that Stalin was paranoid, but our family never heard anything to that effect.” That puts an end to a very popular legend.
Radzinsky, Edvard. Stalin. New York: Doubleday, c1996, p. 319

STALIN WAS NOT GRASPING FOR POWER AND SACRIFICED HIMSELF

There is no question that this was a role [supervising the war in Tsaritsyn] he preferred to sitting in Moscow and quarreling with his assistants on the Commissariat. To give him justice, however, it was not a role which a man who was interested only in power would have sought. Such a man would have preferred to sit in the relative safety of Moscow rather than shoulder hazardous responsibilities in the war zone. A mere politician would have opted for pulling the strings from the center, for building a power base at the head of one of the main Party organizations, as Zinoviev was already doing in Petrograd and Kamenev in Moscow. Stalin, like Trotsky, undertook jobs that could make and as easily break reputations.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 170

STALIN WAS REASONABLE AND NON-PARTISAN

A follower of the proceedings at the [Twelfth] Congress would very likely conclude that Comrade Stalin was firm but reasonable, different from the bullying Zinoviev. His ideas seemed sensible and nonpartisan….
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 226

STALIN DEVELOPED INTO A SHREWD, EFFECTIVE, REALISTIC POLITICIAN

In 1917 Stalin’s transformation with in a few weeks from a misanthropic recluse to a man acknowledged by a sizable group as their leader marked him as a skillful politician. By the mid-1920s and in the context of Soviet politics he became a superb one. He had all the essential ingredients: an excellent sense of timing; simple but effective oratory, which even in its certain crudity was reassuring to the average Party member; the appearance, which while not only correct was certainly more true then than at any time before or later, of a man free of internal complexes and problems, zestfully playing the political game. All these combined to gain him a widespread acceptance that sheer administrative intrigue alone could not have secured. Even some of his irritability seemed to have dissipated.
Ulam, Adam. Stalin; The Man and his Era. New York: Viking Press, 1973, p. 237

Dzhughashvili was a fellow who would fight battles only when there was a decent chance of winning them.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 57

STALIN WAS CONVINCED ROOSEVELT WAS ASSASSINATED

Stalin was convinced, moreover, that Roosevelt had been assassinated and he blamed my father for having nothing to tell him about that matter.

Beria, Sergo. Beria, My Father: Inside Stalin's Kremlin. London: Duckworth, 2001, p. 113

STALIN'S WIFE TREATED HIM RUDELY IN PUBLIC AT TIMES

Stalin was unbearably rude to Nadya [his wife] but historians, in their determination to show his monstrosity, have ignored how unbearably rude she was to him. This "peppery woman," as Stalin's security chief, Pauker, described her, frequently shouted at Stalin in public, which was why her own mother thought her a "fool." The cavalryman Budyonny, who was at the dinner, remembered how she was "always nagging and humiliating" Stalin. "I don't know how he puts up with it" Budyonny confided in his wife.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 17

STALIN GAINED SUPPORT BY CHARM NOT FEAR

The foundation of Stalin's power in the Party was not fear: it was charm.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 48

Stalin was not the dreary bureaucrat that Trotsky wanted him to be. It was certainly true that he was a gifted organizer. He "never improvised" but "took every decision, weighing it carefully." He was capable of working extraordinarily long hours–16 a day. But the new archives confirmed that his real genius was something different–and surprising: "he could charm people." He was what is now known as a "people person." While incapable of true empathy on the one hand, he was a master of friendships on the other. He constantly lost his temper, but when he set his mind to charming a man, he was irresistible….
Stalin's face was "expressive and mobile," his feline movements "supple and graceful": he buzzed with sensitive energy. Everyone who saw him "was anxious to see him again" because "he created a sense that there was now a bond that linked them forever." Artyom [his adopted son] said he made "we children feel like adults and feel important." Visitors were impressed with his quiet modesty, the puffing on the pipe, the calmness. When the future Marshall Zhukov first met him, he could not sleep afterwards: "The appearance of Stalin, his quiet voice, the concreteness and depth of his judgments, the attention with which he heard the report made a great impression on me." Sudoplatov, a Chekist, thought "it was hard to imagine such a man could deceive you, his reactions were so natural, without the slightest sense of him posing" but he also noticed "a certain harshness… which he did not… conceal."
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 48

In the eyes of these rough Bolsheviks from the regions, his flat quiet public speaking was an asset, a great improvement on Trotsky's oratorical wizardry. Stalin's lack of smoothness, his anti-oratory, inspired trust…. "he was that man the Party trusted," admitted Bukharin. "He's like the symbol of the Party, the lower strata trust him." But above all, reflected the future secret police chief, Beria, he was "supremely intelligent," a political "genius." However rude or charming he was, "he dominated his entourage with his intelligence."
…He did not just socialize with the magnates: he patronized junior officials too, constantly searching for tougher, more loyal, and more tireless lieutenants. He was always accessible: "I'm ready to help you and receive you," he often replied to requests. Officials got through directly to Stalin….

Stalin was mercurial–far from a humorless drone: he was convivial and entertaining, if exhaustingly intense. “He was such fun,” says Artyom [his adopted son].
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 49

Stalin’s pitch was perfect: it was a “rare” and “sweet” voice. Indeed, one of his lieutenants said Stalin was good enough to have become a professional singer, a mind-boggling historical possibility.
Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 82

Perhaps it was one of Stalin’s traits to try to make people like him. I do not know. I never encountered Stalin directly. But I have heard the stories of other people who did meet alone with Stalin and who left him feeling not only esteem but also warmth for him as a person. One of the stories was told me after Khrushchev’s report on Stalin at the 20th Party Congress, a time when it was more advantageous to criticize than praise Stalin. The man who told it to me, Lieutenant General Vechny, is very modest. Even those of us who were close acquaintances of his had never heard him say that he had worked in Stalin’s immediate suite for a lengthy period at the beginning of the war– though any self-seeking careerist would have talked constantly about such an experience. But after we had read Khrushchev’s report, — Vechny sighed deeply and said: “This is not the Stalin I knew.” …And he commenced his story, a simple human story about ordinary events and conversations. But out of his words arose the picture of a human being both great and humane! I am convinced that Vechny was sincere and honest. Stalin, he explained, actually made him feel that he could freely discuss with him the situation at the front and even calmly contradict him. And Stalin evidently did not forget him after this. How else can it be explained that Stalin took only Vechny’s name off of the order in which he was named as one of those to blame for the failure of the 1942 Kerch operation? When reading the order, Stalin crossed out Vechny’s name any time he came to it, never explaining to anyone why he did this.
Grigorenko, Petro G. Memoirs. New York: Norton, c1982, p. 138-139

I cannot refrain from stating that, when necessary, Stalin could literally charm a person by his warmth and attention and make one remember every meeting with him for a long time.
Rokossovsky, K., Ed. by Bob Daglish A Soldier’s Duty. Moscow: Progress Pub., 1985, p. 174

If Stalin’s regime wished to inculcate a high level of fear in its citizens, there was no reason to halt the Terror as abruptly as it did; no reason for Stalin to say in March 1939 that the punitive organs had already turned their attention “not to the interior of the country, but outside it, against external enemies”; and no reason to hold public trials of the NKVD agents and party cadres who had abused people. There would have been every reason to continue harrassment of the elite in some lesser fashion, but that did not happen.
Thurston, Robert W. “Fear and Belief in the USSR’s ‘Great Terror’: Response to Arrest, 1935-1939.” Slavic Review 45 (1986), p. 232.

STALIN CRITICIZES HIS WIFE’S BROTHER FOR GIVING STALIN’S WIFE A PISTOL

He stared sadly at Pavel [Nadya’s brother], growling, “That was a hell of a nice present you gave her! A pistol!”

Montefiore, Sebag. Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar. New York: Knopf, 2004, p. 106

STALIN CHOOSES CREATIVE MARXISM OVER DOGMATIC MARXISM

“There is a dogmatic Marxism and a creative Marxism. I take my stand with the latter.” [Proceedings of the 6th Cong. of the Bolshevik Party. Russian Ed. Pages 233 -234]
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 93

STALIN WAS OFTEN MORE LENIENT THAN OTHERS ON THE POLITBURO

Thus, the Politburo, as now constituted, became a stabilized organ, a sort of institution, with a majority grouped about Molotov. Stalin, of course, who had been promised 100 years of life by the medical commission of the Politburo, could impose his point of view whenever he was absolutely determined to do so. He did impose it at critical moments; as, for example, when he forbade Bulganin to close the air corridor during the blockade of Berlin, and to provoke an aerial war with the pursuit planes of General Lucius Clay. Further, through the Military Commission of the Politburo he forbade Molotov and Zhdanov to liquidate Tito’s regime by military action. This would have presented no technical difficulty in 1948, but it might very soon have provoked a generalized military conflict. Tito, at that moment, realized this as clearly as Stalin.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 404

STALIN’S PRESENCE INTIMIDATES CAPITALIST GOVERNMENTS

The mere presence of Stalin suffices, by a kind of virulent osmosis, to reduce and weaken the liberalism of the capitalist governments.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 415

STALIN WAS A BEACON OF HOPE IN A TIME OF GREAT TURMOIL AND DEPRIVATION

Generally the late 1920s are portrayed as stormy years during which great works were accomplished. One cannot deny that Stalin was adroit at advancing ever new and ever larger tasks. The people were tantalized by the goals he set before us. I remember the tremendous enthusiasm Stalin’s essay “The Year of the Great Turning Point” aroused when it appeared a few years after the time I am describing here. Grain was in acute shortage and long bread lines were appearing. Rationing was not far off; neither was famine. But Stalin’s essay engrossed and heartened us. Yes, we believed, the liquidation of small-scale peasant farming was a great turning point. The soil that might give rebirth to capitalism had been destroyed. Directly ahead of us lay the route to the complete victory of socialism.
Grigorenko, Petro G. Memoirs. New York: Norton, c1982, p. 28

STALIN STRONGLY OPPOSED THE MENSHEVIKS

Koba generally enjoyed in the Caucasus the reputation of a second Lenin. He was regarded as the leading Marxist expert. Hence his very special hatred for Menshevism. In his opinion, anyone who professed Marxism but he did not interpret it in the Bolshevist light was a scoundrel.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 80

In the memoirs of Badayev, one of the six Bolshevist representatives in the Duma and perhaps the one who took the most active part in the administration and protection of Pravda, Stalin is represented as the chief engineer of the party in all matters of policy. It was Stalin who was responsible for the creation of the Bolshevist caucus. It was Stalin who framed the basic Bolshevist planks in the platform of the Social Democratic bloc. And again it was he who did not lose his head and did not yield an inch in the many all-night conferences that were marked by extreme passion.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 94

STALIN DID MORE TO CREATE THE SOVIET UNION THAN ANYONE

Stalin more than other leaders of his party, is responsible for the cementing of the federation known as the Soviet Union.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 155

STALIN CONTENDS THAT TO BUILD ONE MUST LEARN AND LEARN FROM EVERYBODY

Stalin's notion of and approach toward learning is typically paternal and didactic. "To build," he wrote for a popular weekly magazine in 1928, "one must possess knowledge, one must master science, one must learn. Learn persistently, patiently. Learn from everybody, from your enemies, from your friends, but particularly from your enemies.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 306

STALIN IS HONEST AND REALLY CARES ABOUT THE WELFARE OF THE PEOPLE

Dmitrievsky continues, "Is Stalin honest? Does he think of the needs and welfare of the people? I am deeply convinced that he aims at the happiness of the people, and sincerely regards himself as the incarnation of the toilers of the country.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 317

STALIN SAYS HISTORY PROVES THE EASIEST THEORIES ARE FROM FROM BEING ALWAYS TRUE

[In a March 15, 1927 reply to Dmitriev Stalin stated]… history tells us that the simplest and easiest "theories" are far from always being the most correct.
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 9, p. 190

STALIN SAYS YOU HAVE TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT NOT WHAT IS POPULAR

[In a reply on June 12, 1928 to Comrade S Stalin stated] Remember the words quoted by Marx: “Follow your own course, and let people talk!”
Stalin, Joseph. Works. Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952, Vol. 11, p. 120

STALIN WAS A STRONG STUDENT OF ESPERANTO

For a while he taught himself Esperanto. For Dzhughashvili and many young revolutionaries this language, invented by the Polish Jewish scholar Zamenhoff, would provide one of the cultural underpinnings for the socialist order which they wanted to create around the world.
Service, Robert. Stalin. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2005, p. 78

He always actively supported the ringleaders in jail, and this made him a good fellow in the eyes of the prison public.
At a time when the whole prison was upset, sleepless, tense, in expectation of a night execution, Koba would calmly compose himself in slumber or else study Esperanto, which he regarded as the future language of the Socialist International.
Levine, Isaac Don. Stalin. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, c1931, p. 80

Koba–who has regarded himself as an expert linguist ever since he learned Esperanto in Batum prison–will also take part in Radek’s linguistic endeavors….
He [Stalin] founded a club of Esperantists, and astonished the inhabitants of the town by talking Esperanto in the street.
Delbars, Yves. The Real Stalin. London, Allen & Unwin, 1951, p. 57

In the Baku prison he began to study Esperanto as “the language of the future.” … Although he spent eight years in prison and exile, he never managed to learn a single foreign language, not excluding his ill-starred Esperanto.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 119

The prison became stricter and calmer. There was not even any talk of collective discussion. Koba had sufficient leisure to study Esperanto, if he had not become disillusioned with the language of the future.
Trotsky, Leon, Stalin. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1941, p. 125

STALIN LOVED AND WAS CARING TOWARD HIS MOTHER

“Recent biographies of my father say that he didn’t go to his mother’s funeral, he didn’t put a cross on her grave. I have to deny these stories. He visited her when she was ill and close to death, in 1935. It was a big effort for him to drive all the way from Moscow to Tblisi with his whole entourage, a thousand miles, but he did it because he wanted to see her.”
…”He didn’t have a cross put on her grave simply because that was not done in those times. The Party was atheist, and the KGB in Georgia decided how to bury her. My father cannot

be blamed for that. ”She was a Christian, and attended church all her life. But it was not his decision.”
The many attempts made to define Stalin’s personality have eluded any real sense of dimension–usually because those who have tried did not know the man personally. Colleagues and contemporaries have given snippets, glimpses and epithets; but the person most qualified to talk about Stalin’s character is his daughter.
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin’s Shadow. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994, p. 200-201

LOT OF AMATEUR PSYCHOLOGISTS ANALYZING STALIN

“There are a lot of amateur psychologists around who think that they know my father. But they didn’t know the man. He was extremely complicated.”
Richardson, Rosamond. Stalin’s Shadow. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994, p. 202

STALIN IS AN IMPORTANT FIGURE ON THE WORLD STAGE

At the present time there are in the world only two persons to whose opinion, to whose every word, millions are listening: you and Roosevelt. Others may preach as much as they like; what they say will never be printed or heeded. I cannot yet appreciate what has been done in your country; I only arrived yesterday. But I have already seen the happy faces of healthy men and women and I know that something very considerable is being done here. The contrast with 1920 is astounding.
Joseph Stalin and H. G. Wells, Marxism Vs. Liberalism: An Interview, New York, New Century Publishers, September 1937, p. 297

STALIN SUPPORTS LISTENING TO THE LITTLE PEOPLE FOR IDEAS

This is what not only teaching the masses but also learning from the masses means.
Two examples to demonstrate the correctness of Lenin’s thesis.
This happened several years ago. We, the members of the Central Committee, were discussing the question of improving the situation in the Donetz Basin. The measures proposed by the People’s Commissariat of Heavy Industry were obviously unsatisfactory. Three times we sent the proposals back to the People’s Commissariat of Heavy Industry. And three times we got different proposals from the People’s Commissariat of Heavy Industry. But even then we could not regard them as satisfactory. Finally, we decided to call several workers and lower business and trade union officials from the Donetz Basin. For three days we discussed matters with these comrades. And all of us members of the Central Committee had to admit that only these ordinary workers, these “little people,” were able to suggest the proper solution to us. You no doubt remember the decision of the Central Committee and of the Council of People’s Commissars on measures for increasing coal output in the Donetz Basin. Well, this decision of the Central Committee and the Council of People’s Commissars, which all our comrades admitted was a correct and even a remarkable one, was suggested to us by simple people from the ranks.
The other example. I have in mind the case of Comrade Nikolayenko. Who is Nikolayenko? Nikolayenko is a rank-and-file member of the Party. She is an ordinary “little person.” For a whole year she had been giving signals that all was not well in the Party organization in Kiev; she exposed the family spirit, the philistine petty-bourgeois approach to workers, the

suppression of self-criticism, the prevalence of Trotskyite wreckers. But she was constantly brushed aside as if she were a pestiferous fly. Finally, in order to get rid of her they expelled her from the Party. Neither the Kiev organization nor the Central Committee of the C.P. of the Ukraine helped her to bring the truth to light. The intervention of the Central Committee of the Party alone helped to unravel the knot. And what transpired after the case was investigated? It transpired that Nikolayenko was right and the Kiev organization was wrong. Neither more nor less. And yet, who is Nikolayenko? Of course, she is not a member of the Central Committee, she is not a People's Commissar, she is not the secretary of the Kiev Regional Organization, she is not even the secretary of a Party cell, she is only a simple rank-and-file member of the Party.

As you see, simple people sometimes prove to be much nearer to the truth than some high institutions.

I could quote scores and hundreds of similar examples. Thus you see that our experience alone, the experience of the leaders, is far from enough for the leadership of our cause. In order to lead properly the experience of the leaders must be supplemented by the experience of the Party membership, the experience of the working class, the experience of the toilers, the experience of the so-called "little people."

Stalin, Joseph. Works, Vol. 14, Speech in Reply to Debate, 1 April 1937, Red Star Press, London, Pravda 1978, pp. 290-291